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Structure and Consequences of Socioeconomic Segregation in Poor Buenos Aires Settlements

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

by

Ana Lourdes Suárez

Committee in Charge:

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Akos Rona-Tas

2007

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The dissertation of Ana Lourdes Suárez is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego
2007

DEDICATION

To the memory of my mother, Alicia Galeazzi
and my sister, Marilí

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page ……... iii

Dedication ……. iv

Table of Contents ……... v

List of Tables …… vii

List of Maps ……. x

.

List of Graphics …….. xi

Acknowledgments ……..... xii

Vita ……. xiv

Abstract ……. xvi

Introduction …….…….. 1

Chapter 1: Theoretical Approach. Residential Segregation and the Erosion of Survival Strategies…….. 18

Chapter 2: Methodological Approach …… 60

Chapter 3: Urban Segregation in the Greater Buenos Aires Area …… 77

Chapter 4: Urban Settlements in Greater Buenos Aires. Poor Settlements Selected for this Study ……... 98

Chapter 5: Settlements Household's Sociodemographic Vulnerability. Neighborhood Social Composition and Risk Behavior ……. 119

Chapter 6: Erosion of Work. Household Work Strategies in Crisis? …… 152

Chapter 7: Circuits for Basic Needs Satisfaction. Trapped in Poverty Stricken Neighborhoods ……. 192

Chapter 8: Repercussion of Social Help obtained by Dwellers through. Public Assistance Programs ……... 203

Chapter 9: Social Capital Erosion. Horizontal Relationship among Domestic Units. Informal Territorial Networks…….. 246

Chapter 10: Conclusion …….. 279

Bibliography …… 290

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Greater Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires City and 24 counties of Greater Buenos Aires by district. Population in 1991 and 2001, and intercensus variation … 89

Table 3.2: Segregation indexes for Greater Buenos Aires and Buenos Aires City. 1991-2001 by County and Census Fraction 90

Table 3.3a: Segregation Indexes for Greater Buenos Aires Counties. 1991-2001 …. 91

Table 3.3b**:** Correlations Between the Different Indexes of Segregation of the Variables of the Analysis. Greater Buenos Counties. 1991-2001 ……. 92

Table 4.1: Greater Buenos Aires and the three counties selected for the study. Population censed in 1980, 1991 y 2001 and Relative Intercensus Variation 1991-2001 ……. 118

Table 4.2: Total Greater Buenos Aires and the 3 counties selected for this study. Unsatisfied Basic Needs and Precarious Houses …… 118

Table 5.1a: Poverty Incidence: Percentage of Households and People below the Poverty Line and with Unsatisfied Basic Needs- Greater Buenos Aires. October 1991-2001 …… 143

Table 5.1b: Poverty Incidence: Percentage of Households and Individuals below the Poverty Line and with Unsatisfied Basic Needs. Settlements ……... 143

Table 5.2: Average Household Members by Age Group. Average Employed, Unemployed, Inactive, and Income Perceivers by Household. Relación de dependencia. Household Members per Active, and per Income Perceivers. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires. 2001 …….. 144

Table 5.3: Households by their Composition and Sex of the Head. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires …….. 145

Table 5.4: Activity and Unemployment Rates of the total Population and of the Population over 13 years old, by Age Group and Sex. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires ……... 146

Table 5.5: Employed Population by Occupational Category, Type of Occupation, Tenure, Social Benefits, and Weekly Hours Worked. Average Income. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires ……... 147

Table 5.6: People 14 years old or older by Level of Education. Settlements and

Greater Buenos Aires …….. 148

Table 5.7: School Attendance by Age Group. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires …… 148

Table 5.8: Households by the Highest Level of Education of their Members. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires …… 149

Table 5.9: Household Human Capital. Households in Settlements and in Greater Buenos Aires …….. 149

Table 5.9bis: Settlement Dwellers by Household Human Capital and Type of Settlement …… 150

Table 5.10: Percentage of Children aged 8-15 Lagging Behind at School, and Youth that do not Study, Work or Seek for a Job. Households in Settlements and in Greater Buenos Aires …….. 150

Table 5.11: Percentage of Children Aged 8-15 Lagging behind at School, by Household Human Capital and by Neighborhood Social Composition. Greater Buenos Aires, 2001 ……. 150

Table 5.12: Percentage of Young People that do not Study, Work or Search for a Job, by Household Human Capital and by Neighborhood Social Composition. Greater Buenos Aires, 2001 …… 151

Table 6.1: Activity and Unemployment Rates. Greater Buenos Aires Active Population (Over 13 years Old) by Education ……. 186

Table 6.2: Labor Insertion of Greater Buenos Aires Workers by Education …….. 187

Table 6.3: Labor Insertion of Settlements Inhabitants Workers by Education …… 188

Table 6.4: Income by Education controlled by Neighborhood Social Composition .. 189

Table 6.5: Settlements Workers by Occupational Category, by Sex, Household Position, Age, Branch of Activity, Employers in the Firm, Average Weekly Hours Worked and Income …… 190

Table 6.6: Settlement Workers by the location of their jobs ……... 191

Table 6.7: Workers in Home-Base productive Activities by type of Activity …… 191

Table 6.8: Average Age, weekly hours worked and Monthly income by Type of Homebased Productive Activity …… 191

Table 8.1: Settlement by Social program Received …… 241

Table 8.2: Settlement Households by weather they receive Social programs and their Poverty Situation ……. 241

Table 8.3: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Settlement Households receiving Social Programs and Poverty Situation (IL) ……... 242

Table 8.4: Settlements Beneficiaries Evaluation of how el "Plan Vida" works ……. 242

Table 8.5: Settlement Households receiving Temporally Working Programs by additional incomes received by household members …….. 243

Table 8.6: Temporally Working Plan Beneficiaries Characteristics compared to those of the overall Active Population **……...** 244

Table 8.7: Temporary Work Beneficiaries. How they Perceive themselves regarding the Program by Sex, Household Human Capital, Laboral Trajectory and Type of Settlement …….. 245

Table 9.1: Households by transference relationships and kind of transference relationship …….. 276

Table 9.2: Households by sons/daughters living outside the house …… 276

Table 9.3: Households by having parents living outside the house …… 276

Table 9.4: Households by where the household receiving or depending on help is located ……. 277

Table 9.5: Households by help received and poverty situation, by transference relationships …… 277

Table 9.6: Main Neighborhood problems ……... 278

LIST OF MAPS

Map 3.1: Greater Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires City and the surrounding Counties according to the Ring they belong to …… 93

Map 3.2: Expansion of gated urbanizations between 1991 – 2001 …….. 94

LIST OF GRAPHICS

Graphic I.1: Analytical Diagram summarizying the research´s main arguments …. 17

Graphic 3.1: Duncan and Bell indexes at the Fraction and County level. Greater Buenos Aires Counties …….. 95

Graphic 3.2: Duncan and Bell Indexes. Education, Health Coverage and Housing Type. Greater Buenos Aires Counties ……... 96

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Structure and Consequences of

Socioeconomic Segregation in Poor Buenos Aires Settlements

by

Ana Lourdes Suárez

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, San Diego, 2007

Carlos Waisman, Chair

This dissertation examines the relationship between the process of residential segregation, the social isolation it produces, and the erosion of resources in households dwelling in poor urban areas. My main question is how and why living in contexts of socioeconomic segregation affects the resources poor households live on. I resorted to a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The data sources are: 1. A semi-structured questionnaire applied to 100 households of four Greater Buenos Aries settlements randomly selected. 2. Life histories applied to a fifth of my household sample. 3. Self-processed data from the 2001 Permanent Household Survey of Buenos

Aires Agglomerate. And, 4. Self-processed data from Argentina's last two Population Census.

Contrary to mainstream approach to survival strategies in Latin America, I found that the more poor and segregated an area is the worst quality of their resources. Moreover I found that segregated areas are related to a process of households' resources exhaustion that worsens their chances of overcoming poverty. I show that this process goes beyond households' members' backgrounds. My analysis demonstrates that neighborhoods, and not only background characteristics matter and do influence individual behaviors and achievements. Living in poor segregated areas increases both risk behavior and labor achievement. Finally, I argue that territorial concentration of poverty favors the formation of "circuits for the satisfaction of basic needs", consolidating particular and specific ways in which poor people obtain the resources they need to deal with the requirements of daily life. I assert that these "circuits" consolidate poor peoples´ marginality.

My research is situated in contemporary urban Buenos Aires with special reference to Greater Buenos Aires (Argentinean's largest urban agglomerate). Yet my arguments about the erosion of resources in contexts of increase socioeconomic segregation is, to some extent, applicable to other countries, given that different world regions are undergoing similar profound economic and social reorganization processes. The approach I use helps to understand some of the most negative effects of the increasing social fragmentation. It contributes to enrich our understanding of urban poverty and some of the mechanisms that support its perpetuation and rigidity in Latin American countries.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation analyzes the relationship between the process of residential segregation and the erosion of resources in households dwelling in marginalized urban areas. Understanding this relationship is important to grasp why residential segregation increases social isolation, affecting the chances of the residential segmentation "losers" to overcome poverty. My main hypothesis is that in contexts of socioeconomic segregation, resources of poor people become exhausted. This process erodes the survival strategies of households living in marginalized urban areas.

I argue that socioeconomic segregation and social isolation are deeply related and mutually reinforcing. These processes contribute to exhausting the set of assets of poor people due to the fact that they affect their capacity for obtaining the resources necessary for overcoming poverty. I argue that these two processes favor the formation of "circuits for the satisfaction of basic needs". In other words, they consolidate particular and specific ways in which poor people access and obtain the resources they need to deal with the requirements of daily life (food, clothing, health, education, etc). I assert that these "circuits" consolidate poor peoples´ marginality. Lastly I argue that these two processes –socioeconomic segregation and social isolation- increase both risk behavior and labor achievement of dwellers in segregated areas.

My research is situated in contemporary urban Buenos Aires with special reference to Greater Buenos Aires (Argentinean's largest urban agglomerate). Yet my arguments about the erosion of resources in contexts of increase socioeconomic segregation is, to some extent, applicable to other countries, given that different world

regions are undergoing profound economic and social reorganization rooted in a free-market development approach.

In Buenos Aires, during the last decades, the lack of jobs, labour precariousness, and the state's inadequate responses –particularly those related to social policy- have deeply impacted households´ daily life. These three factors eroded the survival resources of the poorest, affecting poor households' coping mechanisms. Among all the possible household resources, I will focus on three: 1.work, 2. those obtained though social policies, and 3. social capital. I focus particularly on social capital, due to its direct relationship with social isolation. I am interested in arguing against a body of Latin American literature that considers survival strategies positively related to households' resources and particularly to social capital. My analysis in this dissertation shows that, in fact, social capital as well as all household resources, and survival strategies are closely related but the relationship is far from being positive in contexts of strong segmentation and isolation. I discuss the erosion of what has been called the resources-of-poverty model of survival in light of the ongoing crisis faced by poor households in Argentina. I argue that, because of the deep restructuring and resulting persistent economic and social hardship that have characterized Argentina and other countries for the last decades, poor households have moved toward a situation permeated by a "poverty of resources" that erodes their capacity of survival (Gonzalez de la Rocha 2001). This process worsens in areas where poverty is highly concentrated. I analyze the impact that erosion and exhaustion of social support systems (reciprocal help relationships, family solidarity, and even the collective activities of community promotion) has on the increasing isolation of the poorest households: those living in poor settlements.

In order to understand poverty perpetuation and its increasing rigidity, I argue that it is necessary to use an approach that incorporates family and domestic responses, both in terms of changes of the internal resources, and the external socioeconomic conditions. This dissertation highlights the importance of the residential context. My analysis demonstrates that neighborhoods, and not only background characteristics (such as gender, education, occupation, etc.) matter and do influence individual behaviors and achievements. The residential environment is a crucial aspect that supports many of the mechanisms of poverty reproduction and perpetuation. The concentration of poverty, produced by residential segregation, contributes to eroding households' assets and resources, making them more vulnerable. This issue can lead to social exclusion.

Context and Outline of the Problem

Buenos Aires, together with the 24 cities ('municipios') that form the Greater Buenos Aires, is the most important and developed urban region of Argentina. The Buenos Aires urban area concentrates 33.5% of the population of Argentinean (INDEC 2002). This area experienced strong economic growth and development particularly since the 1940s when Argentina entered an intensive process of industrialization led by Buenos Aires. During the 1970s, however, the economy underwent a period of structural economic crisis that was directly related to the exhaustion of the import substitution industrialization –ISI- model implemented by the state.[1]

The mid-seventies' crisis was accompanied by a general redefinition of the regulatory role of the State in society and in the economy. In the context of this

[1] This process is described in detail in D.Azpiazu, E. Basualdo, and M. Khavisse 1986.

redefinition there were important changes in the ground rules that served as a basis to discuss the distribution of the fruits of the productive process (Beccaria 1992).

These changes affected the countries´ social integration mechanisms. Until mid-seventies in Argentina there were at work mechanisms that would guarantee social integration at the urban level. Universal education, high stipends, housing policies, and social security, were some of the mechanisms that granted social welfare for most of the society for over five decades. These processes were supported by a redistributive state, which allowed differentiating Argentinean capitalism and civic society from the ones of other Latin American countries. Progress and upward mobility was a reality for most people. After mid-seventies these mechanisms weakened, and in their place, mechanisms of social exclusion took place.

During the decade of the eighties production remained stagnated, the investment concentrated on the financial sector and the indebtedness continued growing (Salvia and Donza 1996). It was a decade marked by inflation and recession that concluded in a severe crisis that produced hyperinflation and deep economic stagnation. In this decade the social structure of the country was seriously affected. A general impoverishment and the incorporation of new groups to the universe of the excluded and the socially vulnerable was its consequence. The 1970s' economic crisis negatively affected the social structure of Buenos Aires marking the beginning of the residential segregation process. One of the consequences of the crisis was that the 'precarious' settlements and particularly the shantytowns ('villas de emergencia') that had appeared in the 1940s and 50s as a temporary residence for a population that migrated to the city to find a job in the industrial sector, became the permanent habitat of those most excluded by the system.

From the beginning of this 'lost decade' a new urban phenomenon appeared: settlements of people in illegally 'seized' lands ('tomas de tierras'). The lands of these new marginalized settlements, as well as the shantytowns' lands, were illegally occupied. These were fiscal or private lands not available in the market. But despite the shantytowns, the new 'seized'-lands were occupied mostly by Buenos Aires urban residents (not migrants) affected by the mid-seventies economic crises. Unlike the slums, therefore, the seized lands were occupied by impoverished families that somehow jointly decided to seize and occupy the land.

At the beginning of the nineties, the government forced by the crisis of 'autarkic capitalism'[2] switched economic policies. The new policies, of neoliberal inspiration, pointed at privatizing state-owned enterprises, cutting government expenditures, removing price controls, and financial and trade liberalization. After few years of applying these policies, the design of targeted social programs aimed at reducing poverty and providing a social safety net, began also to be part of the new policy agenda (Edwards 1995).

The economic reforms in Argentina, as in many Latin American countries 'have been broad and impressive' (Edwards 1995:313). The economic role of government was reduced, inflation disappeared, and the economy began to open to the rest of the world. However, regressive effects on income distribution, wages, and employment, as already mentioned, accompanied these processes.[3] In this last period, therefore, the gap among

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[2] Waisman labels the ISI model as 'autarkic capitalism' because 'its goal was industrial self-sufficiency' (Waisman 1992:144)

[3] I am not arguing that these regressive effects on income distribution, wages, and on employment were a consequence of the new economic policies. To a large extend they are due to the crisis of the 'autarkic

the households with bigger and with smaller incomes increased. In Argentina, at the beginning of 2000 the unemployment rate, the precariousness of jobs and the drop in wages, generated increased poverty[4], inequality and social exclusion. Social exclusion becomes apparent in a new phenomeno, unknown twenty years ago: social isolation and spatial segmentation. The poor households suffered, therefore, important modifications in the last two decades. These changes were in the direction of worsening their situation.

During the nineties social exclusion mechanisms that had started operating since mid-seventies gained strength. One of the negative effects of these mechanisms that work against social integration is the perpetuation and rigidity of poverty. At the same time there is a process of social fragmentation that increases social marginality. The increasing difficulties of institutions such as the labor market and the State to provide security increase vulnerability and instability.

These process influence on social isolation and manifest themselves in spheres of integration increasingly differentiated. They have territorial correlates marked by the loss of the physical integrity in the city. In Greater Buenos Aires a new periphery is conforming in which the "losers" and the "winners" of the social breaking start occupying segregated spaces. The important expansion of gated neighborhoods and the increase in precarious settlements reflect this process. Social contrasts are accentuated, increasing social distances visibility (Svampa 2001). During the nineties, in short, the process of residential segregation aggravates and consolidates.

---

capitalism' (Waisman 1992). My point here is that whatever their causes, during the 90s poverty, unemployment and regressive income distribution increased.

[4] According to the National Institute of Statistic and Census, for Greater Buenos Aires, in 1985 13,1 percent of the households were below the Poverty Line. From 1994 there is a constant and strong increase of this figure; it passed from 14,2 percent in 1994 to 18,2 percent in 1995, and to 20,1 percent in 1996.

Residential Segregation can be defined as the separation of two or more groups in the urban space. It is the degree of spatial proximity or of territorial agglomeration of families belonging to same social groups (Massey & Denton, 1988). These groups can be defined in ethnic, religious or socioeconomic terms. Due to Buenos Aires social structure characteristics, the process of residential segregation is defined according to a socioeconomic matrix.

Poor settlement dwellers start isolating from the rest of the society, not only as a consequence of residential segregation, but also because of increasing lack of social interaction beyond the marginal area. These inhabitants have rising problems in getting access to jobs and consumption. They also have constrains in obtaining services that guarantee social integration, especially good quality education. Other services such as health, transportation, public security and recreational spaces are appropriated differently in concordance to territorial fragmentation.

My dissertation focuses on those sectors most affected by the process of segregation. I am interested in understanding the consequences of increasing isolation in which an important proportion of the population is forced to live. I pretend to understand how this new kind of isolation affects obtaining resources and the meaning they have to cope with poverty. By analyzing the consequences I also contribute to understand the mechanisms that perpetuate social isolation and residential segregation.

The approach I use to analyze my topic relates two theoretical frameworks. I recourse to the spatial segmentation discussion, and to the theoretical discussion that addresses the set of assets and resources poor people live on to cope with poverty. I am interested in providing evidence of the type and quality of the resources people on

segregated areas count on. I believe that the approach I am using helps to understand some of the most negative effects of the increasing social fragmentation. It contributes to enrich our understanding of urban poverty and some of the mechanisms that support its perpetuation and rigidity in Latin American countries.

By addressing the sorts of adjustments that households make in response to socioeconomic constraints, I aim to lay out some of the breadth and depth of urban poverty change in contexts of faulty welfare state support. I come up with findings, processes, and particularly with concepts that may be useful not only for understanding poverty in Buenos Aires, but in other similar urban contexts. My approach helps to identify and understand new forms of social inequality, specifically those generated by socioeconomic segregation. I hope the findings of the research may help to design best empowering actions and the kind of policy support required to help households cope with poverty.

Objectives of the Research

Main Objective:

To analyze how the degree of residential segregation affects households' survival strategies in contexts of poverty territorial concentration

Specific Objectives:

1. To analyze the characteristics of urban segregation in Greater Buenos Aires.
2. To analyze if and how the degree of neighborhood marginality and segregation affect the courses of action of their residents

a. To analyze if the degree of neighborhood segregation is associated with its residents risk behaviors
b. To analyze how residential segregation influences labor achievements beyond background characteristics

3. To analyze the characteristics households´ **resources** acquire in contexts of social segregation.
    a. To analyze the characteristics *"work"* acquires in terms of:
        i. The characteristics that their jobs acquire, and how their labour insertion is influenced by the fact that they live in segregated areas.
        ii. What occupational strategies they use, and which of them are the most successful ones.
        iii. How the degree of territorial marginality influences in labour achievements.
    b. To analyze the characteristics that *the resources coming from social state programs* acquire in shaping survival strategies in terms of:
        i. The resources to which they have access to; they way they obtain them; how they perceive them; and how they impact in the possibility making ends meet.
        ii. How social policy influences in the conditions and strategies of these households, and specifically in the relationships among dwellers of these neighborhoods.
    c. To describe and analyze how poor households conform *relationships and networks* through which they obtain recourses to make a living in terms of:

i. The role these networks have in copying and overcoming poverty.
ii. The relationship between the degree of socioeconomic segregation and social capital.
iii. The type of relationships these households engage in among themselves, and with "actors" from outside the settlements.
iv. The communal social capital and its relation to the neighborhood's degree of segregation.

4. To describe the characteristics of the "circuits" that allow poor households satisfy their basic need, that is to say that allow them obtain their daily food, clothing, education and recreation. I am interesting in analyzing the relationship between these "circuits" and the degree of neighborhood marginality.

Presenting the Unit of Analysis, the Main Aspects, and Hypotheses

The *units of analysis* of this research are households. I use household to refer to the group of people living under the same roof (residential criterion), which organizes resources collectivelly to carry out income-generating and consumption activities (organizational and social criteria). Household is, therefore a unit of co-residence with a social ingredient derivered from its involvement in survival and reproduction (González de la Rocha 1994: 4). In Argentina, as in many parts of the world, households have a family base, either by consanguinity and/or affiliation through marriage

The main independent variable of this research is the degree of socioeconomic segregation in Greater Buenos Aires. In next Chapter I present a theoretical discussion on

this aspect and the theoretical framework from which I use the concept. I have meassured socioeconomic segregation in three values, considering the type of urban settlement.

Marginalized urban areas ('asentamientos urbanos carenciados') 'are constituted by groups of housing, built by their inhabitants with technical and non-conventional methods, on land that generally has been illegally occupied. They include faulty environmental conditions and deficient urban infrastructure and public services. In these settlements, subgroups of urban inhabitants live under poor conditions, with high levels of risk and unsatisfied basic needs'.[5] Basic needs, such as sanitation, garbage removal, and adequate supplies of clean water, go unmet in these squatter settlements. Many of these settlements are on unsuitable public and private land, subject to periodic floods, landslides, earthquakes, and other natural and man-made disasters (Hardoy 1992).

In Argentina, especially in Greater Buenos Aires, there are *two main types of marginal urban areas*: shantytowns and lands recently 'seized' ('tomas de tierra'). Migrant populations formed shantytowns during the 40s and 50s; the first 'tomas' appeared around the 80s. Native of Buenos Aires formed these new settlements as the result of a joint process of irregular land occupation. The 'seized land' occupants, unlike slum dwellers, respected the urban infrastructure of the area and tried to apply it to the new settlement. They, for example, delimited plots of land for each household (Agostinis, Gazzoli and Pastrana 1990). According to these characteristics, which I will describe more in depth in Chapter 4, I operazionaze socioeconomic segregation in three categories:

[5] I extracted and translated the definition from CEPAL/CNUAH 1987.

a. Shantytowns, which according to their history are the areas with more degree of social segregation. Dwellers in these settlements have higher levels of vulnerability and social marginality.
b. Seize lands “tomas de tierra”, which are precarious settlements that, due to their recent formation, present high levels of social segregation. However their dweller are less vulnerable than those of shantytowns.
c. For those part of my analysis where I wanted to consider areas with low levels of segregation, I identified them as the Greater Buenos Aires Population that live in areas without Unsatisfied Basic Needs.

My main hypothesis is that socioeconomic segregation is a contextual aspect that has great influence in the quality of households´ resources. I argue that the more segregated an area is, the worst quality of their resources. Moreover I argue that segregated areas are related to a process of households’ resources exhaustion. This process goes beyond households members’ backgrounds.

Dependent variables

To prove that the segregation context has an influence that goes beyond background characteristics I introduce two dependent variables: 1.***Risk behaviors***. Two are the indicators of risk behavior selected: a. Children that lag behind at school, and b. Young people 15 to 24 years old that do not study, work or search for work. ***2. Workers income***. For these two variables I perform a multivariable analysis. I analyze the effect of segregation controlling by education. The first part of Chapter 5 presents the first analysis and the last part of Chapter 6 the other multivariable analysis.

My main dependent variable is ***Resources available to the household.*** This aspect is closely related to background characteristics, but it refers specifically to characteristics of the household as a whole. It encompasses:

1. Labor and wages from work ; 2. consumable goods produced at home; 3. income from the market sale of commodities (or petty commodity production and petty commerce); 4. rent (from use or land, animals, etc.); 5. Subsidies received without immediate reciprocal exchange. This category encompasses all the benefits the household as a whole or any of its members receives through *social programs*. 6. Benefits received for belonging to social netwroks. 7. Income generated through 'illegal' activities of any of the household members is also included. Prostitution, drug abuse, smuggling, stealing, etc. are all income-generating activities to which poor settlements dwellers may resort. 8. Human capital (health, education and skills), 9. Natural resources, 10. Time, and 11. Family cohesion. All these resources can be mobilized against vulnerability

I pay particular attention to three of these resources:

a. *Labor*. It is considered in its diverse forms, including formal wage employment, informal work for cash, unpaid labor and subsistence production. They constitute different ways in which individuals and households mobilize their labor power in order to secure their livelihood. I approached "work' in two ways: a. As a resource in itself. Within this approach I characterize labour insertion (occupation, branch of activity. Occupational category, etc.). And, b. The resources, especially monetary ones, and the social benefits labour allow getting access to.

b. Benefits available through *Social Programs*[6]

c. *Social capital* or the group of people's stable relationships. Usually each household member builds these relationships over the years through their participation in different institutional settings (schools, church, sport clubs, etc.). Social networks-, which I will discuss broadly in next chapter-, are an important aspect of social capital. Networks are all the different kind of social 'arrangements' in which the members of the households are involved (Lomnitz 1977). Networks encompass all the reciprocal or asymmetrical social links which household members build with a social constellation of relatives, friends, neighbors, and workmates in which there is circulation of goods, services, information, etc.

Resources have a crucial influence in household survival strategies.[7] The more resourceful a household is the more chances of implementing a successful survival strategy. How households maximize the use of their resources, even if scarce, may have an important impact on survival strategies. I believe that the degree of success of poor households' income generating strategies may be more related to their effectiveness in diversifying the income sources, and maximizing the use of their resources, than to background characteristics of the members of the households. My main argument however, contrary to mainstream approach to survival strategies in Latin America[8], is that segregated areas extremely limit the possibility of using resources and making them meanful to exit

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[6] The agencies providing aid through social programs may be either public or private. Private programs refer to Non Governmental Organizations. Public social programs may exist at the federal, state or city level. Public and private social programs, therefore, refer to income, subsidies, food, clothing, etc. as well as those related to services (day care, education, training, etc.).

[7] I will present and discuss the concept of survival strategies in the first chapter.

[8] Research findings on survival strategies in different Latin American cities argue that poor urban households have been able to tide themselves over periods of economic crises thanks above all, to the implementation of collective and diversified income-generating strategies. Increasing the number and diversity of their sources of incomes (mostly from informal activities) has been the key of success.

poverty. Moreover, in these context households resources tend to exhaust, worsening households´ chances of overcoming poverty.

Circuits for satisfaction of basic needs is my last dependent variable. These are the different channels, social networks and links through which households obtain the resources to live. From these "circuits" I focus on those that allow access to food, clothing, educations and recreation. My hypothesis is that in contexts of increasing socioeconomic segregation the circuits for satisfaction of basic needs reinforce the social isolation of the most vulnerable people. These are circuits that operate as mechanisms that strengthen marginality and social segregation. Chapter 7 analyses this issue.

Graphic I.1 at the end of the chapter summarizes my argument.

Methodology and Data Sources

I resorted to a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The data analyzed came from the following sources:

a. Primary data gathered through a semi-structured questionnaire and In-Depth Interview. I adapted for this purpose a questionnaire designed by the Instituto del Conurbano of the Universtiy of General Sarmiento in 1997. During 2001 I applied the questionnaire to 100 households of four Northwest Greater Buenos Aries settlements randomly selected.

Two of the selected settlements are slums, and the other two, seized lands – "tomas"-. Selecting these two types of settlements is relevant because it allows an approach to degrees of marginality and isolation. It is expectable, as I will argue and

demonstrate in Chapter 4 that slums show greater degrees of marginality than seized lands.

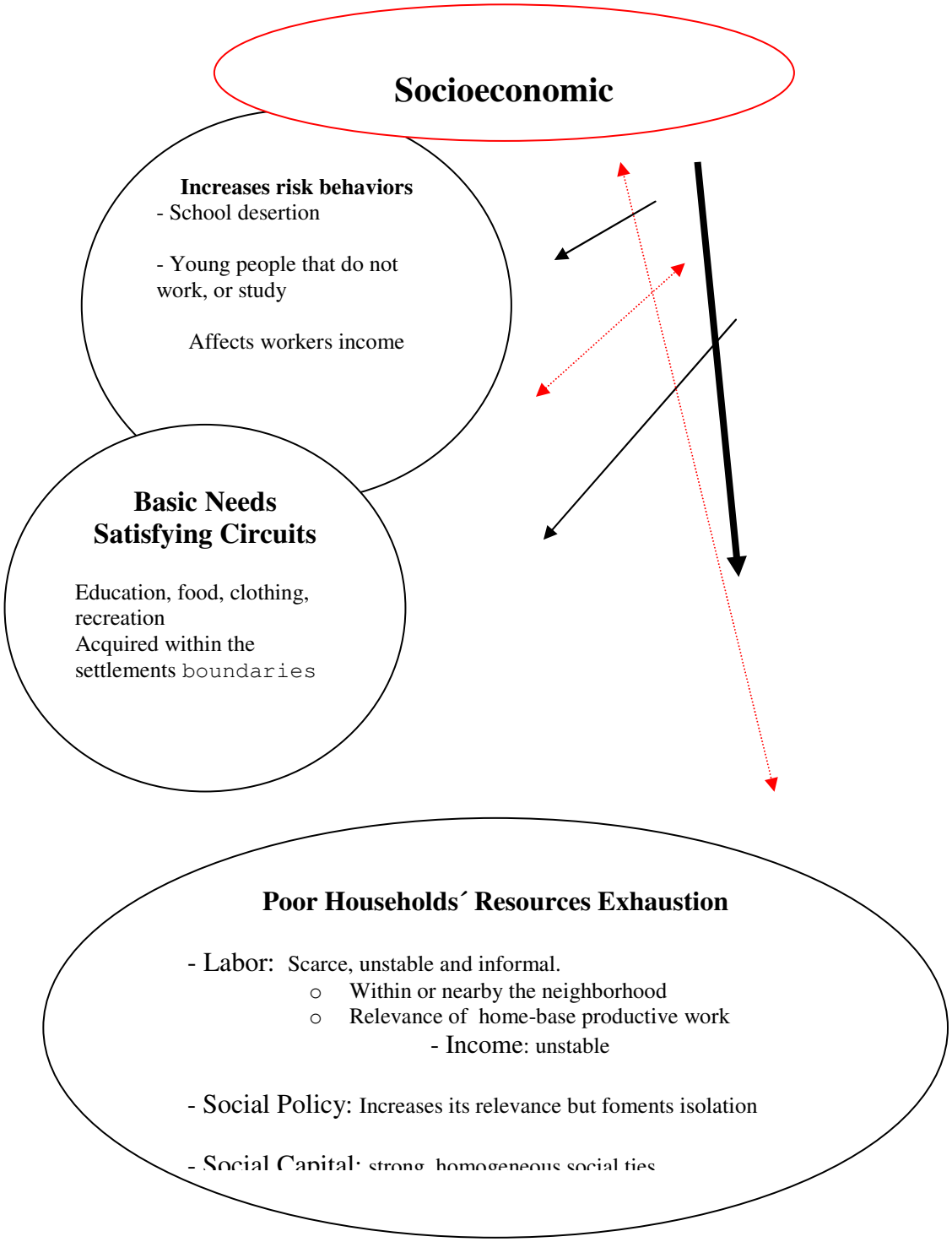
b. I applied 20 life histories to a fifth of my household sample. These households were contacted again with the aim of deepening on the qualitative approach.

c. Secondary data from the Permanent Household Survey –EPH- I processed data from 2001 corresponding to Greater Buenos Aires Agglomerate.

d. Census Data from the last two National Populations Census (1991 and 2001). I used these data to calculate residential segregation indexes for Buenos Aires.

Chapter 2 discusses the methodology used, the data sources I resorted to; their possibility and limitations. I also describe the research stages.

Graphic I.1: Analytical Diagram summarizying the research´s main arguments



CHAPTER 1:

THEORETICAL APPROACH:

RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION AND THE EROSION OF SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

This thesis seeks to contribute to the current debate on the erosion of household survival capabilities within the resources-of-poverty-model. I relate the inadequacy of the model to the territorial segregation processes.

My initial theoretical focus is on my independent variable: residential segregation. Within this discussion, the underclass debate approach offers new potential and sheds light on social processes linked to segregation. I link the territorial segregation process to the notion of the underclass.

I then focus on my dependent variable: survival strategies. The survival-strategy approach has guided many studies that address the understanding Latin American poverty. Among the many survival resources to which households have recourse, I privilege social capital. This decision is based on the importance that studies of survival strategies have given to it. My objective is to build a theoretical frame that supports the main hypothesis of this thesis: in residential segregation settings of marginal and social isolation, household resources are being eroded that strongly limit the possibility of overcoming poverty.

Residential segregation: Concept, Causes and Consequences

This section defines the problem of residential segregation and refers to two approaches adopted to explain its causes. Based on evidence from Latin America, I present the reasons why the ecological rather than individualist models can be viewed as more appropriate for the analysis of socioeconomic segregation. I then discuss why spatial separation of groups is important beyond and above social distances. Spatial processes bring about interaction within and between groups and potential spillovers that affect social outcomes. Finally I relate the process of spatial segregation to the underclass debate.

Residential segregation can be defined as the separation of two or more groups in the urban space or "… the degree to which two or more groups live separately from one another, in different parts of the urban environment" (Massey & Denton, 1988:282). Until the seminal work of W.J. Wilson (1987), the literature had paid more attention to racial and ethnic segregation. Many studies continue to confound race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, and this underestimates the problem of socioeconomic segregation by not considering race. While Latin American cities are fairly racially homogeneous, the aboriginal population is significant in many cases; [9] however, Latin-American ethnic groups are –for the most part- located in rural areas. Yet, the most obvious element that separates the Latin American urban population is class structure. Inequality and poverty levels in Latin America are high, thus, the issue of socioeconomic segregation is much more relevant than racial segregation. Accordingly, this study focuses on the residential

[9] In Bolivia, for instance, more than 80% of the population is estimated to be indigenous

separation of socioeconomic groups, its causes and consequences for the reproduction of poverty.

The two main approaches that epitomize theories of segregation are the individualist and the ecological perspectives. Individualist models explain the formation of homogeneous clusters in urban settings by focusing on individual preferences and decisions. Ecological models stress the proximal and distal contexts that effect individual outcomes.

Individualist models have their roots in economic and rational choice theories. The assumption is that "persons choose the types of people with whom they want to reside" (Borjas, 1998: 251) and that household's choices about where to live are rational, informed decisions. Accordingly, segregation is the rational outcome of peoples' decisions. Economic theory suggests that socioeconomic segregation is the household's rational response to the match between tax services and local expenditures on public goods. Economic man can be seen as a "consumer/voter that picks the community – neighborhood- which best satisfies his preference pattern for public goods" (Tiebout, 1956:418). As a result, poor households concentrate because they have similar preferences for areas with particular spatially characteristics tax burden and service provision.

One of the most influential works feeding the individualist models is the Bid-Rent theory developed by William Alonso (1964). The theory states that household's decisions about where to live are based on the maximization of the budget that combines rent and transportation costs. Longer distances to the city center are associated with higher transportation costs; thus, the higher the amount of money the household needs for

transportation, the lower the amount the households will be willing to pay for rent. In technical words, the bid-rent theory argues that households have preferences given by a set of indifference curves that shape the "bid-rent function". This function represents "the set of prices for land the individual could pay at various distances (from the city center) while deriving a constant level of satisfaction" (Alonso, 1964:59). Each point of this bid prices curve reflects the sum that a household is willing to pay for a dwelling depending on its locations and size.

Alonso´s formulation explains why near the city center, space is more limited than in the suburbs. Bid Rent theory also explains why higher income households usually locate in the suburbs: it stipulates that high income households in US metropolitan areas are willing to pay higher transportation costs in exchange for larger spaces that are less expensive in the suburban. The apparent paradox of disadvantaged minorities living near the city center where land prices are much higher is a rational response to household preferences: as income increases, desire for space also increases and it does so more than the desire for saving in transport costs. High income households outbid low income families pushing them to locations in which no other households outbid them –usually in the city center.

The problem emerges when sources of employment starts to follow the middle and upper classes to the suburbs (Wilson, 1987), leaving low income households isolated and jobless. According to Alonso´s theory, the creation of multiple business centers dispersed in the suburbs should replicate the biding process. However, the theory has been unable to explain the creation of an underclass that has not been able to move out from isolated areas. Alonso´s theory neither explains why high levels of segregation often

contradict individual preferences for diversity (Zhang, 2004). Using game theory, individualist models have tried to explain this contradiction by arguing that the aggregation of individuals' motives might generate contradicting outcomes (Schelling, 1978).

Empirically, households with different characteristics tend to concentrate spatially because of different reasons. Bayer et al (2003) found that for American cities, education accounts for 37% of the segregation among Hispanics, 8% among blacks, 7% among whites, and 1% among Asians. Although these authors focus on ethnic/racial rather than on socioeconomic segregation, they assume that residential segregation is mainly the result of the household decisions. In the Latin American context, Gilbert (1998) argues that –other than race and ethnicity- housing consumption is determined by differentials in income, education, occupation and access to credit. Hence, low income households are short of affordable housing solutions and tend to be pushed to areas where there is a concentration of poverty.

The main difference between Bayer et al´s and Gilbert´s explanations of segregation is that the former stresses demand pressures whereas the latter highlights supply influences in shaping segregation outcomes. In other words, models based on individuals have failed to recognize that the process of residential sorting is affected by contextual factors.

Ecological Models of Segregation. The central question of this approach is why a segment of the population is being pushed into and isolated in urban areas. According to the ecological model, residential sorting is mainly affected by restrictions on household decisions imposed by environment. In Marcue and Van Kempers words, the "patterns of

segregation and concentration change as a consequence of the interaction of household decisions with a variety of structures and development on different spatial levels" (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2000:5).

As the urbanization process unfolds, land becomes scarce leading to price increases in areas of higher demand. Thus, rather than the result of rational household decisions, residential segregation is mostly related to the restrictions imposed by two sources: the market and the public sector (Kein, 2004; Ward, 1998, 2001; Gilbert, 1994). On the one hand, formal housing is expensive and time consuming to obtain, and is often unavailable for a large segment of the population (Gilbert, 1996, Ward, 1988, Sabatini, 2003). On the other hand, public housing, eviction and gentrification policies have directly or indirectly helped to create clusters of poverty.

Some housing polices have explicitly contributed to the segregation of the poor. For- example, in Latin America, , the 1976-1980 eviction policies moved all of the Buenos Aires slum dwellers to poor areas of Greater Buenos Aires. Another example were the eviction policies of Augusto Pinochet between 1979-1985 that moved thirty thousand Chilean families form the city center and the wealthy area of northeastern Santiago towards ill-serviced zones at the periphery of the city. These policies were aimed at homogenizing the city´s districts in order to facilitate targeting a group (Morales, 1989:226); however, the initiated the current large scale level of segregation. At the same time, urban policies reflected the view that land was not to be considered "scarce". Urban land was left entirely unregulated which allowed the market to satisfy bidder demands, but not particularly the poor (Sabatini, 2002). This is one of the reasons

why –as it was previously mentioned- the poor in Latin America face a shortage of affordable housing options, mostly within the private sector.

Public housing policies have been detrimental for the spatial integration of the poor. Besides being mostly located in isolated areas of the city, social housing implies the eradication of the low income housing from their old informal homesteads.

Low income households have found the solution in the informal market. Lack of affordable private housing and poor quality of social housing has brought about a large contingency of households relying in self-help housing located mainly in the peripheries of the cities. The high legitimacy of informal economy in Latin American reinforces the presence of informal solutions: "The state has generally allowed informality to proceed, and neither dirigist interventions nor widespread public housing provision have come to shape the city fabric" (Ward, 2001:1). The formation of informal homestead subdivisions in the peripheries of the city segregates and isolates the poor.

Social Isolation. Spatial and Social Distances, and Group Interaction

Socioeconomic segregation has an important spatial component. Since segregation relates to the physical distance between different groups, it suggests the extent to which elements in this group –individuals, households, schools, etc.- interact with one another and how spatial propinquity facilitates and shapes this interaction (Anselin, 2001). In this sense, the underlying assumption that gives substance to the study of the consequences of segregation is that spatial separation prevents "interaction" between groups. In the literature, however, this assumption is only implicit. Obviating the link between segregation and interaction generates confusion about the role of social

distances and the relevance of spatial distance in the analysis of interaction between groups.

Segregation is a much more complex phenomenon than the simple distribution of the population in space. Segregation includes distances generated by subtle socio-cultural barriers that prevent interaction. Social and cultural differences, historical disputes, and economic barriers prevent interaction between groups. Some argue that interactions based on spatial and social proximity are correlated (White, 1983); however, many others (Sabatini, 2004; Reardon and Firebaugh, 2002, Arriagada and Rodriguez, 2003) argue that, strictly speaking, nothing guarantees that potential interaction coming from spatial propinquity is not hindered by social barriers.

A complex definition of segregation that accounts for the spatial and non-spatial aspects of segregation has been proposed by Reardon and Firebaugh (2002) as a "concern with the social distance between members of different groups… based on spatial locations, social institutions –such a schools, organizations, or occupations- social networks, or other aspects of the social terrain" (Reardon and Firebaugh, 2002:85). These authors realize that interaction among social groups has many causes other than physical distances. The authors' definition of segregation refers to the probability of interaction between different groups where interaction depends upon social distances between subjects that are attached to a particular space.

The blurring of social and spatial distances tends to confuse the definition of segregation with its causes. This confusion is crystal clear in Reardon and Firebaugh´s definition. The definition of segregation that blurs social and spatial distances creates methodological and theoretical problems.

In a caste society, for instance, social segregation may be absolute even if spatial segregation is minimal (White, 1983). Yet social and physical distances are often correlated. Children in a play ground just want to play –and interact- because they happen to be sharing the same space. They are often not aware of the social distances between them. When the unpredictable and unstable relationship between social distance and physical distance varies in time, we still lack a comprehensive measure of segregation. Social network theory is one way we could measure social distances; however it disregards space as a facilitator of interaction when overt social interaction is absent.

The conception that –under certain circumstances- space is not relevant for interaction (Arriagada and Rodriguez, 2003) reflects a gap in the literature. This conception challenges the ecological perspective where space is conceived as more than a scenario in which people interact. Secondly, it restricts the concept of interaction to social propinquity. I will refer to these issues in turn.

According to ecological models, space is not merely a setting for individual action. Space is a "social construction that shapes social action and guides behavior" (Fox, 2003:723). Space is a social construction because its material characteristics and meaning are the product of social relations. A particular neighborhood, for instance, is identified by inhabitants as a space with particular characteristics while attributing other characteristics to other spaces. As Kevin Fox puts it, "Spatial boundaries, identities and meanings are negotiated, defined and produces though social interaction, social conflict and struggles between different groups" (Fox 2003: 723).

Space shapes social action inasmuch as it situates actors in a material reality that

makes sense in relation to other actors´ material reality. The relative material situation of actors embedded in the space they inhabit affects the way in which people relate to one another (Gottednier, 1994, Harvey 1989). Space, therefore, affects the way individuals behave (Fox 2003) and their ability to shape their own lives (Sabatini 2004).

Stated in other terms, socioeconomic segregation can be seen as a cause and consequence of the lack of opportunities, a feeling of being isolated from the mainstream and the inability to achieve social mobility aspirations through institutionalized channels (Kaztman 2001). Spatial separation acts like a structural constraint that affects the individual's perception of his/her future.

Geographic proximity and social proximity can be viewed as mirroring different types of contact between groups. Affirming that, in a caste society for example, spatial proximity does not matter reflects the underlying assumption that the concept of interaction is being restricted to cooperative, face to face, intimate relationships associated with social propinquity. Spatial proximity can affect human behavior, including functional, business-like relationships, simple awareness of other groups, and even social tensions between groups (Fox 2003). In part, a cast society survives in time because one caste is aware of the other and because spatial propinquity facilitates the reproduction of this awareness from one generation to the next.

The present research assumes that spatial separation reduces interaction among groups, whereas spatial propinquity reshapes the interaction between groups. When the spatial distribution of the population changes –for instance when the scale of segregation declines- the forms of interaction also change which may well affect social outcomes.

Another approach views the social capital of household resources as increasing their vulnerability and isolation. After presenting aspects of survival strategies, I will return to this discussion.

Concentrated Inner-City Poverty and the Underclass Debate: 'Cultural' versus Structural Approaches

The residential segregation process is closely related to a particular kind of poverty: concentrated inner-city poverty. My research is restricted to a particular type of poverty, that *of* the city (Geisse 1992). Poverty *of* the city is closely related, yet analytically different from poverty *in* the city. The latter is 'manifested in high levels of unemployment, low income, precarious health conditions, lack of social security, low levels of education, and the like' (Geisse 1992: 213). Poverty *of* the city is manifested in the lack of access, or reduced access to resources that are characteristically urban: urban land, services (such as sewers, running water, electrical and gas lines, transportation), and employment centers (Geisse 1992: 213). These areas of concentrated poverty are inhabited by what has been labeled as the 'urban underclass'. Residential segregation and urban underclass are closely related. I will highlight some aspects of the underclass debate that I believe are particularly useful for my research.

Even though the 'underclass' definition is ambiguous it refers to a relatively new phenomenon of concentrated poverty in big cities. The term popularly connotes people who are mired in poverty and unable to overcome it. The underclass is distinguished, therefore, from the working class principally by its lack of mobility.

Over the last three decades, two approaches, particularly in the United States, have dominated the discussion on the underclass: the *culturalist* and structural understandings. These two approaches have divergent visions of the social order; in each, the concept of poverty, and also the qualitative threshold that distinguishes it from non-poverty is different. In the former, poverty is perceived mainly in the domain of moral attributes and behavior. In the latter the emphasis is placed on structural conditions or event chains that condition life chances largely independently of individual will and moral attributes.

The *culturalist views* argue that aberrant individuals or cultures cause poverty and that poor persons bear a significant responsibility for their condition. Cultural explanations for the underclass can be traced to the work of Oscar Lewis (1961), who identified a 'culture of poverty' that he felt promoted patterns of behavior inconsistent with socioeconomic advancement. According to Lewis, this culture originated in endemic unemployment and chronic social immobility, and provided an ideology that allowed poor people to cope with feelings of hopelessness and despair that arose because their chances for socioeconomic success were remote. In individuals' lack of impulse control, a strong present-time orientation, and little ability to defer gratification typified this 'culture.' Among families, it yielded an absence of childhood, an early initiation into sex, a prevalence of free marital unions, and a high incidence of abandonment of mothers and children.

Although Lewis explicitly connected the emergence of these cultural patterns to structural conditions in society, he argued that once the culture of poverty was established it became an independent cause of persistent poverty. D. Moynihan (1965) further

elaborated this idea. In his study of the plight of the black family, Moynihan came to the conclusion that 'it would be troubling indeed to learn that until several years ago employment opportunities made a great deal of difference in the rate of Negro dependency and family disorganization, but that the situation has so deteriorated that the problem is now feeding on itself -that measures which ones would have worked will henceforth not work so well, or work at all' (Moynihan, 1965: 157). Although Moynihan's speculation emerged from a liberal perspective, ironically, his pessimistic concern has since become a cornerstone of the neoconservative opposition to liberal-sponsored government intervention on behalf of black urban poor people. In the United States, when these ideas were transmitted through the press, both popular and scholarly, the connection between culture and economic structure was somehow lost, and the argument was popularly perceived to be that 'people were poor because they had a defective culture'. This position was later explicitly adopted by conservative researchers, who argued that low-income culture -with its limited time horizon, impulsive need for gratification, and psychological self-doubt - was primarily responsible for persistent urban poverty. Moynihan believed that these cultural traits were largely imported, arising primarily because cities attracted low-income migrants. Even though his argument did not mention directly the black population, it was clearly used against people of color.[10]

[10] During the late 1970s, conservative theorists increasingly captured public attention by arguing that the creation of the underclass was rooted in the liberal welfare state. The central character in this debate is C. Murray (1984), who argues on the basis of rational choice theory that generous welfare benefits made it 'profitable for the poor to behave in the short term in ways that were destructive in the long term' (p.9). According to Murray, the 1960s' federal antipoverty programs altered the incentives governing the behavior of poor men and women. Welfare reduced the desirability of marriage for poor women, increased the benefits of unwed childbearing, and lowered the attractiveness of low-wage labor for poor men. As a result, male joblessness increases, rates of single motherhood rose, and female-headed families proliferated.

In sum, from these *culturalist* approaches it can be concluded that the term 'underclass', constitutes a new version of 'blaming the victim', and generally its use tends to imply that the explanation for their problems lies with the pathological behavior of those who experience them. Moreover, by focusing on the exclusion of the underclass from mainstream society, it disconnects their problems from those of other social groups.

On the other side of the debate, the *conflict/structural approach* holds that poverty is a deficit of integration existing independently of the will and behavior of the poor. In this approach, there is a direct link between the configuration of an underclass and the ecological understanding of the segregation process. The argument states there is a structural fissure in society, which should be repaired through intervention to restore to the poor opportunities for social achievement equal to those enjoyed by other subjects.

In William J. Wilson's influential approach, the concept of underclass derives its meaning from a theoretical framework that links structural, socio-psychological, and cultural arguments. He argues that the disappearance of work, and the consequence of that disappearance for both social and cultural life are the central problems in the inner-city ghetto (Wilson 1996). He strongly emphasized the increasing importance of class over race for understanding the social and economic problems facing blacks.[11] This

[11] In *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987), Wilson analyses the underclass formation in the US. He argued that persistent urban poverty stemmed primarily from the structural transformation of the inner-city economy. The decline of manufacturing, the suburbanization of employment, and the rise of a low-wage service sector dramatically reduced the number of city jobs that paid wages sufficient to support a family, which led to high rates of joblessness among minorities and a shrinking pool of 'marriageable' men (those financially able to support a family). Marriage thus became less attractive to poor women, unwed childbearing increased, and female-headed families proliferated. Blacks suffered disproportionaly from these trends because, owing to past discrimination, they were concentrated in locations and occupations particularly affected by economic restructuring. Wilson argued that these economic changes were accompanied by an increase in the spatial concentration of poverty within black neighborhoods. This new geography of poverty, he felt, was enabled by the civil rights revolution of the 1960s, which provided middle-class blacks with new opportunities outside the ghetto. The out-migration of middle-class families

argument puts him in a very different position from those other authors as Glasgow, Massey and Denton, who also reject the culturalist approaches to underclass, but still believe that race is the main factor in urban underclass.[12]

In Wilson's usage, the concept of underclass can be theoretically applied not only to all racial and ethnic groups, but also to different societies. He argues that in the United States, the concept will more often refer to minorities because the white poor seldom live in extreme poverty or ghetto areas. However there is nothing in the definition that restricts its application to nonwhite persons. Moreover, in other societies, the combination of weak labor-force attachment[13] and social isolation[14] may exist in certain urban environments without the same level of concentrated poverty inherent in American ghettos.

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from ghetto areas left behind a destitute community lacking the institutions, resources, and values necessary for success in post-industrial society. The urban underclass thus arose from a complex interplay of civil rights policy, economic restructuring, and a historical legacy of discrimination.

[12] The conceptual framework of D. Glasgow's (1980) study holds that structural factors in the organization of American society are directly or indirectly responsible for the development of the underclass. Further, he argues that institutional racism first initiates and later supports the exclusion of Black from the normal paths of achievement and fulfillment. He also argues that market dynamics, when coupled with institutional racism, account for the disproportionate number of young Black shut off from mainstream opportunity and represent a major force propelling Blacks into the underclass. In his view, the persistence of black inner city poverty stems from the systematic failure of American institutions -the school, the courts, the welfare system, the economy, the government - to address the desperate needs of poor blacks. He argues that bureaucratic practice motivated by racism act to maintain blacks in poverty and perpetuate their underclass position.

[13] Wilson views weak labor-force attachment as a structural concept set in a theoretical framework that explains the vulnerability of certain groups to joblessness. The concept signifies the marginal position of some people in the labor force because of limited job opportunities or limited access to informal job network systems (Wilson 1993: .20)

[14] Social isolation implies that contact between groups of different class and/or racial backgrounds is either lacking or has become increasingly intermittent and that the nature of this contact enhances the effects of living in a highly concentrated poverty area. Unlike the concept of the culture of poverty, the notion of social isolation does not postulate that ghetto-specific practices become internalized, take on life of their own, and therefore continue to influence behavior even if opportunities of mobility improve. Rather it suggests that reducing structural inequalities would not only increase the frequency of these practices but also make their transmission by precept less efficient (Wilson 1993: 5).

Structuralist understandings of poverty argue that the concentration of poverty has negative effects on households' survival strategies because structural factors limit the possibility of ghetto dwellers to access formal job network systems, thus increasing the probability of access to the most precarious and informal jobs. On the other hand, approaches framed within the 'culture of poverty' perspective would argue that the impact is negative because poor settlements reinforce and promote patterns of behavior inconsistent with socioeconomic advancement.

The cultural versus the structural debate has highlighted important aspects related to concentrated urban poverty. However, a simplistic debate confronting these two arguments 'has impeded the development of a broader theoretical context from which to examine questions raised by continuing debate on the rise of inner-city dislocations' (Wilson 1991 :1). Urban ethnographers, in fact, have shown that neither of these views is adequate. Inner city ethnographers have shown that structural circumstances inevitably have cultural consequences and that cultural consequences of poverty only make sense within the structural circumstances in which they exist.[15] Most of these ethnographers,

[15] Daniel Dohan (2003) cites some of the recent ethnographies that support the argument that structural circumstances have cultural consequences (E. Anderson 1999; Patillo-McCoy 1998; Duneier 1999; and Bourgois 1995). I will summarize Dohan's presentation of these ethnographers' arguments. Elijah Anderson shows how deindustrialization supported the emergence of a public drug culture and a change in role models that has forced all ghetto residents to adopt a 'streetwise' public persona and thus condition themselves to the routine use of violence (Anderson 1999). Mary Patillo-McCoy's study of a non-poor neighborhood in Chicago shows that racial segregation means that the African-American middle class can not isolate itself from the dislocations of the ghetto. She argues that the lack of parity between middle-class blacks and whites is partly explained by the fact that "unlike most whites, middle-class black families must contend with the crime, dilapidated housing, and social disorder in the deteriorating poor neighborhood in the city and suburbs." This means that young people in middle-class ghettos can easily be torn between the right path of steady adult employment and the wrong path of the "showy drug dealers and cocky gang members who make dabbling in deviance look fun" (Patillo-McCoy 1998: 6). Duneier describes a culture surrounding sidewalk vending in Greenwich Village that is connected in myriad ways to the structural-economic circumstances of the communities where they grew up and of the New York metropolis in general (Duneier 1999). Philippe Bourgois' study of crack dealers in Spanish Harlem provides a micro-

with whom I agree, however, have criticized conventional structural and cultural theories without being able to build new theory. A way to address this challenge is to focus on inner-city neighborhood household survival strategies. By focusing on how on their everyday life households cope with poverty and try to make a living, it is possible to grasp the patterned responses of households in local contexts to macro-economic and institutional forces. By doing so, one is able to understand that those patterned responses and adaptations are shaped both by structural and 'cultural' factors. Structure and meaningful responses to 'external' factors are constantly interacting. This dynamic is neatly captured in a recent excellent research in which Sudhir A. Venkatesh (2000) tries to understand how the dwellers of the poor Chicago Robert Taylor community met their needs by dealing with a complex web of social institutions. Venkatesh argues that what "formed in the Robert Taylor Homes was a complex 'social economy', that is systematic patterns of exchange of goods and services that had spatial, institutional, and cultural dimensions and so were more than simple 'adaptations', that is, mechanical behavioral responses to poverty. Throughout the community, the flowering underground economy affirmed social relationships... by creating patterns of obligation, reciprocity, and expectation among tenants. Conversely, the established networks and associations facilitated the introduction and consolidation of material and social exchange among individuals, households, and buildings. As this burgeoning economy created social problems, tenants responded with strategies to restore safety and security, sometimes effectively, sometimes not" (Venkatesh, 2000: 105).

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level view of how structural-economic decline can spawn a local cultural order that is able both to withstand and provoke a shocking amount of social suffering (Bourgois 1995).

To finish this section I want to argue that a critical question when dealing with persistent inner-city poverty is the following; how can we build a framework for understanding patterns of poverty at a very local level that themselves may be shaped by forces emanating from the larger society? Local behavior is often said to be shaped by abstract forces, such as shifts in the 'market' and the restructuring of 'global capitalism'. To study this interaction in a practical way is a daunting task. In order to address the study of households belonging to specific communities characterized by a concentration of poverty (like the four poor neighborhoods in which I focus my research), the challenge becomes how best to approach the experience of these households such that we do not reduce them to passive victims of abstract notions like "larger social forces?" Nor see them as wholly responsible for their fate and their circumstances that is, uninfluenced by larger structures?

Survival Strategies. From the Resources of Poverty Model to the Poverty of Resources Model

There is a large body of literature in the work of historians, sociologists, and anthropologists dealing with household strategies. The concept of family and household strategies has been used by some historians as "a way to move away from individual-level motivation... [and as] a reaction to some uses of modernization theory that denied instrumental rationality to poor people because of their lack of resources and power... [and as a way] to show families as actors, not passive objects of economic, demographic, and political processes" (Tilly 1987). Other historians have used the term strategy to emphasize the process of resources becoming available to the family and its members,

and the use and management of those resources (Anderson 1980). Anderson also emphasizes people's capacity to actively respond to structural constraints and, therefore, the existence of both constrains and options. Hareven (1982), on the other hand, discusses the existence and confrontation of collective and individual interests in shaping the process of family work strategies.

Anthropologists and sociologists have also participated in this discussion, both in Latin America and in Europe (less so in the United States). Most of the early studies within a household strategy approach have centered on the analysis of the participation of household members in the labor market and the organization that underlies economic participation. The analysis of the household division of labor, and the capacity to reach the extra-household environment through the intensification of work and social arrangements (household structure and use of networks, among others) were essential elements of these studies (Duque and Pastrana 1973; Schmink 1979; 1982).

Survival Strategies. Latin American Approaches during the Eighties and Nineties

Survival strategies research was developed within the framework of the growing productive crises that has affected most Latin American economies since the middle seventies. This economic context restrained social integration processes. Due to economic restructuring, and the lack of an adequate State response, the poorest domestic units have developed their own mechanisms, behaviors and relationships to achieve their reproduction by devising their own strategies. The concept of survival strategy focused on understanding how households who found themselves in a socially marginal position, managed to reproduce socially. Research on survival strategies have been helpful in

clarifying how domestic units were affected by changes in the economy, social policies, and how they coped with these changes.

The development of the concept of survival strategies in Latin America has become useful in understanding a series of phenomena and issues related to situations that old classic concepts could not understand and that were analyzed within the theoretical concept of "marginality". The concept soon became an irreplaceable heuristic tool to show the apparently illogical but pragmatically effective behavior of poor people to survive and reproduce (Forni 1988).

At the end of the 70s, PISPAL[16] and the CLACSO Population and Development Organization initially developed research within this framework, and many subsequent studies[17] were developed to understand survival strategies.[18] These studies focused on trying to understand how domestic units manage to socially reproduce in adverse socio-economic contexts. Survival strategy research permitted the clarification of how

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[16] PISPAL is the Latin American Demographic Research Program

[17] Based on the PISPAL arguments, there has been important research on survival strategies. Some of these studies are: - Duque y Pastrana 1973 "Las estrategias de supervivencia económica de las unidades familiares del sector popular urbano: una investigación exploratoria. Santiago de Chile. FLACSO (mimeo); - Lomnitz, L. 1975 *Cómo sobreviven los marginados*. México siglo XXI; Arguello, O. 1981 "Delimitación del concepto de estrategias de supervivencia y sus vínculos con la investigación socio'demográfica" In *Demografía y Economía*, vol. XV, nro. 46. México. El colegio de México; - Borsotti, C. 1981 "La organización social de la reproducción de los agentes sociales, las unidades familiares y las estrategias" In *Demografía y Economía*, op. cit; - Torrado, S. 1981 "Sobre los conceptos de Estrategias de vida y Proceso de reproducción de la fuerza de trabajo. Notas teórico-metodológicas" en *Demografía y Economía* op. cit; - Cariola, Cecilia –Coord. *Sobrevivir en la pobreza: el fin de una ilusión* Cendes Editorial Nueva Sociedad; Schmink, M. 1984 "Household economic strategies: Review and research agenda" En *Latin American Research Review*, vol 19. Albuqueque. University of New México; - Hintz, S. 1989 *Estrategias alimentarias de sobrevivencia. Un estudio de caso en el gran Buenos Aires*. Vol. I y II. Buenos Aires. CEAL; - Roberts, B. 1996 "Estrategias familiares, pobreza urbana y prácticas ciudadanas. Un análisis comparativo". In *Anuario de Estudios Urbanos*; - González de la Rocha, Mercedes (1994) *The resources of poverty: women and survival in a Mexican city*, Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell; among other studies

[18] More recently the World Bank developed a theoretical and methodological framework within the survival strategy approach. Its aim is to orient research on survival strategies within a qualitative approach. The Work Bank approach relies on analytical tools from the management of risks for multiple actors proposed by Gillespie (2000), de Ferranti et al (2000), and Holzmann and Jorgensen (2000). They argue that the poor are more vulnerable than the rest because they usually are more exposed to risk and have less means to overcome it.

domestic units affected by the economy and public policy changes faced adverse situations.

The main theoretical and methodological aspects of the approach made by ¨PISPAL¨ can be summarized as follows: [19]

a. Life strategies are the arrangements and procedures implemented by social agents in order to achieve their reproduction by improving their existing material and non- material conditions (Torrado, 1981).

b. The type of reproduction strategies implemented is conditioned by the country's development style, which determines the market characteristics of work and consumption, namely, State action and population living conditions (Rodriguez, 1981).

c. *Survival* strategies, unlike life strategies, refers only to specific socioeconomic groups: those excluded by the existing regional development style. (Arguello 1981).

d. The different aspects, dimensions or components of survival strategies can be included in three fields: socioeconomic, demographic and cultural. For the socioeconomic field, the main elements are related to activities for obtaining goods and services to satisfy family needs. These activities imply, among other aspects, forms of insertion in productive structures and in jobs in general; a work organization unit; the ways and sources of unit consumption; the network structure of the exchange of goods and services; and the structure of mutual assistance networks or non-family cooperation.

For the cultural field, special significance is given to values and rules that support the attitudes and behavior displayed to acquire and maintain goods and services, such as

[19] The presentation of the main theoretical and methodological aspects of the survival strategies model have been compiled in the Spanish Journal *Demografía y Economía*, vol XV, nro. 46. México. 1981 It is a publication entirely dedicated to the new approach that was emerging at that time. It publishes the most relevant studies currently done in Latin American.

task assignments when organizing jobs in and outside domestic units, women's role, etc. Within demographic research, life strategy studies include subjects such as structure of family units, and their characteristics regarding sex, age, birthrate, marital status of couples, mortality, migrations (mainly job-related), etc. (Moreno and Pok, 1985).

e. The survival strategies guide lines are performed in specific circuits known as ¨ Circuits for the satisfaction of basic needs ¨. These include a diversity of units, agents, processes, practices, flows and interchange that constitute more or less fragile systems. Circuits for the satisfaction of basic needs can be recognized as ¨socio-organizational¨ models (Borsotti, 1981). Through these circuits, the different social sectors channel the total demand for each type of good and service (food, health, clothing, housing, etc…).

f. An interesting concept, which allowed enhanced the understanding of the "Circuits for satisfaction of basic needs" mentioned above is that of *interchange networks* that take place in ecologically marginal areas. These networks directly influence strategies to obtain goods and services and devising occupational strategies. These networks work as a collective protecting structure for the social and economic survival of marginal people (Lomnitz, 1975, 1991). Goods and services that are the key reciprocal interchange of networks have economic importance mainly because they provide a. Information (finding a job, house, how to migrate, etc.) b. Different types of labor assistance, for instance learning a skill (also, many networks known for offering their own jobs). c. Loans of food, money, clothes, tools and a wide variety households items for general use. d. A wide scope of services including, housing construction and maintenance, daily carrying of drinking water, different kind of help, and taking care of

others' children. e. Moral support, since these networks develop solidarity mechanisms (Lomnitz, 1975, 1991).

g. The different study of possible rationales behind reproduction strategies assumes that such strategies do not necessarily require or exclude the claim that family behavior follows rational behavior patterns that are deliberately oriented toward obtaining the reproductive objectives of the family group. In any case, the logic behind these strategies can be built or re-built through research processes, and assumes underlying behavioral consistency even though people are not aware of it.

The above issues permit us to state that according to the analytical perspective developed by PISPAL, poor urban sectors adopt strategies (though aware or not) to satisfy their needs for food, housing, clothing, education, health, etc. The domestic units can be said to produce or select "satisfactors" to achieve their reproduction through a combination of activities (Hintze 1989:20).

G. A. Cornia (1987) has proposed three categories to regroup households' life strategies: 1. Strategies for resource generation, for example increasing the supply of jobs, increasing income producing activities to survive and augment transference flows. 2. Strategies to improve utilization of existing resources; these strategies are usually linked to changes in the way goods and services are used and changes in food habits. 3. Strategies linked to household composition, changes and migration.

Considerable research on household reproduction strategies have shown that households with fewer resources have to perform a combination of the three strategies mentioned above. These strategies ¨manage reproduction in the units based on different types of adaptations¨ (Margulis 1988). Family strategies, therefore, are part of the ¨well

differentiated practices, through which individuals and their families tend, whether conscious or not, to keep or increase their patrimony and therefore to maintain or improve their position in the class-related structure¨ (Bourdieu 1993:22). The theoretical diversity of the concept of survival strategies, as used by the PISPAL approach, permitted the establishment of connections between family behavior and societal functions.

PISPAL´s proposal emphasizes action and agency in contexts of social exclusion. It is an approach that objects to economic determinism based on inexorable laws. In its most radicalized expression,[20] it emphasizes the capacity of social reproductive action to give an alternative explanation for social change. It also states that structural restrictions offer options which contribute to the process of reproduction and social development.

The asset-vulnerability approach

The "asset vulnerability approach" was developed by the World Bank, but it differs widely from the one this same Organization developed for Risk Management. The approach has many things in common with the PISPAL perspective. C. Moser, who worked out this perspective, studies poor people and in particular investigates the nature of resources that leads them to reduce their vulnerability to risk situations. Her studies focus on the "asset portfolio" of households and their capability to cope with poverty in critical situations. The asset portfolio, as defined by Moser, includes the possession and control or ability of material or symbolic resources that would allow individuals to act in

[20] I am referring to the Perspective of the Popular Urban Economy -Economía Popular Urbana- as it has been framed by J.L. Coraggio (1996) and L. Razzeto (1996).

society. The possession of financial, human, physical and social capital comprises the main components of asset portfolios approach (Moser 1998).

To summarize, the theoretical-methodological assumptions of studies analyzing mechanisms and arrangements linked to resource generation are the following:

1. The domestic unit is capable of pooling monetary or non monetary resources.[21]

2. Domestic units obtain their income from different sources and through a combination of domestic strategies.

3. When monetary income is lacking, households have to adapt or complement it with other types of income.

The idea of *existing resources* as a strategic tool of households is important since they are the ways in which a domestic task is organized, (giving rise to family division of labor). These are practices that groups develop with domestic family resources (Pahl 1984). Hence, we get the idea of a multiplicity of resources in the hands of the poor, through which they perform income generating activities. These resources include work in exchange for salary, the sale and consumption of homemade goods and services for the family, unpaid domestic jobs, the use of limited state assistance and aid, and social resources coming from the flow of goods and services within family, friends, neighbors and godparents. In the present research, I focused on work as a resource itself and as a way of obtaining resources; resources obtained through social assistance programs and from social capital.

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[21] Non-monetary income comes from state transferences. They can come from the public system of goods and services, the availability of transportation, housing, health and education. The social policies and the social benefits that the State gives through social programs are one of the most important mechanisms though which non-monetary resources are distributed.

Shortcomings of the Classical Model of Survival Strategies

The resources-of- poverty approach has contributed to our understanding of the dynamics of poverty in relation to its reproduction, as well as to its contribution to self-improvement. When opening the "black box" of poor households and considering them as active agents in overcoming their situation, this research encouraged reviewing the reasoning behind their resource production and their mobilization.

Nevertheless, the approach has shortcomings and has received some criticism. I will focus here on three of these criticisms: 1. The model underestimate internal household conflict when planning how to use their resources; 2. The poor relation between household resources and the broad opportunity structure offered by the labor market, the State and society; and 3. Not addressing the existence of a hierarchy among resources – resources coming from steady jobs can not be comparable to, for example, jobs coming from social networks – and therefore assuming that the resources possessed are endless.

In what follows, I will address each of these criticisms in more detail. I would like to focus on the third criticism, since this thesis has enough empirical evidence to support it. One resource survival strategies research considered as stable is social capital. My hypothesis is that resources become eroded, and their exhaustion negatively affects the vulnerability level of households.

Family Strategies: Are there Domestic Units without Intra-Household Conflict?

When studying strategies developed by families to achieve their reproduction in the best way, many works assume that there is an internal household rationality, and that

the ¨decisions¨ made or their manner of acting reflects a degree of ¨family consent¨. Such a degree of cooperation is a variable that many works on life strategies have not dealt with sufficiently. Households are more than agglomerations of individuals. 'Households', as social entities within and through which people live significant segments of their lives, share their most intimate activities. They rely on strong social/emotional support for coping with the harsh realities of survival. This support serves as a critical connecting link between the micro and macro levels of socioeconomic development and change (Clay and Schwarsweller 1991:1). Households, however, also are more than homogeneous entities. Power and conflict are inherent aspects of internal household relationships. The strategy-based approach has been criticized for underestimating such complexities (Selby, Murphy, and Lorenzen 1990; Crow 1989, among others). Frequently there are considerable disparities in the inputs, benefits and activities of various household members; age and sex are often critical variables in the equation. Feminist researchers understandably have drawn attention to these power conflicts within households, suggesting that the notion of collective 'household strategies' is an inadequate and simplistic concept (Wolf 1991:30). They argue that it is safer to discuss strategies at an individual rather than a more abstract level. Their argument is that only if the barriers separating women and men's experiences are distinguished and broken, would it be possible to achieve joint household strategies. [22]

I agree with the feminist criticisms that survival strategy-based approaches have somehow treated households as relatively unproblematic entities. I believe, however, that this issue in itself does not invalidate the approach. A focus on household strategies does

[22] See among others Diane Wolf 1991, Nancy Folbre 1984; and Lourdes Beneria and M. Roldan 1987

not exclude the analysis of conflict and negotiation. Solidarity and conflict in households both shape family survival strategies, and generate the power to persevere as well as the ability to deal effectively with economic exigencies and opportunities presented by the environment (Guyer and Peters 1987, cited in Clay and Schwarsweller 1991:6). The degree to which intra-household conflict shapes survival strategies is an empirical issue.

Opportunity Structures. Constrains on Household Resources

For over three decades of survival strategy studies, the focus has been on the production of household resources and mobilization, but the studies have omitted the analysis of vulnerability in a wider context. Researchers have recently criticized the household resource approach because of the omission of the structural roots of vulnerability.[23] The criticism states that it is essential to analyze households resources resulting from the dynamic relationship established between resources and the changing requirements of ¨the opportunity structure to access well-being¨ (Kaztman 2002).

It is essential, therefore, to consider the opportunity structure in order to link the study of vulnerability situations to changes in social structure. ¨The opportunity structures are defined as possibilities of access to goods, services and performance of activities. These opportunities influence household well-being because they allow household members the use of their own resources or provide new resources¨. (Kaztman 1996b: 21). The three main opportunity sources needed to achieve stability are: Market, State and Society, and how they are linked.

[23] See Kaztman (1999b, 2002), Hintze (2004), Filgueira (2002), among others

Household resources do not exist in a vacuum. What matters is people's ability to convert their resources into assets that can be used to lessen vulnerability and improve wellbeing. Resources become assets only when people can take advantage of opportunities in the market, society and their relationship to the state.[24] This implies that household resources cannot be analyzed independently of the opportunity structure that either enables or constrains their ability to transform those resources into actual assets.

The main question of which resources do households have and how do they mobilize them to face vulnerability situations now becomes a more open one: Which resources do households have and what opportunity structure is offered by the market, the state and society in order to leave poverty situations as well as vulnerability? The focus of studies of survival strategies on understanding how poor households cope when declining incomes and jobs become scarce, and food and services increase, should then address the larger question of how should we build a society in which such situations are unusual and only affect the fewest people? The answer to this problem cannot merely identify assets and their use, but must also address the reasoning behind the production and the distribution of assests. In other words, it must look to the market, state and society to understand the opportunity structures to these sectors (Kaztman 1996b: 34). It is also necessary to ask about effective patterns of social mobilization and integration. Resources managed by households are defined as the assets used to take advantage of the opportunity structure present at a historical moment and in a certain place. It makes no

[24] Labor, for instance, is a crucial household resource, which becomes an asset only when it is used to obtain wages or products. Social contacts and relationships are also important resources, but they become assets when they can be used to obtain useful information for credits, jobs, markets or services for a household, such as when a neighbor baby-sits for a mother who goes to work.

sense to talk about assets outside of the context of mobilization, social integration patterns, and their opportunity structures.

Poor People Resources Exhaustion

A key aspect that has not properly been examined by the survival strategies model is the fact that poor household resources are not endless. Not all resources managed by domestic units have the same status. The permanent absence of a job - the main resource of any household's survival –means the erosion of remaining resources. The dissertation will offer empirical evidence for explaining the different resources depleted by the lack of work, namely, the notion of ¨social capital¨.

I will first present a brief discussion on social capital and later focus on the relationship between social capital and survival strategies.

Social Capital

Social capital is a widely used concept widely accepted in the social sciences. Nevertheless, like many other ideas adopted and rapidly expanded due to their apparent suitability for the analysis of many social problems, there has been a great difference between their adoption and their degree of conceptual precision. I have[25] only used selective aspects of social capital in order to link the concept to survival strategies. As pointed out by A. Portes (1999), even though there are differences in focus, there is a consensus in literature which states that the concept represents ¨the ability of actors to

[25] For a presentation of the different approaches and definitions on social capital see A. Portes (1999)

secure their benefits by belonging to networks or other social structures¨ (Portes 1999: 248).

The notion of social capital contains three common hypothesis: 1. systems of social relationship systems change the performance abilities of individuals in social structure, 2. the concept of ¨social capital¨ has referred to a certain type of relationship that emerges in interaction and informal social networks outside the market, and 3. networks facilitate the behavior of individuals, households, and social groups, supplying them with resources which if absence, would make their performances more difficult.

Sociologists interested in poverty have generally focused on the instrumental importance of social networks (Edin and Lein 1997; Hagan 1998; Uehara 1990 among others). Their findings are derived from Granovetter's arguments about the importance of weak ties in finding a job (Granovetter 1973). The 'strength of weak ties' emerged a useful concept because, as Portes points out, it ran contrary to the commonsense notion that strong networks such as those available through family circles would be most effective in finding jobs (Portes 1998:12).

Two approaches to social networks can be distinguished. One approach conceives of networks mainly as social structures that facilitate actions. For J. Coleman (1988: 16), social capital is shaped through membership in social networks and "like other forms of capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible." Other approaches rely on Granovetter's notion of embeddedness, and conceive of social networks as both a facilitating and constraining social structure. Consistent with this understanding of social networks, Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) distinguish four types of social capital which they label: value introjection, reciprocity,

bounded solidarity, and enforceable trust. They argue that all these sources of social capital have positive effects on individuals' lives. They may, however, also have negative effects. Community solidarity represents a precondition for the emergence of a network of successful enterprises. "However, the exacerbation of these sentiments and obligations can conspire against exactly such network" (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993:1338). A second manifestation of negative effects consists of the constraints that community norms put on individual action and receptivity to outside culture (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993: 1340).[26]

The popularity of studies on social capital appears to be a consequence of the search for organizational methods, contacts or networks that assist people affected by the lack or absence of the State recent decades. Encouraged mostly by international organisms, many studies have recognized these contacts as an expression of social capital. This view sees social capital as facilitating the avoidance of major social conflict. I agree with Portes that social capital is not a value but a concept which considers multiple processes as social facts that should be studied in all their complexity (Portes 1999: 262).

Recent work on social capital has extended the concept by going beyond the view of being an individual asset, to being a feature of communities and even nations. This point of view acquired special importance in Putnam´s studies where social capital implies ¨features of social organizations, as networks, rules and regulations and trust which facilitates the action and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam, 1993: 35-36).

[26] Portes and Sensenbrenner rely on immigration literature to illustrate the negative effects of networks. Chinatown in San Francisco and the Korean community of New York are examples that indicate that solidarity and enforcement capacity that promote ethnic business success also restrict the scope of individual expression and the extent of extracommunity contacts (p.1341).

This approach has focused on the search for indicators to measure communal social capital. Putnam´s approach associates social capital with the hypothesis that it will provide solutions for the avoidance of major social conflict. International organisms such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank agree with this analytical line.

In this thesis I refer to a structural perspective of social capital in opposition to the cultural approach – as stated in Putnam´s work-.[27] I refer to social capital as a resource available to social actors, resulting from their participation in networks (access to information, reciprocal responsibilities, and the advantage of cooperative social behavior).[28] Therefore, social capital has a material base: the stable network of interpersonal relationship. Even though less tangible than other forms of capital – physical, human – it has a structure which at the same time possesses history and continuity (Herrero and de Francisco 2001:7). I believe that people´s values and attitudes – central to the cultural perspective of social capital – can be viewed as a dependant variable. I believe that social trust, shared values, cooperation, and reciprocity principles, are molded according to the quality of social capital that actors can accumulate in specific historical and socio-economic contexts.

I view social capital in its two structural meanings, namely, having individual and communal characteristics. In both cases, they are directly related to household survival strategies. At the same time, I believe that the relationship between social capital and

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[27]The difference between a structural approach and a cultural one on social capital follows the analysis done by Herreros and de Francisco (2001)

[28] P. Bourdieu (2001) made an important contribution to understanding social capital from a structural approach. He argued that social capital consists of all the current or potential recourses linked to belonging to a stable network of relationships.

survival strategies is the difference between different perspectives within this relationship, and this is not found in its definition. The notion suggests that the urban poor can increase their social capital in emerging marginal situations, and that this capital offers the potential to face and overcome marginality.

Current Debate on the existing relationship between Marginality, Social Capital, and Survival Strategies

a. Approaches that have a positive view of social capital

Studies performed from a ¨classic¨ perspective regarding survival strategies of poor areas of Latin American confirm, although with different nuances, that marginality increases social networks and solidarity links among those affected. These are studies which recognize the value of social capital in providing such links, and as an essential resource with which to face poverty.

One of the most influential studies regarding this issue is the one performed by L. Lomnitz (1975, 1991). Based on her study of inhabitants of poor neighborhoods in Mexico, she stated that social networks made up by neighbors and family, represent the socio-economic mechanism taking the place of social assistance (Lomnitz 1975: 20). According to her study, social links are one of the few resources that poor urban people can use extensively. Close contact and trust, based on a common situation of necessity and poverty, are the two causes that make exchanges and survival possible\. Lomnitz states that poor neighborhood inhabitants thus make up a ¨*sui generis* social organization¨ that has the capability to balance the negative effects of economic insecurity.

Following Lomnitz statements, the many studies that focused on survival strategies[29] have emphasized that under conditions of marginality, social networks are strengthened and becoming an essential resource for survive.

The idea that poor populations can utilize their own social capital to overcome situations of conflict has emerged in recent decades and has been linked to leftist or populist views. Yet Feldman and Murmis (2001) note that later on, this concept became the primary component of widely different points of views, among them a traditional rightist, romantic, populist movement. The general idea is that the creative capabilities of poor populations in marginal situations should be recognized. Some Christian group analysts, for example, "Solidarity Economy"[30], state that poor groups should not only be defined as groups with needs, but attention must be paid to their positive characteristics. According to a current appraisal, sometimes this claim of positive characteristics is valued precisely because of their counter-cultural orientation. The notion of a Popular Urban Economy also falls within this perspective. As stated before, it is a perspective, which not only considers social capital as a factor for survival, but also sees it as a type of link created by marginal persons as an alternative form of social development. A radical version of this view is that not only is the population capable of acting or participating, but also possess the ability to solve problems by themselves by virtue of their close relationship to others. The existence of such values and capabilities would make State intervention unnecessary, or at the very least, it could become a source of State assistance, thus unintentionally coinciding with the neo-liberal perspective.

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[29] See Forni (2004) Cariola (1992), M. González de la Rocha (1987), Roberts 1995, Moser 1996, Cornia 1987, among others.

[30] See Razzeto, L. (1986) among others

Many Nation-Sates or international organizations have addressed the possibility that popular groups possess the capabilities to work out their own problems based on their ability to accumulate social capital through the links that make up social networks. In fact, the World Bank (WB) and other international agencies adopted a supportive approach, reasoning that poor people can find ways to use different resources to fight vulnerability and to adapt to any economic crisis. As stated by González de la Rocha (2003), the WB view is simple: poor individuals and families use different resources as tools to face adversity (economic, social or ecological). The World Bank's perspective is based on the idea that poor people are minimally concerned with monetary income compared to the importance they give to other resources, such as social networks and self-help sources and activities. The WB, therefore, continues to endow poor people clever survival capabilities. The increasing adoption of the concept of ¨Empowering¨ by the World Bank as a means of reducing poverty[31], even though it has positive elements, is partially nurtured by this notion of intelligent capabilities attributed to the poor for solving their own problems.

The above perspectives fail to realize that supporting mutual assistance relationships, family solidarity and even communal activities are not endless resources for the poor. As stated by González de la Rocha (2003) in a critical review of her own work, to go on supporting the idea that social capital is the key resource of survival strategies, without taking into account their limits, is not only wrong, but dangerous.

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[31] For a presentation on the empowerment perspective and how the World Bank uses it see Deepa Narayan –editor (2002) Empoderamiento y reducción de la pobreza. Libro de consulta. México: Banco Mundial y Alfaomega

González de la Roca 2001, 2003; Grinspun 2001; Stiglitz 2002 (among others), suggest that the co-existence of different types of resources (salaries, homemade goods and services, the sale of home produce, social interchange), does not mean that they are less or more important analytic tools. The lack of importance assigned to resources, as is the case in some studies of survival strategies, is equivalent to saying that salary-based income is as important for the well-being of a family, as the time expended on laundry, or the effort to organize a meeting among family members and neighbors. The growing pressure on family and relationships with neighbors can lead to deteriorating relationships, increasing social isolation, a phenomenon not properly studied by social scientists even though it is the result of growing poverty – or the new poverty of societies (Feijoo 2001, González de la Rocha and Grinspun 2001, among others).

b. Approaches that have a negative view of the role of social capital in urban marginality settings

Authors who believe that poor, marginalized people feel that their social capital has deteriorated, the primary explanation given is the loss of daily contact with persons of different socioeconomic status and the fragility of "relational support." Urban marginality is characterized by growing isolation, which is said to increase the deterioration of the portfolio assets of poor people while diminishing their capability to accumulate social capital.

Within this latter perspective, Wilson´s (1987; 1996) contribution was of great importance. Based on his research on American ghettos, he states that the main cause of growing isolation is structural. He states that when steady jobs disappear and in their

place signs of poverty and job insecurity appear, the possibility of social life and relationships are seriously affected. In the neighborhoods he describes as ¨socially isolated", the main problem is not only the absence of sociability, but also the negative aspects stemming from this absence of sociability. Wilson underscores the loss of role models which would lead to a more valuable ways of participation, role models which have been lost due to African-American neighbors moving out of the ghetto to improve their social possibilities. When analyzing the nature of sociability present in those marginal neighborhoods, he refers to situations in which sociability is very weak. He insists, however, on finding different, more vital ways of social connection. Yet, these types of social living do not represent ways of accessing the larger society. Living in marginal neighborhoods does not allow contact or sustained interaction with institutions, family and individuals representing the larger society. Neighborhood social ties usually lead to negative behavior on the part of individuals, including criminal behavior. He also mentions the existence of social ties, though not necessarily harmful, do not help solving problems such as finding jobs or even such simple tasks such as taking kids to school. Existing social contacts may enable someone to obtain casual jobs to solve immediate needs, but they never take people to the formal labor market. The prevailing social way of life in such neighborhoods tends to lead young people, and its general members, to criminal activities and behavior that alienates them even more from good opportunities. It is necessary, therefore, to evaluate the meaning of existing contacts and ties. At this point, Wilson arrives to a very interesting conclusion; he questions the value of social relationship for the sake of relationships: he states that it can be very positive if ghettos

isolate themselves in order to neutralize the negative influences coming from neighborhood social life.

Following Wilson´s statements, Kaztman (1999; 2002), mentions three reasons why social capital deteriorates in marginalized social settings. First, isolation reduces the possibility that social relationships have per se to obtain jobs or information on work. Second, social marginality reduces the opportunity to be in contact with role models, thus weakening the genuine channels of social mobility as ways to satisfy the consumer needs of the poor. Finally, there is a reduction in the possibility of sharing with other social classes the daily experiences which would help them believe in a common future and building strong citizenship characteristics. Kaztman uses this approach in a study of marginality in Uruguay (1999a and 1999b). He emphasizes that the growing isolation of vulnerable sectors is destroying the social structure of a country historically characterized by its strong component of social integration. Following Wilson's proposal for helping problem solving among the marginalized in urban settings, Kaztman pays special attention to the emergence of claims and movements which allows for the most marginal people to become integrated with more open population sectors, within the framework of a strong State presence. It is paradoxical to be considering this position when it is precisely the absence or abandonment of the State that has provoked the creation of analytical lines that presumably offer a step-by-step re-valorization of the use of social connections in marginal settings.

This discussion directly relates to the "Neighborhood effects" research arena. There is a large body of literature on neighborhood effects.[32] Among the most prevalent ideas about how neighborhood effects are transmitted, four types of mechanisms can be referred to: 1. Though neighborhood resources, including the reputation of the neighborhood; the availability of local public services; accessibility of jobs and to other key services. 2. Via model learning coming through social ties, peer groups and other contacts. 3. Through socialization processes in which common norms are developing. 4. Through the perception of deviance, related to crime, drug and the like. The assumption is that the larger the concentration of relative poverty is, the stronger the negative effects.

From the perspective adopted by the above mentioned authors, we can state that the growing isolation, network weaknesses, and social ties among those in marginal areas, favors the creation of a ¨subculture¨ supporting the most disruptive elements of poverty. In her analysis of teenage pregnancy in Baltimore's ghetto, Fernandez-Kelly (1995) notes how the dense but truncated networks of inner-city black families not only cut-offs members from information about the outside world, but simultaneously supports alternative cultural styles that make access to mainstream employment even more difficult. Inhabitants of marginal urban areas constitute a residual population, recently impoverished and increasingly distant from people with the minimum skills to enable them to succeed in current society. Wilson claims that criminal and illegal activities become institutionalized. Even in theory, local communities reject these behaviors in

[32] I am not going into details of the theoretical discussion on neighborhood efects, but reference can be made to various large studies and reviews of the literature. For the American comprehensive reviews studies have been done, among others by Ellen and Turner 1997, Briggs 1997, Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2000, Galster 2002, Sampson et al. 2002; and some recent European and Trans-Altlantic studies and reviews were done by Atkinsons and Kintrea 2001, Farwixck 2002, Musterd and Ostendorf 2003,Musterd and Anderson 2005, among others.

practice, and the shared suffering experienced by daily survival conditions generates a better understanding of their causes and a greater tolerance of these situations (Kaztman 2001). Contrary to the notion of a ¨Culture of Poverty¨ to which I already referred to, these practices do not have a life of their own influencing behavior, even when possibilities for improvement arise. In fact, the present work suggests that when structural differences decrease, these subcultures will start to disappear.

The initial theoretical approach of this dissertation did not take for granted isolation and social capital deterioration of underprivileged sectors, nor did it take for granted the restorative ability and strength of the primary social ties. But throughout the writing of the dissertation, the first approach has gained strength. This dissertation strongly suggests that if the isolation trend is not reverted, social marginality will soon become ¨social exclusion¨. In this context, the social capital of "the excluded" will be severely affected and eroded. Instead of being a resource for survival, it becomes, in the present context, a resource which further excludes the most marginalized population.

Poverty, Survival Strategies and the Informal Sector Debate

Working in the informal sector is not synonymous with poverty. In Latin America, however, there is a strong linkage between both issues. About 80 percent of informal workers receive incomes below the minimum (PREALC 1987:23), and besides most of them lack access to social welfare systems (Bayon, 2006)). Beyond the poverty related to the informal sector, lay the structural or regulatory factors that create the informal sector: surplus labor (PREALC), decentralization (Underground Economy), or state regulation (Legalist approach).[33] All three approaches to poverty and labor market

[33] *PREALC* (Employment Program for Latin America and the Caribbean) uses a dualistic concept of informal sector, which is linked to size (small), type of employment or way of doing things-organizing production (self-employment, family firms, low levels of capital, unsophisticated technology), and outcomes (low productivity,

dynamics, therefore, differ from Piore's dual market interpretation of poverty. According to Piore poor are confined to the secondary labor market because they lack the behavior required by the primary labor market (Piore 1970: 360). An adequate indirect market policy, according to Piore, would make the primary labor market absorb the secondary labor market. Nor the PREALC, neither the Underground nor the Legalist approach see any relationship between a 'deficient' culture and informal sector.

Research on the informal sector has been important in highlighting particular aspects of the stratification process. Most researchers in Latin America agree that the increasing importance of informal employment entails a shift from individual to household characteristics in determing the labor market participation of both individuals and their families. Because the informally employed usually receive low incomes, they are often part of a forced household strategy of diversifying work roles to maximize income, increasing the numbers of household members who work for pay. Under these conditions, the type of job that an individual does is a less significant determinant of life chances than other factors such as household composition and cycle, gender and age. Furthermore, the increase in informal sector employment reinforces the local dimension of labor market and makes people unusually dependent on community ties for finding paid work and meeting their economic needs (de Oliveira and Roberts 1992:68).[34]

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poverty). Informality is a certain form of production within a structural context characterized by an excess labor supply and a low demand for well-paid jobs (PREALC 1987:5). *The Underground Economy approach* combines the PREALC structuralism with selective compliance with or avoidance of regulations and laws. Underground proponents reject economic dualism and focus on the way in which forms of production, productive units, technologies, and workers are integrated into local, regional and international economies. (Castells & Portes 1989: 12). In the *Legalist or ILD-de Soto approach*, issues of regulation and extralegality are central to understand informality. Legalists differ with the PREALC and underground approaches in their assessment of the primary causes and outcomes of informality and in the role of the informal sector in economic growth. They agree with PREALC that informality is encouraged by rural-urban migration. It is "survival strategies" – "a safety valve for societal tensions" (de Soto 1989: 243) –undertaken by the poor with "ingenuity and entrepeneurial spirit" (Bromley 1990, 328). The informals are forced into extralegality (and poverty) because of discriminatory state regulations and costs that advantage powerful economic interest groups that compete unfairly with informals who have no property rights and no access to credit.

[34] See among others M. Gonzalez de la Rocha (1986) "Los recursos de la Pobreza: Familias de bajos ingresos en Guadalajara, Mexico" Working Paper, Colegio de Jalisco/CIESAS/SPP; Humberto Munoz and O. de Oliviera (1981) "Migration, Family Context and Labour-Force Pariticipation in Mexico City" In Why People Move, ed. Jorge Balan Paris: Unesco; Azucena Reyes La Pobreza mas de Cerca. Las Estrategias de Supervivencia de las Familias mas Pobres de Mendoza. Mendoza: Universidad de Cuyo.

CHAPTER 2:

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

In order to understand the complexity of the subject under study and to answer all the research questions, I decided to resort to a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. I believe it has been useful to perform a mix of methodological approaches to the phenomena under study (by integrating qualitative and quantitative strategies). The focus on the use of a methodological combination, used jointly and with the same purpose, are strengthened reciprocally, offering insights that none of them could show individually (Vasilachis 1993).

I resorted to different sources: semi-structured questionnaires, surveys, census, in-depth interviews, life histories and participative observation. I believe that the use of the different mentioned sources can overcome the restrictions that each one of these data tools could have if used separately. The use of combined data coming from different sources – detailed below -, gives a richer and more adequate understanding of the processes under study.

Sources Used

Most of the data was obtained through data gathering tools specially designed for the current research. Semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews and life histories were created and applied during different steps of the research. The data collection tools used are attached to this document. I have also processed data taken from

a secondary census, mostly from the Permanent Household Survey (*Encuesta Permanente de Hogares" –EPH-).*[35] I will briefly detail each of the tools used.

To understand the different survival strategies carried out by domestic units in contexts of social isolation, requires on the one hand, an accurate description of the current situation of domestic units. And on the other hand, also requires an accurate description of the life history of each member of the household. In order to cover the first aspect I have used a semi-structured questionnaire as well as an in-depth interview, and for the second one, a life history chart.

Semi-structured Questionnaire and In-depth Interview

I have adapted a questionnaire first designed by the National University of General Sarmiento in 1997, known as *"EPU – Economía Popular Urbana"- (Spanish for: Urban Popular Economy)*. The purpose of this tool was to record data for a research project based on popular urban economy.

The objective of the EPU research performed in 1997 by *UNGS* was to survey the economic strategies of the domestic units within the area of the University which included the districts of San Miguel, Malvinas Argentinas, José C. Paz and Moreno. During the development of the EPU questionnaire an important part of the variables taken into account were adapted for comparison purposes with data from the EPH. EPU's aim was to study the resources obtained through the markets (provisions, labor force insertion, etc. – which were also aspects reported by the EPH-), as well as those obtained

[35] The Permanent Household Survey ('Encuesta Permanente de Hogares –EPH-) is carried out twice a year by the Official Institute on Statistics of Argentina This survey is based on a statistically representative sample of the urban population of the country. The Greater Buenos Aires, is one of the 24 urban areas were the survey is carried out.

or produced in other ways or actions such as the State (perception of social programs), other domestic units (economic and non economics interchanges between them), participation in networks, cooperatives and other kinds of non State related organizational and institutional groups, resource distribution and tasks within the units and the different methods and levels of training and degree obtained (inside as well as outside the official education system). The EPU compiled information regarding different aspects of the life and current daily consumption pertaining to the standard of living of each domestic unit: food and clothing, health, housing and domestic equipment, education and recreation; information on the domestic unit's resources source was compiled (monetary and non-monetary) and its origin, and budget organization. Since these units are inserted in a determined territorial space the habitat in which the activities were performed was also taken into account.

For the research involving this thesis, the EPU was modified in order to include more items with open questions. Among these, there are items used for the purpose of finding out about the use of "free time" and recreational activities; and also items addressed to detecting the education and labor background of family members. Also some items were added to reinforce understanding of their networks and social ties. The information gathered through open questions allowed me to include a qualitative dimension to the analysis.

The semi-structured questionnaire and the in-depth interview were focused on the following aspects: a) Household members and domestic unit characteristics. b) Consumption trends and needs satisfaction circuits – access to food, clothing, education… - c) Current labor insertion of each household member and their labor

background d) receipt, perception and assessment of social welfare plans e) Links with the educational system, training received and educational background; f) Social network participation; social ties and types of interaction.

Life Histories

The dynamic approach of these dimensions gathered through the questionnaire and interview were mainly performed in a retrospective manner: compiling *life histories* of all adult and teenage family members living under the same roof. For this purpose a dynamic record guide was implemented containing some main areas, family, occupation, demography, education, where outstanding events taking place throughout their lives was recorded, including date and the mentioned events. The themes for this part of the study reinforced the historical perspectives required by the objectives of the study; to connect historical and structural change tendencies with the experience of the social actors responsible for this change; and primarily, to understand the logic underlying the strategies developed by the domestic units.

I adopted the life history item aware that this data compiling technique presents some problems. People usually, as times goes by, redefine their life events. They tend to evaluate and judge their options about the past and their action course with their present perception scheme – that has usually matured and changed through the years. To minimize these problems I did the following: 1. I tried to interview each person more than once, with the purpose of reviewing twice some aspects that seemed problematic or uncertain, 2. I contrasted same family events with different family members (at least two adult members were interviewed in most households). The life histories and in-depth

interview allowed me to obtain information from the point of view of the actors involved. This aspect is of great importance and a specific characteristic of qualitative research.

Other Primary Data Sources

Even though the important data of the thesis comes from the household interviews, I have obtained important information through *participant observation*. It was very useful to spend time on the chosen poor settlements. I participated, for instance, in some activities in which the inhabitants were involved. I spent long hours in places where they get together for recreational activities, convenience stores, grocery stores, etc. Being able to observe how people interact in different situations, inside poor settlements, allowed me to see how the settlement influences their ideas, behavior and ways of acting. This participative observation allowed me to better understand how inhabitants intervene socially and build their social networks.

I informally interviewed different ¨key informants¨. They were all of great assistance and facilitated my field work. I talked with many people from the poor settlements – besides those to whom I have applied the questionnaire and life histories -, as well as with members of different institutions linked to each neighborhood (social workers, teachers, volunteers, etc.). The information compiled through this method has been important in better perceiving the social dynamics of poor settlements. The data proved to be useful when comparing it to the data obtained through the interviews.
By using a qualitative methodological approach this research relies on an epistemology focused on understanding social subjects and interpreting their opinions with their own lives as reference. The choice to “hear the voice” of the inhabitants of marginal areas,

their opinions, their struggle for survival, their expectations about their future, has its roots in an epistemology that prefers known subjects over cognoscente ones (Vasilachis, 1999). Recovering the social actor's perspective (Touraine, 1992) means to "be in somebody else's shoes", to understand the meaning that living in poor and underprivileged conditions has for them, to learn about their perception and place it in context in the network of their social relations. Knowing poor people's perspective implies being able to compare prevailing stereotypes, mostly built up by persons who have never lived in situations of social isolation, nor have had to deal with daily subsistence problems, with the voices of the ones living in areas of social exclusion (Auyero, 2001).

Secondary Data Sources

I used two secondary data sources: 1. The 1991 and 2001 National Census of Population and Housing *(Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda)*, and 2. The Permanent Household Survey of October 2001 *(Encuesta Permanente de Hogares).*

1.With the census data I calculated different indexes of segregation for years 1991 and 2001. One of the objectives for this Thesis is to measure and characterize the residential segregation in Greater Buenos Aires. For this purpose it was necessary to resort to data sources that could allow a territorial location of the households. The National Population Census was the best option. In this way I obtained and processed the census micro-data from the last two national censuses of years 1991 and 2001

respectively. Chapter 3 focuses on social fragmentation and residential segregation processes in Greater Buenos Aires.

2.The Permanent Housing Survey was processed for different purposes. The EPU – that I adjusted to interview the 100 surveyed households – was designed so that its variables could be compared to the Permanent Housing Survey. With the compiled data I was able to compare the socio-demographic and labor situation of poor settlement households against the whole Buenos Aires agglomerate. Chapter 5, is mainly based on procedures performed with the "EPH" *(Permanent Household Survey)*. In that Chapter I compare the demographic and socio-labor situation of the population interviewed for the Thesis against the whole population of Greater Buenos Aires. Both data sources, census and *EPH* were used in of Chapter 4. In that chapter I describe poor urban settlements of Greater Buenos Aires.

Poor Settlement Selection

I selected four poor settlements, two of them slums and the other two squatter settlements. The four poor settlements are located in the Northeast of Greater Buenos Aires. The slums selected are "Villa Hidalgo" and "Villa Mitre". The first is a middle sized slum in the district of San Martin. "Villa Mitre" is one of the largest and oldest slums in Greater Buenos Aires located in the City of San Miguel. The chosen squatter settlements are Santa Elena in the Moreno district, and Barrufaldi in the district of San Miguel. The first is a small settlement, and the second is a medium-size one. The lands of Santa Elena were sized in 1984. It is a public land, classified by the City as "suitable

for living purposes". The land seized by "Barrufaldi" inhabitants is also a public land classified as "not suitable for living purposes".

Field Work Stages

The first stage of this field work was to compile data through the semi-structured questionnaire applied to a random sample of 100 households located at the four chosen poor settlements. In each poor settlement I randomly chose 25 domestic units obtaining information about 590 persons, living in those households. The size of the sample was close to a representative sample. Therefore I was able to generalize. To have a high representation level is important to this research for two reasons: 1. The analysis of 100 households and their family members can be generalized to all households and family members of suburb poor settlements. 2. It allowed me to make comparisons with the "*EPH*". In other words, considering that the questionnaire used was designed to be compared with the "*EPH*", I was able to consider and analyze the 100 households as a subgroup within "*EPH*".

After applying the semi-structured questionnaire to all samples of the domestic units, I analyzed the compiled information and started the second part of the field work: to select 20 out of 100 households located in two of the poor settlements, in order to perform the in-depth interview and the life history. Therefore, I designed an analytical sample[36] where I selected households according to their relevant importance for the research. I believe that the size of the sample is big enough to reach diversity among

[36] The analytical or theoretical survey is done based on "concepts that have been proved to be theoretically relevants for the theory' (Strauss and Corbin 1990:176).

households, and discover different behavioral patterns. I based my decision on the concept of ¨Knowledge Saturation¨ developed by Berteaux (Berteaux and Berteaux, 1981).

Both stages of field work followed an ethnographic approach. I think that the field work and the ethnographic analysis are the best way to approach the main research objectives: identify, describe and analyze different types of poor settlement survival strategies, and explain the mechanisms of their course of action. The Ethnographic approach supplies necessary tools to open the households´ ¨black box¨. This approach allows poor domestic units to be analyzed as the area in which reproduction and survival practices are shaped.

Selection of 100 domestic units on which to apply the semi-structured questionnaire

The best way to guarantee a random domestic unit sample selection for interviewing was to obtain information about the inhabitants of the neighborhood chosen through agencies of Buenos Aires Province. However, there are no updated and reliable data on this regard. Therefore, to obtain information about quantity and location of households for each poor settlement, I followed a different strategy in order to guaranty the most random selection of 25 domestic units in each one of them.

* *In Santa Elena* settlement, that was the first neighborhood in which I applied the questionnaire, my first contact was in the Housing Division of the Municipality of Moreno. They gave me a table with the list of settlements in the area of the municipality that contained some minimum data on each settlement (when was the land seized,

number of families living at present, and condition of the land). They also gave me the name of partisans -punteros politicos- on some of the settlements. Among these 'punteros' was Dominga Jovita Moyano, a respected dweller of Santa Elena

I met Jovita at her home in Santa Elena before applying the questionnaire. She had a nice and friendly attitude with me, and was of great help. During the interviews she gave valuable data regarding the settlement's history, the people, and the institutions related with Santa Elena. She is a member of the settlement's Committee. When I interviewed her, the Committee was working on the legalization' of the settllement's land. Jovita, therefore, had in her possession a detailed map of Santa Elena. The map identified every single of the 111 'lotes' that conform the settlement. I made a copy of the map, and ramdonly selected 25 households. To select them I considered that the settlement is conformed of 7 blocks of houses ('manzanas') that have from 15 to 25 'lotes' each one. In the random selection I considered that there should be a proportional representation of households based on the number of 'lotes' of each block. For each block besides the households selected I randomly chose a replacement.

After finishing the selection, I interviewed Jovita again. I showed her the selected households. She gave me the names of the family of each one, and in some cases she made some comment (for instance, if the Head of the Family was unemployed, if there was any disabled person, etc.). With all this data I was ready to interview the 25 households.

* *Villa Hidalgo* belongs to the Municipality of San Martin. I got in touch with the Municipality, but they had no recent data con the slum. I contacted a social worker that works in the slum. She gave me her impression on the slum, and advised me to get in touch

with Chichita, a 60 years old lady that lives a block away from the slum. I met Chichita at her home. She was very nice and helpful. She volunteers for charitable organization in the slum. She contacted me with 4 of the 7 'manzaneras[37]' of Villa Hidalgo. Through them I had the list of the families they attend in the slum with children under 7 years old (which are most of the families of the slum). They also gave me the list of families that were not receiving the *Plan Vida*[38] any more because their youngest kids were no more eligible because of their age.[39] All of these 'manzaneras' could also give me information about the families living in the blocks they were in charged of that did not receive the Plan Vida because they did not have young members. Through Caritas I had the list of people receiving the *Plan Asoma*[40] (many of these families obviously overlapped with those receiving the Plan Vida). I put together all the information gathered and contrasted it with Chichita, who knows most of the slum dwellers. I came up with the list of the families living in the settlement belonging to the blocks of 4 of the 7 manzaneras of the slum. I could then randomly select 25 households and some replacements.

* In *Barrufaldi* I came up to the list of the settlement's households through a similar way I did in Villa Hidalgo. The Municipality of San Miguel has no information on the settlements of the area. Therefore it was not useful to use this tool to obtain a list of the inhabitants.

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[37] "Manzaneras" is the popular word given for inhabitants of the settlements in charged of distributing the assistance given through a state program for children under 6 years old

[38] *Plan Vida* is a state assistance program for poor children under 6 years old. The "manzaneras" are those in charged in the neighborhoods of distributing the goods to the program recipients

[39] The manzaneras are required to keep the list of families that are forced to quit the Plan because of the age of their youngest kids.

[40] *Plan Asoma* is another state program for poor old people

My first settlement key informers were members of the Redemptorist religious order. The mentioned Order has its novices house near the neighborhood and some of the novices carry out their Pastoral work at the settlement. They are responsible for one of the two *soup kitchens* – comedores populares- that daily serve food to its inhabitants. One of the Priests of this Order runs the neighborhood Church. I interviewed two of the Order's members. They showed their interest in my project and offered me support and assistance. They contacted me with Rosa, an inhabitant of the neighborhood, a *¨Manzanera¨* and volunteer at the soup kitchen. I met Rosa at her house. She is a very nice person who offered me any needed assistance. She had a map of the area under her jurisdiction as *¨Manzanera¨*. She contacted me with Maria, another *¨Manzanera¨*, who lives at the other end of the settlement. She did not have a map of her area; instead she gave me a list of families to whom she delivers *¨Plan Vida¨*. She had information about most of the remaining families in her area not receiving *¨Plan Vida¨*. In this way I obtained a list of about 70 families, from whom I randomly chose 25 plus replacements.

* *Villa Mitre* is one of the largest and oldest slums of Greater Buenos Aires. My first contact there was a young woman involved in political activities inside the neighborhood. She had lived there with her family until approximately 5 years before. I had a very interesting interview with her. She gave me her own impressions on the slum. She gave me the name and address of the 12 *¨Manzaneras¨* living there. Each one of them was in charge of approximately 3 to 4 blocks. I selected three *¨Manzaneras¨* taking into account that they belonged to different areas of the neighborhood. As *Villa Mitre* was the last neighbourhood I visited, I already had the experience of how to approach *¨Manzaneras¨* and obtain information about all the inhabitants under their jurisdiction. I

contacted the three-selected *¨Manzaneras¨* and they gave me the information I needed. In this way I was able to randomly choose the families to interview and their replacements.

Applying the Semi-structured Questionnaire and Life Histories

The questionnaire was applied from May 4 to July 20 2001. One hundred households were interviewed, from which we obtained data of 590 people -the members of those households-. For settlements Santa Elena and Villa Hidalgo, two advanced students of the University of General Sarmiento worked with me. Two other students[41] joined us for Barrufaldi and Villa Mitre. Besides coordinating the fieldwork, I applied questionnaires to 27 households of the four settlements. The two students that worked with me from the beginning of the fieldwork interviewed 26 and 25 households respectively. The other two students that joined us afterwoords applied the questionnaires to 11 households each of them. I gave each of the students a folder with the map of the settlements, the list of households selected and the replacements, and the data of key informants in each settlement.

At the end of April I had an interview with the students to discuss the questionnaire and the methodological approach. We agreed to perform the field work on the settlements one at the time. Before starting the field work at the next settlement we planned to meet to interchange impressions. After applying 4-5 questionnaires they had to return them to me so I could adequately perform work follow up, mostly about

[41] The four students selected had already wide experience in applying questionnaires. Two of them had done field work in 1997 when the University of General Sarmiento applied the EPU questionnaire. The questionnaire I applied was almost the same as the EPU questionnaire. Researchers of the University had recommended the four students to me based on their experience and high quality work.

difficulties and pertinent subjects. Due to the increasing insecurity in the settlements we agreed that each time we went into the neighborhoods to interview households, we would inform our ¨key informer¨. We carefully followed the fieldwork strategy stated above.

The fieldwork was carried out smoothly, without important difficulties. Most respondents had a nice and friendly attitude. We had only about 10% of 'rejection', composed of both, people that did not want to respond, and people that we could never meet due to different reasons. The replacements I had previously randomly chosen were enough to afford the 'rejections'.

Since most households chosen did not have telephone, to arrange the interview we went on a weekend to the households of the sample to present ourselves and arrange a meeting for the interview. In some cases, especially in Santa Elena, the respondents had already an idea that we were going to interview them since the key informant (Jovita in the case of Santa Elena) had already told them that we were coming. All the interviews were done in the settlements, and most of them were done at the respondents' home. While arranging the interview with the respondents, we gave them the option of responding the questionnaire at some of the neighborhoods' institutions (the Day Care for Santa Elena, the Catholic Church for Villa Hidalgo, the 'comedor popular' for Barrufaldi, and an elementary school for Villa Mitre). A few interviews (about 8 or 9) were done in one of these institutions. Three female respondents said that answering the questionnaire outside their homes was important because it allowed them to talk 'freely'. They said that

with their husbands at home they felt unable to talk at ease[42]. Eighty-five interviews were responded only by a female lady alone –the lady of the house-. Nine interviews were responded by the couple of the household (man and women). In three interviews the respondents were the lady of the house and another component of the household (a brother, a grownup son, a sister). Finally, five interviews were responded only by a men (the head of the household). During many of the interviews, besides the respondent/s other components of the house made brief comments. Each interview lasted on average two hours.

I am aware of the biases related to applying the questionnaire mainly to female heads of the households. However, many studies have proved the importance of women in the organization of the household and their fundamental role in the survival strategies. After having applied the questionnaire mainly to women, I can tell that it was a positive issue. All these ladies have been very helpful and willing to talk about their families. These ladies gave us detailed information on the family and answered very openly to all our questions.[43] Instead, in-depth interviews and life histories were applied both to adult women or men in the households. In this way we were able to understand gender perspectives in relation to their survival strategies.

The fieldwork in Santa Elena went on very well. Besides applying the questionnaire to the households, I met several times with Jovita. Each time I went to

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[42] We heard the same argument in many women that purposely arranged the meeting for a time when their husbands would not be at home. In one case I was interviewing a lady at her place when suddenly her husband came home before he was expected due to an unexpected problem at work. This lady gave me clear evidence that we had to stop the interview. We met again on another day at the Day Care.

[43] In those interviews in which only a man responded, we found it more difficult to have accurate information on all the household members.

interview a family she would receive me at her home and spend time with me. She introduced me to the principal and the teachers at the Day Care (the main institution inside the settlement). I talked with the principal several times. When we were about to finish the fieldwork in the settlement, she invited me and the two students for the 25 de Mayo celebration[44] that was taking place in the Day Care. We shared a friendly and informal three hours celebration with many of the settlement dwellers. We met there most of the families we had interviewed. It was a nice way to end our field work in that neighborhood.

My next field work at Villa Hidalgo, was not as easy as in Santa Elena. It was the settlement in which we faced most difficulties. This is an old and extremely poor slum. The Municipality of San Martin has neglected it for too long. No infrastructure improvements have been carried out during the last few years. Inhabitants have the feeling that they have been forsaken and that there is no possibility of improvement in the short run. Inside the slum there are different ¨gangs¨ -*patotas*-many of which are well known for their extreme aggressiveness. Chichita, our key informer, accompanied us to some interviewed households. She even stayed with us in some interviews. Her positive attitude and support were very important to us to perform our job. Without her help, the field work would have been almost impossible and dangerous.

In Barrufaldi and Villa Mitre, we had an excellent relationship with our key informants. Also the *¨Manzaneras¨* were very helpful. I went several times to the soup kitchen –*comedor popular*- at Barrufaldi, where one of the *¨Manzaneras¨* I was in contact

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[44] 25 de Mayo is a National celebration in Argentina. It is a National holiday.

with, worked as a volunteer. In this way I was able to chat with other volunteers whom openly shared with me the difficulties they were encountering feeding so many people.

For in-depth interviews and life histories, I selected two of the four settlements: Santa Elena and Barrufaldi. The first one is a relatively well-organized squatter settlement. The second one is a poor settlement with a high degree of internal conflict. It is going through a process of social disintegration. I thought it would be interesting to compare survival strategies from both neighborhoods.

The second part of the field work began in August and ended in October 2002. The work was performed rapidly and fluently, since I interviewed the same households I had interviewed during the first stage of the research. All re-interviewed families showed a positive attitude and helped with the interview. Each interview and life history lasted an average of three hours. Most times we went back twice in order to be able to talk to all members of the domestic unit.

CHAPTER 3:

URBAN SEGREGATION IN THE GREATER BUENOS AIRES AREA

Tendencies in Greater Buenos Aires composition

Greater Buenos Aires is part of the Metropolitan Region of Buenos Aires. This is the biggest urban area in the country. It holds, in more than 18.000 km^2 (0,7% of the Argentine territory), more than one third (38,4%) of the country's total population, as well as a great part of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and industrial employment.

The conglomerate represents an "urban entity", both from a functional point of view (it is the field of the population's daily shifting, specially the pendulum like movements from place of residence to work place (Kralich 1995) and from a physical point of view (it represents an "urban spot" without important solutions of continuity). This region is made up of Buenos Aires City, the first and second rings of the outskirts of Buenos Aires – made up of 24 municipalities – and more than 18 GBA adjacent municipalities –counties- which could be called a third ring (Map 3.1). .

In order to contextualize the recent tendencies it is important to highlight that the great urban explosion of the conglomerate, in the middle of last century, was related to a process of suburbanization which was characterized by the spreading of the city towards the periphery. The urbanization's growth consolidated the first ring and subsequently the second and the third ring. During the period of import substitution the dynamics of the space appropriation in the BAMR (Buenos Aires´ Metropolitan Region) was stimulated by redistribution policies that promoted the access of middle and working classes to dwellings (Torres, 1993). Lower income strata shifted towards the suburbs motivated by

economical land lots that made it possible for them to gain access to properties. The population's shifting followed the railway line since low fares, based on subsidiary policies granted to public companies that supply services, favoured the shifting process from these areas to the periphery. In this way, the suburbs developed with very low population density and with a slow development of the urban infrastructure. As a result of this process, the urban space that was created was untidy; with poor planning; and with faulty basic infrastructure, urban services and means of transport.

In the 60´s and 70´s there was a reduction in the growth of metropolitan areas and consequently a decrease in the relative participation of migration. Nevertheless, the urban space appropriation pattern -described above- gained strength and intensified.[45] The decade starting in 1980 was characterized by a drop in the rate of population's growth. This tendency is corroborated in the 90´s. The counties that have shown a greater growth belong to the second ring (they hold 70% of the conglomerate's total growth), while the counties nearer the Capital City –Buenos Aires- have shown a lower growth, and thus they are considered to be entering a stage of expulsion. Table 3.1 shows the dynamics of GBA population within the last decades.

The main tendency in the GBA of the 90´s was the residential polarization of the City of Buenos Aires as well as the suburban areas. It might be said that in this period the most important factors for the delimitation of social spaces are the strata with greater income (Cerrutti y Grimson, 2005). In Buenos Aires City, between 1991 and 1999, the

[45] The last military regime determined that shanty towns should be eradicated from Buenos Aires City. Poor population then moved to suburban areas. In addition, under that same regime, changes in urban politics were introduced in order to prevent people from living in land lots with no infrastructure or poor equipment. The result of both policies was the migration of poor people beyond the city limits and the increase in the number of shanty towns, added to an incipient process of taking hold of lands.

number of luxurious households increased more than four times (Torres 2001), and the number of ordinary households decreased more than 10%.

The process of elite suburbanization was also intensified. It was parallel to the growth of gated urbanizations.[46] These kinds of urbanizations which include different types, namely "country-clubs", "gated neighborhoods" and "ventures", set a new space appropriation pattern. Map 3.2 shows the urbanization's growth in the 90´s. At the same time, in the lower end of the residential segmentation, there was an increase of precarious settlements.[47] In traditional neighborhoods of low and middle classes there was a generalized deterioration.

Methodology

I calculated two of the residential segregation indexes generally used for this kind of analysis and with Census data. They are Duncan's dissimilarity indexes and Bell's isolation indexes.[48] The former belongs to the evenness indicators and allows a comparison of the distribution of two groups, one of them is the segregated group. With

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[46] All figures regarding the extent of the urbanization expansion phenomena show an extraordinary increase in the 90s. Between 1990 and 1991, 91 different ventures were registered, while in the year 2001 there were 461 (Torres 2001).

[47] At present, according to the *Info-Hábitat* team from *Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento,* there is about one million people spread across 700 to 1000 shanty towns and settlements in suburban areas. In Buenos Aires City there are almost 100.000 people living in poverty. But, it must be added that, there is "nearly one million people who live in unstable conditions and out of any official records, such as families occupying isolated pieces of land or taking hold of a house; clandestine houses or plots, especially in the third suburban string. This brings the final amount of people to two million." (*Fernández Wagner*, excerpt from *Clarín* newspaper, 2005)

[48] Segregation has been measured in various ways; some have focused on levels of isolation, others on unevenness, again others on the level of concentration, or clustering and some have also included the extent to which pattern reveal an orientation to the centre of the metropolitan area. Massey and Denton (1993) have brought all these variants together and applied them to construct their concept of "hyper-ghetto". In the current research I will focus on unevenness and isolation.

this index the difference between the proportion of individuals from the segregated group and the proportion of the rest of the population, within each territorial unit, is calculated.[49] The latter captures the exposure or contact between both groups. In this case it takes into account the representativeness of the groups within the total population and measures the amount of potential contact between members of the same group on each area. These indexes were estimated with the microdata of the latest National Census of Population and Housing carried out in 1991 and 2001 respectively.

The formula for each index is the following:

Duncan Index

$$D = \frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left|\frac{Ni}{N} - \frac{Wi}{W}\right|$$

where i=1…n refers to the geographic units –e.g. census fractions–; Ni=Minority population in each area "i"; N=Total minority population, Wi=Majority population in each area "i"; W=Total majority population.

Bell Index

$$xP * y = \sum_{i=1}^{n}\left[\frac{x_i}{X}\right]\left[\frac{y_i}{ti}\right]$$

where x, y y t with the sub index "i" indicate the minority, majority and total population respectively; X is the total minority population.

[49] Some researchers take this number as the index rate of the minority group that should change dwelling in order for the distribution to be fair.

The variables that were used to build the groups were five: 1.The level of education of the head of household as proxy of social stratification; 2.The incidence of structural poverty – measured with the compound indicator of Unsatisfied Basic Needs – 3. The migratory condition of the head of households; 4. The proportion of indigent households or house type B; and 5. Head of Household Health insurance coverage. I will discuss the selection of these variables in the following section.

The Greater Buenos Aires segregation patterns are analyzed distinguishing between the Suburban areas and Buenos Aires City.

Analysis´ Dimensions: Selected Aspects for Segregated Groups 1991-2001

- Head of Household level of education.

In Argentina, as a result of the social exclusion process and the impoverishment that took place in the 90´s, it was feasible to expect that the segregation might have shown according to socio-economic strata.

The minority category is made up of those who have less than 7 years of education.

- Household Poverty measured by UBN

This indicator is used since it is the one that is available in Census data. The segregated group would be made up of the households that have at least one of the indicators of Unsatisfied Basic Needs[50].

[50] An UBN house is one that meets any of the following conditions: more than three people per room, precarious housing, substandard sanitation (having no disposal system for sewage), children between 6 and

- Migratory condition of the Head of the Household.

The minority group is made up of Heads of Household born outside Argentina. The international migration pattern in Argentina in the last decades is made up of bordering countries.

By introducing this aspect I wanted to check the importance of another aspect besides the educational one; which also modifies the social composition of these groups.

- Type of household

The families that inhabit deficient houses make up the minority group. The census holds in this category the households of type B and the cabins. In this group the houses´ deficient character is related to the household socio-economic level but, unlike the level of education, it is related to aspects of urban infrastructure. [51]

I was interested in the type of houses that reflect, though in an indirect way, the public policy of households in the decade we are studying. The urbanization code on place since the mid 70´s imposes very demanding standards.[52] This technical regulation should have improved the habitability conditions, lessening pollution and the risk of floods, favouring the supply of collective equipment; but it produced the opposite effect

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12 who do not have access to formal education and over four active members of the family with poor academic preparation.

[51] It refers to census data classification that groups all dwellings meeting at least one of the following conditions: having concrete or brick flooring (instead of ceramic, marble, hardwood or tile floors, or carpets) and lacking piped water or bathroom facilities. This evidence makes it possible to round off a wider number of poor quality housing than the one picked up by the UBN. When including the type of dwelling we focus on the house, not considering other UBN references that, in our opinion, are inadequately incorporated in the global UBN parameters. Likewise, the way in which the type of housing indicator classifies poor housing is more accurate than that used by the UBN.

[52] The Regulation Nº 8912 (*State Law 8912)*, on the use of the land in Buenos Aires City, sanctioned in 1977, controls the order of provincial territory, distinguishing its use, subdivision, occupation and equipment. It forces the town council to define the uses of the soil, and it demands basic infrastructure works, establishing dimensions and equipment. This law, compelled real state agents to be responsible for the services in the offered lands (Catenazzi and Fernandez Wagner, 2004)

in popular sectors, increasing the value of land lots and at the same time reducing the bid of accessible land lots for these sectors.

- *Head of Household Health Insurance*

It was dichotomized according to whether there was access to health or not, through medical insurance.

Medical Insurance allows us to approach the segregation patterns with certain independence to the household socio-economic level. This condition seemed to be important. At the same time, just like the household indicator, it relates directly to a public policy: the health policy.

Health assistance in Argentina, since the middle of last century, has been closely related to formal work. Therefore, the labour impoverishment of the last decades affected the way in which the health services are accessed. Hence, I have a dimension that allows to relate the processes of urban segregation with labour precariousness.

Results[53]

In the suburban areas segregation indexes were estimated for two different territorial levels: the county and the census fractions. The difference between them is not only one concerning the spacial size of the unit but also the administrative delimitation and the local government delimitation. As a matter of fact, the former coincides with the

[53] These results summarize what I presented in *Urban Segregation in Greater Buenos Aires* Paper presented with Fernando Groisman in the Work Shop Urban Gobernance and Intra-Urban Populations Differentials in Latin American Metropolitan Areas. Convocado y realizado en la University of de Texas, Austin. 17 y 18 of November 2005. Further develpments has been made since then. In Groisman-Suarez (2006) we recourse also to spatial indexes: the lOcal and Global Moran indexes

delimitation of the counties while the latter only reflects territorial delimitations. In the case of Buenos Aires City, only the departmental criterion was used, although in this case the differentiation is merely geographical. See Table 3.2.

There is a confirmation of the increase in the segregation with both indexes only when estimated by the Health insurance of the heads of households. As a matter of fact, for the rest of the variables, the tendencies of both indicators are not coincidental.

This would allow us to claim that the characteristics of the segregation in Greater Buenos Aires in the 90´s were associated with what took place in the labour market. While the household health is mainly secured through the system of medical insurance for workers, the access to that protection is dependent on the insertion of a household member into a job where he or she will become a "salaried worker".

It must be taken into account that the mere decrease in the proportion of registered labour – as it actually occurred in that decade – does not necessarily imply greater segregation. The fact that this has occurred is a hint of the differential impact of the labour deterioration on the population, according to their place of residence. This could have been the result of the peculiar evolution of the local labour markets as well as the influence of the urban environment on the people's labour paths – e.g. stigmatization, means of transport high fares, access difficulties, security aspects–.

Another result that deserves to be highlighted is the fact that the suburban areas of Buenos Aires as a whole include a low segregation – that is, measured in terms of social

stratification. In addition, contrary to what was expected, there were no changes between the two ends of the decade in any of the two indexes. [54]

The reason seems to be, in dynamic terms, that there might have prevailed a segregation pattern within each county. In fact, in most counties there was an increase in the territorial concentration of groups with an educational deficit.[55] The counties in which the increase in the dissimilarity index is higher than 30% of its value with regard to 1991, belong to the second ring of Greater Buenos Aires. In turn, most counties belonging to the first ring did not register changes in the socio-economic segregation index. This fact suggests that the counties that strongly increased their population in the 90´s were the ones belonging to the second ring (as we mentioned before) and they did it following a socio-economic segregation pattern.

The segregation pattern that describes the type of housing indicates that through the decade there was no record of any changes in the concentration of households that reside in precarious houses. Nevertheless, the isolation index of these houses increased reflecting the relative growth of this group. The increase in the isolation pattern that describes the type of houses can be seen in all counties, but it is particularly high in those belonging to the first ring. The fact suggests that, during the decade, there has been an increase in the differences within the population that reside in precarious houses and

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9 The difference in the index value was considered as relevant when above 10%.

10 Between 1992 and 2001 there were changes in the conformation by suburban areas. Although we have the segregation index of the 24 conglomerates revealed by the 2001 census, we have set aside the counties of *Morón, Ituzaingó* and *Hurlingham*, the three of them formed part of Morón in 1991. *Esteban Echeverría* and *Ezeiza*, which branched from the first, were also set apart. On the other hand, we have been able to measure the segregation index of those towns which resulted from the subdivision of *General Sarmiento* County, basing our research on the information on sections belonging to each of the new counties in 1991. This is the reason why *José C. Paz, Malvinas Argentinas* and *San Miguel* are included in the analysis of this section.

those who do not, and that the disparity in those counties nearer Buenos Aires City (which are the ones that have a reliable urban infrastructure network) has aggravated. The flexibility in the real estate market, and the poor sectors´ impossibility to acquire houses that are in agreement with legal standards show a segregation pattern that seems to strengthen in the 90´s.

Even though there have been different behaviours in the segregation depending on the variable with which it is measured, an implicit assumption is that all of them reflect different dimensions of the social deficit. Therefore, we could expect that similar relative values for each dimension might coincide spatially. A way in which this can be evaluated is through the distributions´ level of association – e.g. through simple correlation rates –. Table 3.3 shows the high association between different dimensions of analysis.

Around 2001 it was also verified that the counties with higher dissimilarity within themselves are the ones belonging to the first ring. Contrary to this, the isolation indexes of these counties are very low and indicate the lowest relative importance of these groups within the areas where they are concentrated.

Urban Segregation in Greater Buenos Aires. 2001

Within the Greater Buenos Aires Counties urban segregation is higher when considering smaller census tracks than fractions, that is radios. Urban segregation by education is higher both with Duncan and Bell indexes at the radio level. Its values are about 30% in some counties (Gráphic 3.1).

By 2001 the counties with higher inner dissimilarity are those belonging to the first ring. On the other side, the isolation indexes of these counties are low, which

indicates the less relative weigh of these groups in the segments were they are concentrated (Graphic 3.2).

Finally it is interesting to highlight that the residential segregation measured by education is lower than when measured by other aspects. Health coverage and housing type reach the highest values. The first one is particularly high when considering the isolation index. In some counties of the second ring these indexes reach values near to 50%. Segregation by housing type is the aspect that most incidence has in segregation according to the Duncan.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a first approach to segregation patterns in Buenos Aires. The results highlight the necessity of deepening in the study of segregation, especially in what concerns the index and indicators selected, and in relation to the territorial scale where they are applied. There are some interesting conclusions to consider.

In the first place when considering the extremes of the period under study -1990-2000- residential segregation measured both by dissimilarity and isolation, increased only when is was estimated by health coverage. This finding is interesting and gives a clue of the pattern that guides segregation in the area: it follows changes that take place in the labor market. These changes, which increased job insecurity, precariousness and instability, had during the nineties territorial impacts.

On the second place it is to highlight that precarious housing increased everywhere in the area. This is reflected in a greater isolation of the houses according to this aspect.

Another interesting result is that residential segregation measured by the head of household education, has been stable during the nineties. However it increased within the counties of the second ring of the area.

In general, by 2001, the counties with higher level of dissimilarity according to the aspects considered are those of the first ring. On the other hand, the isolation indexes of these counties are low indicating the relatively lower weight of these groups in the segments where they are concentrated. These findings suggest that those counties with higher population growth rate –those of the second ring- have been growing following a pattern of residential segregation.

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TABLES

Table 3.1 Greater Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires City and 24 counties of Greater Buenos Aires by district. Population in 1991 and 2001, and intercensus variation

County (Partido)	Population		Absolute variation	Relative variation %
	1991	2001		
Total GBA	**10918027**	**11460575**	**542548**	**4,9**
Buenos Aires City	2.965.403	2.776.138	-189.265	-6,4
24 Cities of Greater Buenos Aires	7.952.624	8.684.437	731.813	9,2
Almirante Brown	450.698	515.556	64.858	14,4
Avellaneda	344.991	328.980	-16.011	-4,6
Berazategui	244.929	287.913	42.984	17,5
Esteban Echeverría (1)	198.335	243.974	45.639	23,0
Ezeiza (2)	75.298	118.807	43.509	57,8
Florencio Varela (3)	254.940	348.970	94.030	36,9
General San Martín	406.809	403.107	-3.702	-0,9
Hurlingham (4)	166.935	172.245	5.310	3,2
Ituzaingó (5)	142.317	158.121	15.804	11,1
José C. Paz (6)	186.681	230.208	43.527	23,3
La Matanza	1.121.298	1.255.288	133.990	11,9
Lanas	468.561	453.082	-15.479	-3,3
Lomas de Zamora	574.330	591.345	17.015	3,0
Malvinas Argentinas (7)	239.113	290.691	51.578	21,6
Merlo	390.858	469.985	79.127	20,2
Moreno	287.715	380.503	92.788	32,2
Morón (8)	334.301	309.380	-24.921	-7,5
Quilmes	511.234	518.788	7.554	1,5
San Fernando	144.763	151.131	6.368	4,4
San Isidro	299.023	291.505	-7.518	-2,5
San Miguel (9)	212.692	253.086	40.394	19,0
Tigre	257.922	301.223	43.301	16,8
Tres de Febrero	349.376	336.467	-12.909	-3,7
Vicente López	289.505	274.082	-15.423	-5,3

(1) The surface of the county has been modified. State Lwas 11.550 from 20/10/1994

(2) It is created with lanas from the Counties of Esteban Echeverría. State Law 11.550 from 20/10/1994.

(3) County with land modification. State Law 11.480 del 25/11/1993.

(4) It is created with lands from the county of Morón. State Law 11.610 from 28/12/1994.

(5)) It is created with lands from the county of Morón. State Law 11.610 from 28/12/1994

(6) It is created with lands from the county of General Sarmiento. State Law 11.551 from 20/10/1994.

(7)It is created with lands from the county of General Sarmiento. State Law 11.551 from 20/10/1994.

(8) The land of this county has been modified. State Law 11.610 from 28/12/1994.

(9) is created with lands from the county of General Sarmiento. State Law 11.551 from 20/10/1994.

Source: National Census of Population and Housing 1991– 2001 – National Institute on Statistics (INDEC)

Table 3.2 Segregation indexes for Greater Buenos Aires and Buenos Aires City. 1991-2001 by County and Census Fraction

	DISIMILARITY INDEX		ISOLATION INDEX	
Greater Buenos Aires	1991	2001	1991	2001
Education				
By County	0,108	0,115	0,225	0,211
By Census Fraction	0,210	0,225	0,248	0,237
Migration				
By County	0,151	0,091	0,059	0,120
By Census Fraction	0,282	0,138	0,081	0,129
Poverty –UBN				
By County	0,157	0,173	0,169	0,164
By Census Fraction	0,329	0,315	0,222	0,202
Type of Housing				
By County	0,307	0,283	0,202	0,282
By Census Fraction	0,478	0,473	0,280	0,383
Health Coverage				
By County	0,128	0,148	0,326	0,463
By Census Fraction	0,242	0,262	0,361	0,497
Buenos Aires City				
Education				
By Department	0,172	0,192	0,086	0,081
Migration				
By Department	0,137	0,127	0,051	0,151
Poverty –UBN				
By Department	0,246	0,307	0,102	0,111
Type of Housing				
By Department	0,362	0,380	0,009	0,110
Health Coverage				
By Department	0,106	0,188	0,156	0,242

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the National Census of Population and Housing - 1991 and 2001 (INDEC)

Table 3.3a Segregation Indexes for Greater Buenos Aires Counties. 1991-2001

	Education				**Type of Housing**				**Health Coverage**			
	Dissimilarity		Isolation		Dissimilarity		Isolation		Dissimilarity		Isolation	
Counties	*1991*	*2001*	*1991*	*2001*	*1991*	*2001*	*1991*	*2001*	*1991*	*2001*	*1991*	*2001*
Alm Brown	0,161	0,163	0,247	0,235	0,299	0,298	0,132	0,351	0,161	0,172	0,364	0,497
Avellaneda	0,156	0,183	0,199	0,184	0,355	0,421	0,045	0,198	0,179	0,147	0,259	0,377
Berazategui	0,051	0,070	0,246	0,214	0,217	0,167	0,099	0,232	0,113	0,107	0,334	0,492
E.Echeverría	0,122	0,160	0,276	0,236	0,293	0,358	0,124	0,410	0,166	0,243	0,404	0,527
Ezeiza		0,062		0,243		0,106		0,443		0,096		0,536
Florencio Varela	0,087	0,093	0,309	0,282	0,144	0,271	0,329	0,499	0,120	0,154	0,431	0,607
San Miguel	0,175	*0,233*	0,244	0,232	0,342	0,437	0,275	0,394	0,217	0,281	0,374	0,503
Malvinas Argentinas	0,102	0,097	0,290	0,268	0,164	0,227	0,298	0,392	0,077	0,086	0,386	0,532
J.C. Paz	0,144	0,109	0,314	0,290	0,672	0,286	0,383	0,495	0,215	0,170	0,446	0,586
San Martín	0,188	0,215	0,216	0,208	0,410	0,450	0,055	0,226	0,201	0,213	0,319	0,444
La Matanza	0,199	0,205	0,270	0,262	0,490	0,482	0,135	0,439	0,222	0,260	0,400	0,549
Lanas	0,184	*0,210*	0,222	0,215	0,384	0,445	0,078	0,236	0,191	0,194	0,295	0,415
Lomas de Zamora	0,246	0,298	0,267	0,276	0,461	0,574	0,201	0,461	0,326	0,364	0,391	0,530
Merlo	0,154	0,147	0,271	0,257	0,312	0,334	0,191	0,440	0,197	0,209	0,421	0,570
Moreno	0,118	*0,157*	0,279	0,262	0,232	0,229	0,313	0,452	0,139	0,154	0,459	0,612
Morón		0,229		0,162		0,468		0,161		0,197		0,354
Ituzaingó	0,197	0,128	0,194	0,148	0,373	0,259	0,012	0,169	0,192	0,135	0,297	0,424
Hurlingham		0,115		0,193		0,258		0,188		0,137		0,432
Quilmes	0,200	0,221	0,254	0,248	0,409	0,408	0,152	0,327	0,291	0,267	0,345	0,471
S. Fernando	0,184	*0,244*	0,265	0,244	0,398	0,376	0,184	0,265	0,213	0,259	0,376	0,462
San Isidro	0,218	*0,238*	0,153	0,129	0,378	0,422	0,050	0,130	0,161	0,228	0,217	0,303
Tigre	0,116	0,100	0,272	0,228	0,280	0,244	0,109	0,297	0,145	0,128	0,389	0,498
Tres de Febrero	0,176	0,195	0,195	0,176	0,423	0,368	0,008	0,122	0,200	0,181	0,304	0,404
Vte López	0,226	0,265	0,114	0,100	0,395	0,478	0,033	0,087	0,180	0,215	0,186	0,261

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the National Census of Population and Housing - 1991 and 2001 (INDEC)

Table 3.3b Correlations Between the Different Indexes of Segregation of the Variables of the Analysis. Greater Buenos Counties. 1991-2001

Correlations 1991. Duncan Index

	Education	Health Coverage	Poverty	Type of Housing
Education	1	,908(**)	,908(**)	,634(**)
Health Coverage	,908(**)	1	1,000(**)	,676(**)
Poverty	,908(**)	1,000(**)	1	,676(**)
Type of Housing	,634(**)	,676(**)	,676(**)	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Bell Index

	Education	Health Coverage	Poverty	Type of Housing
Education	1	,954(**)	,944(**)	,789(**)
Health Coverage	,954(**)	1	,882(**)	,789(**)
Poverty	,944(**)	,882(**)	1	,765(**)
Type of Housing	,789(**)	,789(**)	,765(**)	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations 2001. Duncan Index

	Education	Health Coverage	Poverty	Type of Housing
Education	1	,846(**)	,944(**)	,925(**)
Health Coverage	,846(**)	1	,816(**)	,830(**)
Poverty	,944(**)	,816(**)	1	,967(**)
Type of Housing	,925(**)	,830(**)	,967(**)	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

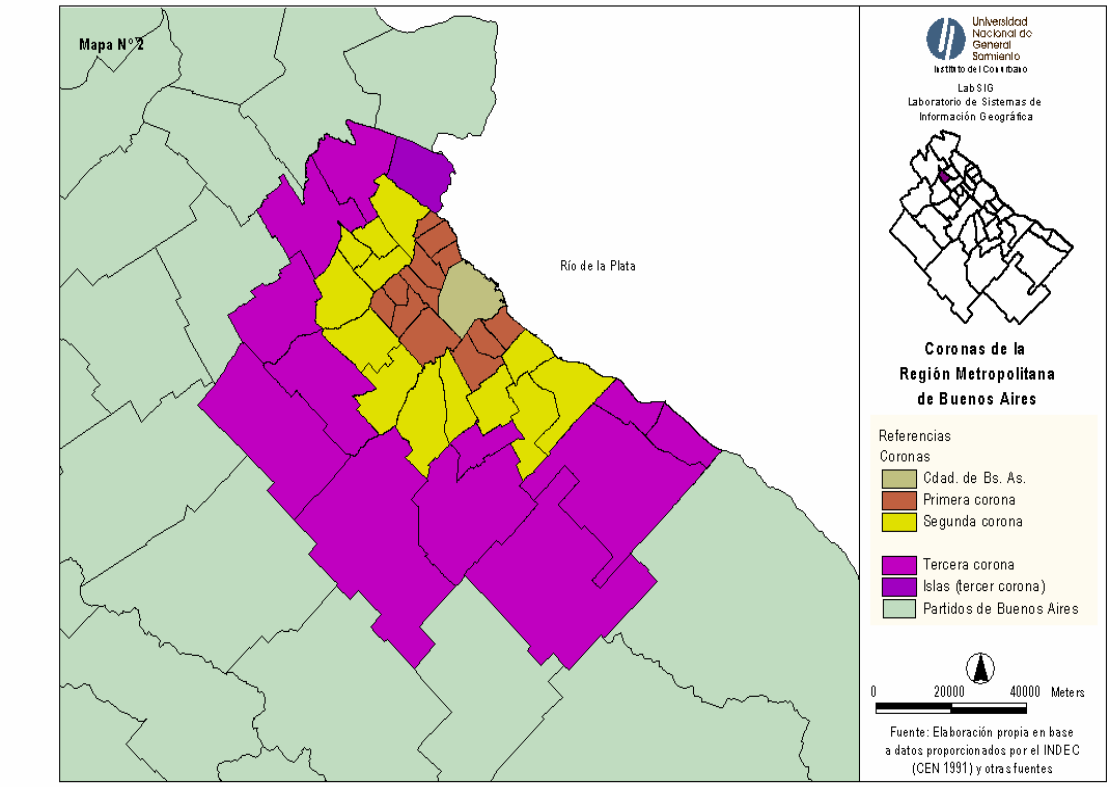
Bell Index

	Education	Health Coverage	Poverty	Type of Housing
Education	1	,930(**)	,916(**)	,918(**)
Health Coverage	,930(**)	1	,919(**)	,926(**)
Poverty	,916(**)	,919(**)	1	,961(**)
Type of Housing	,918(**)	,926(**)	,961(**)	1

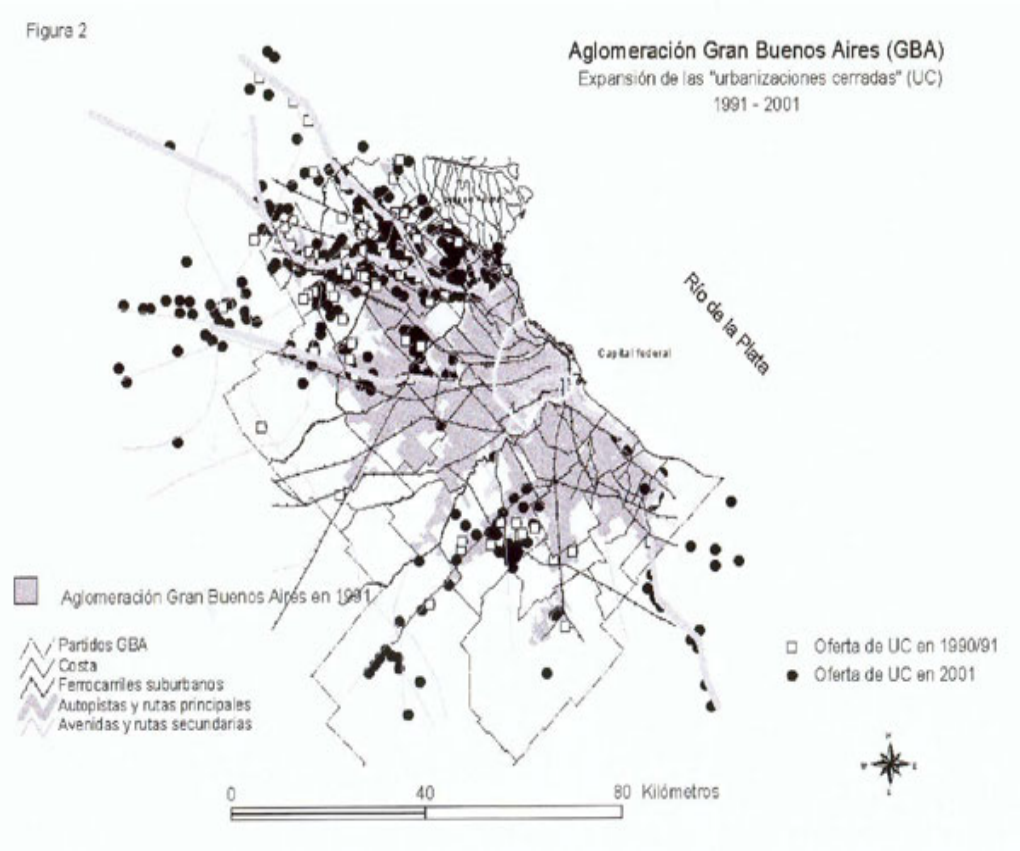
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

MAPS

Map 3.1 Greater Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires City and the surrounding Counties according to the Ring they belong to



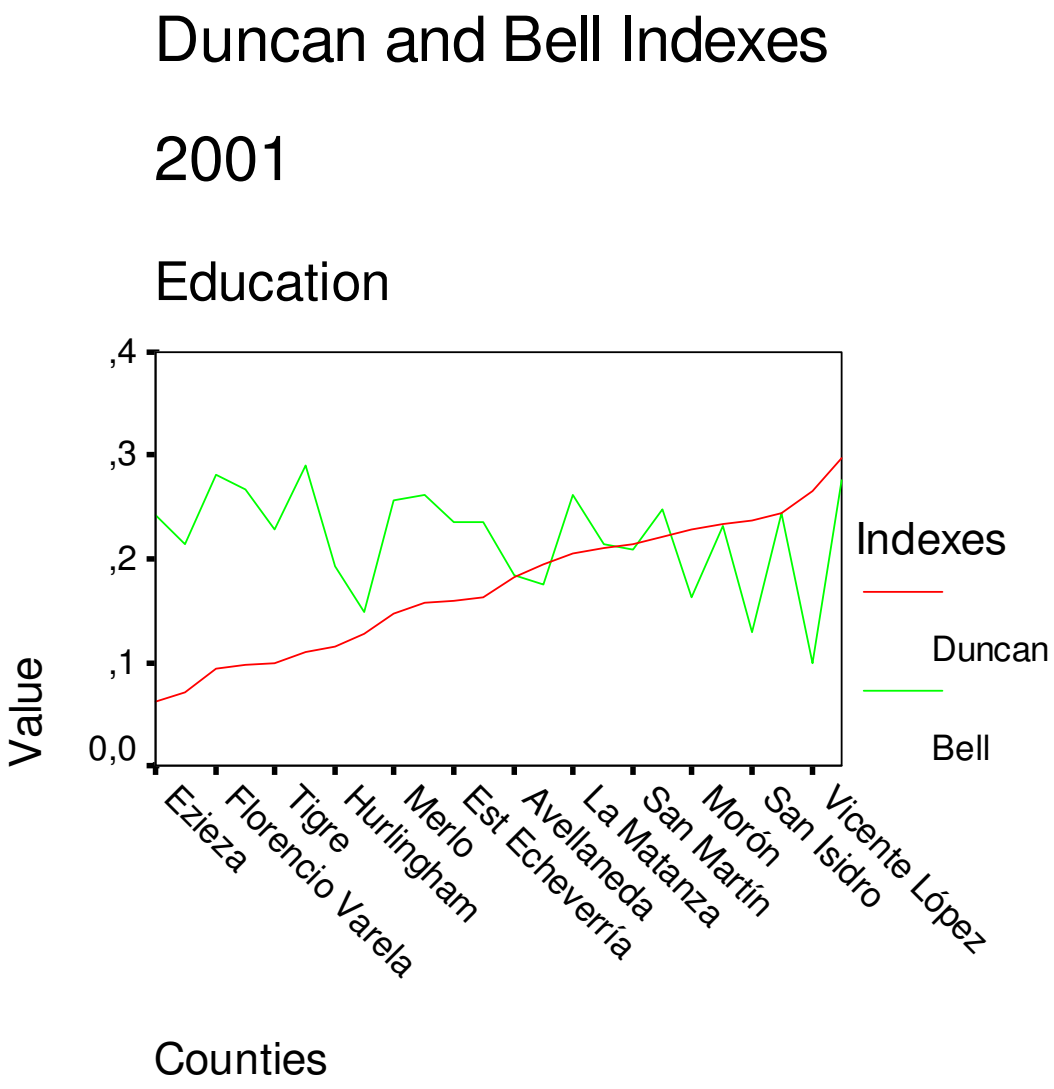
Map 3.2 Expansion of gated urbanizations between 1991 - 2001



Source: Torres, 2001

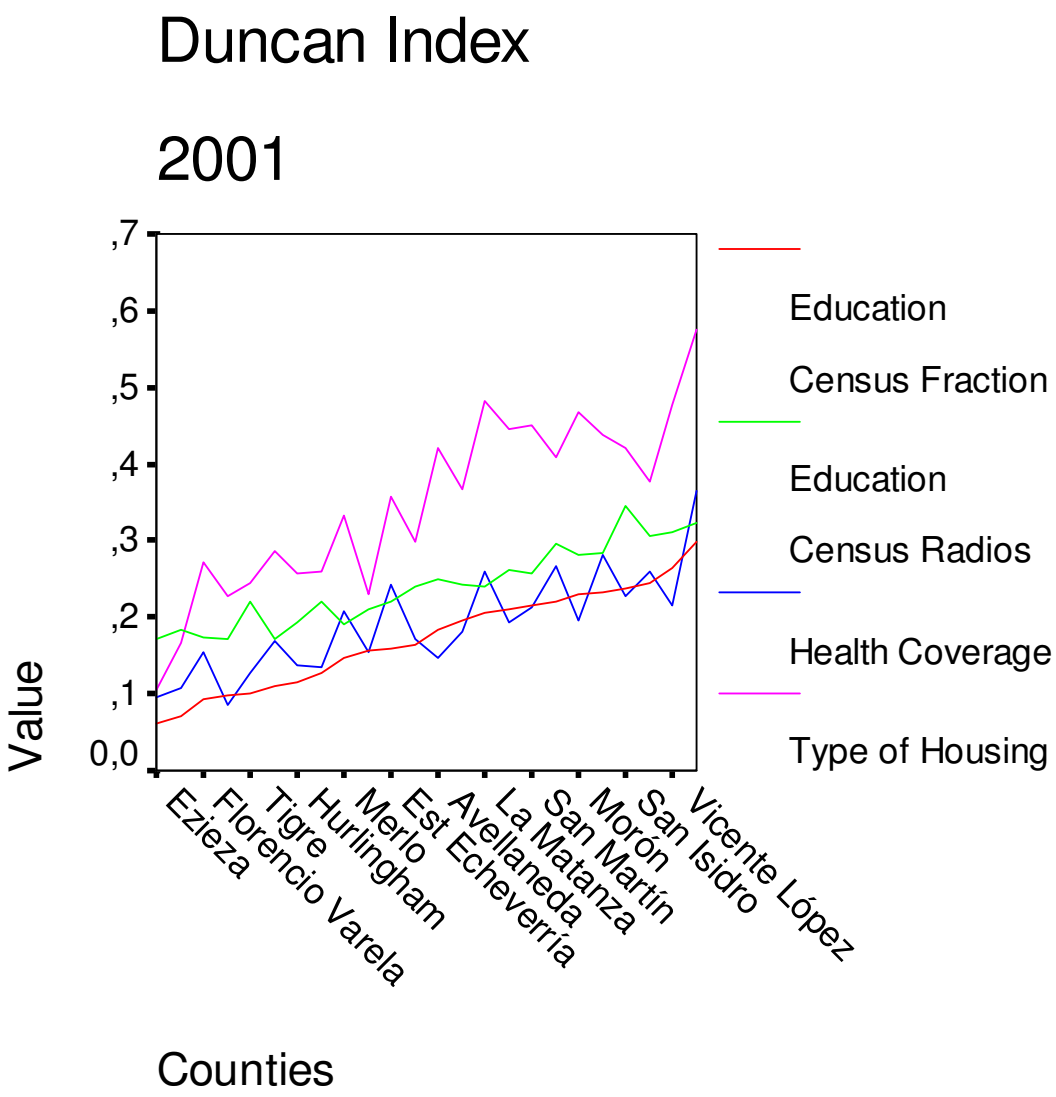
GRAPHICS

Graphic 3.1 Duncan and Bell indexes at the Fraction and County level. Greater Buenos Aires Counties

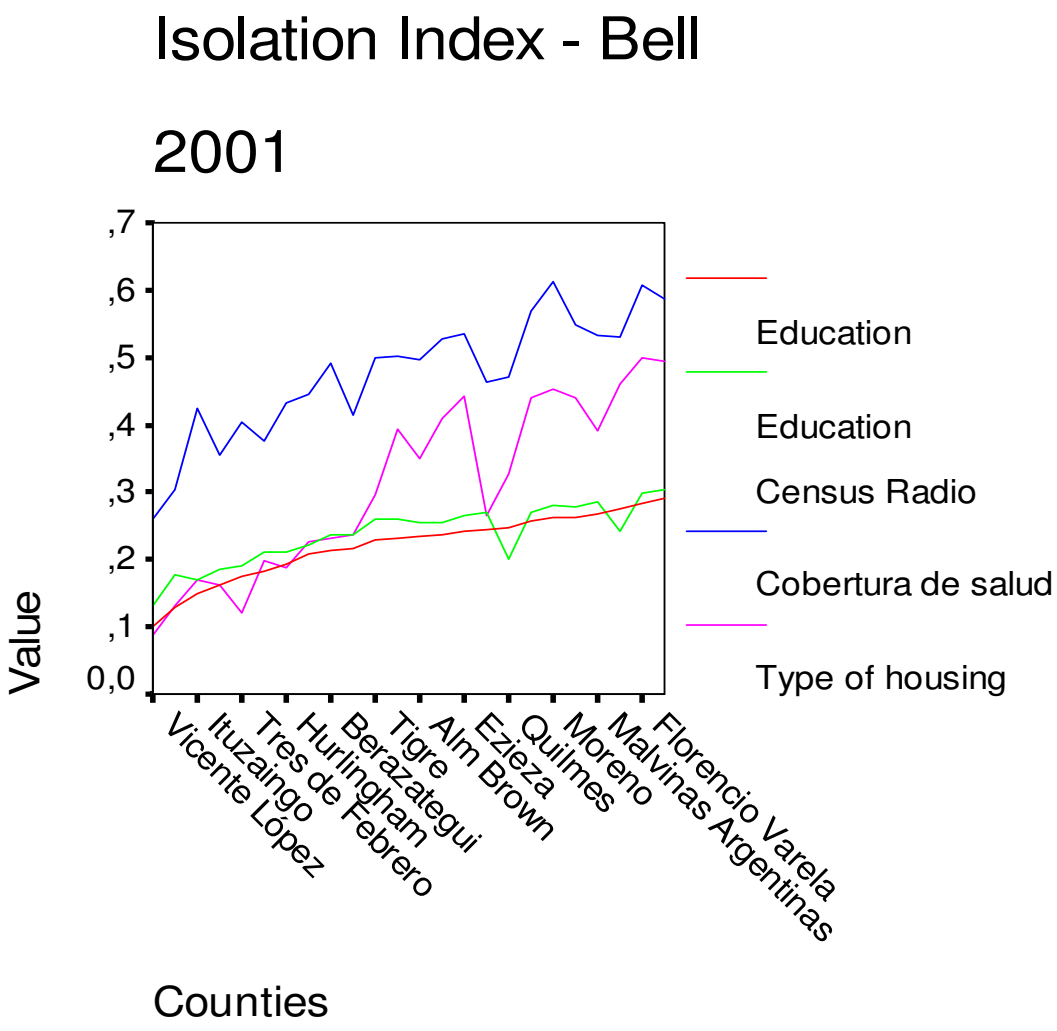


Source: Prepared by the author using data from the National Census of Population and Housing 2001 (INDEC)

Graphic 3.2 Duncan and Bell Indexes. Education, Health Coverage and Housing Type. Greater Buenos Aires Counties



Graghic 3.2 (continuos) 1



Source: Prepared by the author using data from the National Census of Population and Housing 2001 (INDEC).

CHAPTER 4:

URBAN SETTLEMENTS IN GREATER BUENOS AIRES

SETTLEMENTS CHOSEN FOR THIS STUDY

This chapter describes the process of poor settlements conformation: I distinguish between the processes that gave birth to slums and those related to squatter settlements. In order to present the socioeconomic context of the settlements chosen for the thesis, I present a characterization of the counties where the chosen settlements belong to, and the main changes they went through during the nineties. Finally, there is a description of the four settlements chosen for this thesis, according to some relevant variables as a frame of reference for the information supplied by the households interviewed for the study.

Poor settlements in Greater Buenos Aires. Slums and Squatter or Seized Settlements

Marginalized urban areas ('asentamientos urbanos carenciados') 'are constituted by groups of housing, built by their inhabitants with technical and non-conventional methods, on land that generally has been illegally occupied. They include faulty environmental conditions and deficient urban infrastructure and public services. In these settlements, a subgroup of urban inhabitants live under poor conditions, with high levels of risk and unsatisfied basic needs'. Basic needs, such as sanitation, garbage removal, and adequate supplies of clean water, go unmet in these squatter settlements. Many of these settlements are on unsuitable public and private land, subject to periodic floods, landslides, earthquakes, and other natural and man-made disasters (Hardoy 1992).

In Argentina, especially in Greater Buenos Aires, there are *two main types of marginal urban areas*: slums or shantytowns, and lands recently 'seized' ('tomas de tierra') or squatter lands. Slums were formed during the forties and fifties by migrant populations; the first seized lands -'tomas'- appeared around the 80s. Native of Buenos Aires formed these new settlements as the result of a joint process of irregular land occupation. The 'seized land' occupants, unlike slum dwellers, respected the urban infrastructure of the area and tried to apply it to the new settlement. They, for example, delimited plots of land for each household (Agostinis, Gazzoli and Pastrana 1990). Following I will further describe these two type of settlements.

Slums

Slums emerged and expanded during the forties and fifties.[56] The growth of these dwellings is related to the historical evolution undergone by the metropolitan area of Greater Buenos Aires (Facciolo, 1981). Slums grew on illegally occupied public or private land, without any kind of urban planning or respect for the municipal building line. They represent a type of dwelling set up with the aim of housing the migrations coming from the different states and boundary countries who were arriving to the city in search of jobs. The reason for this was the light industrialization process taking place in Buenos Aires which resulted in workshops and factories with an intensive use of labor, such as the case of textiles, or the growth of the existing factories producing goods which

[56] About the origin and characterization of slums see Lidia De la Torre, "La ciudad residual" in J.L.Romero and L.A.Romero, comp., Buenos Aires, historia de cuatro siglos, Ariel, Buenos Aires, 1983; Hugo Ratier, Villeros y villas miseria, CEAL, Buenos Aires, 1985; M.Bellardi y A.De Paula, Villas miseria: origen, erradicación y respuestas populares, CEAL, Buenos Aires, 1986. These authors agree in that the origin of slums goes back to the 30s, when the first precarious houses appeared in the port area of the city.

hitherto had been imported and were now supplying the market internal demand. At the same time, due to prevailing conditions and structural reasons, agricultural work was no longer retaining these people.

Characteristic features of slums have been their urban location and their configuration. Their proximity to the work places and to the means of transportation determined the location of slums in the city (Merklen 2001). [57]

In reference to their internal configuration, the main characteristics of slums are overcrowding, the very precarious nature of their dwellings and the irregular planning of the plots of land. When they first appeared, these dwellings were built with waste materials such as bits of old cars, metal sheets, stolen signs or boards, bits of wood, etc. But later these were replaced by other less precarious materials, and now the oldest slum dwellings are mostly made of masonry. There is no doubt that these slums concentrate the largest number of the poorest quality dwellings in the city, but generally speaking and within this most precarious condition, these poor neighborhoods have undergone some improvement in regards to their first years (Merklen 2001).

The phenomenon regarding the improved quality of the dwellings, tends to be described as a process of "slum consolidation" and even as "highly consolidated slums". This means that the dwellers have slowly replaced earth floors with cement, tiles or ceramics, the wooden or metal walls with bricks and masonry and even some trees have grown between the shacks. But overcrowding is still a constant. This untidy overcrowding of shacks and people has become worse over time.

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[57] Merklen in his ethnographic study on three Greater Buenos Aires urban settlements affirmed that "All my reports were coincident in that what they were searching for was a job, and then a place where to live that would be near the working place… Perhaps the denomination as "villa de emergencia" (slum) refers to the transitorily in which both neighbors and authorities conceived those settlements" (Merklen 2001:3)

These neighborhoods are made up of a great number of shacks placed in very close spaces and too many people to a shack. It is difficult to distinguish streets, squares or plots of land and green space and recreational grounds are practically non-existent. Alleyways, the main means of circulation, have become a mythical element when describing a slum scene. This make-up reflects the spontaneity and disorder that characterizes poor settlements.

At present slums are established in urban areas offering its inhabitants very deficient livelihood conditions. This is the result not only of the precarious nature of their dwellings and overcrowding, but also due to lack of public services and inadequate occupational/social integration.

In Greater Buenos Aires, the fact that slums emerged during the middle of the century, makes their characteristics differ from other more recently conformed poor urban settlements, such as self built precarious neighborhoods and the squatter settlements established during recent years. The following are some of the main aspects to highlight from slums:

– They are the result of unplanned processes of occupying the place. They are the result of individual practices over a period of time which differ from those which are planned and carried out at point in time.

– Its occupants have not respected the existing urban planning of the area. The dwellings are built with waste materials. After some time some of the inhabitants have built their dwellings with masonry, but the end results is always a precarious dwelling.

– Land proprietary procedures are not frequent and any intent to give this problem a solution is difficult due to overpopulation and the complicated way in which the dwellings are set up.

– Their formation and consolidation are generally related to the migratory phenomenon of four or five decades ago.

– Slum dwellers' socio-demographic and labor characteristics place them on disadvantage regarding the rest of the population of Greater Buenos Aires. [58]

– They present a high population rate, partly due to the factors mentioned above.

– Their population are stigmatized by the population living outside their boundaries. They are cruelly called "cabecitas negras" and "negros villeros" which is equivalent to "black slum people" or "slummy people", etc. (Ratier, 1975).

Settlements Resulting from Collective Squatting. Recently Seized Lands

This phenomenon is known as "settlements on land illegally occupied", "tomas de tierra" or squatters for short, which give these places their own characteristic identity. Seized lands emerged during the last Military government and they were carried out by the involved sectors as a collective strategic solution to their housing problem [59] In Greater Buenos Aires, land settlements took place when poor people were expelled from Buenos Aires city as a result of slum uprooting programs and an increase in rent prices.

[58] See Ana L. Suárez 1996, for a characterization of slum households and population in comparison with the overall Greater Buenos Aires population.
[59] The first seized land took place in 1981 in the County of Quilmes, in the south of Greater Buenos Aires.

Three issues differentiate these settlements from the ‘slum’ phenomenon: the action strategy, the objectives and the results. When analyzing them it becomes clear that there is a rationale that gives them meaning and connects them logically (PROHA, 1990). Unlike slum dwellers, their protagonists are people born in the city or having spent many years in it. Their shared objective is to obtain a plot of land on which to build their house and make up a neighborhood. Not being able to satisfy this need through the market, they make use of this ‘illegal’ strategy, and once they have occupied the land they seek out its owner so as to legalize their situation by offering to buy the land.

The occupied land is subdivided respecting the construction planning of the surroundings – division of land into squares, street planning, size of plots, etc. - one plot per family where only one home can be built and depending on the size of the settlement, a space is kept free for community needs. This space planning is a decisive issue when later trying to obtain ownership of the land.

On the other hand, once the families have established in the settlement, a new stage begins, which could be called a ‘process of consolidation’. This process can be achieved thanks to organizing processes which coordinate the collective tasks as well as representing common interests, thus giving rise to a collective identity taken from the diversity of its protagonists and processing the contradictions and conflicts which are generated both inside the settlement and in its relations with the “outside”.

Their self-built dwellings, the proceedings initiated to obtain services (electricity, water, gas, etc), contacting the owners of the land and government authorities, seeking outside help, are all tasks which the squatter settlements start without delay. It is in this struggle to consolidate their habitat, that settlement leaders and organizations have

emerged, not exempt from conflict and internal division. Today, settlements generally recreate the aspect of the working class neighborhoods which emerged during the period of intense urbanization of the area and to which these sectors had access by means of monthly installment payments on the land, aided by state loans to build their homes.

In a survey carried out between December 1989 and March 1990 101 settlements were counted in Greater Buenos Aires with an estimated population of 173.000 inhabitants. This survey is important because it is the only one carried out for Greater Buenos Aires area, but the data was taken from interviews to municipal authorities. Therefore there could be some shortfalls, as the people carrying out this study have admitted (PROHA, 1990).

Considering the objectives of this thesis, I am interested in questioning two issues. First, is to question about what is new in this present residential segregation in Greater Buenos Aires. More specifically, what is the difference between poor settlements today and those existing over two decades ago? Secondly, the question arises as to how the difference posed by type of settlement - slums or squatter settlements - influences the degree of social isolation among their population.

Regarding the first question, referred to the main differences between poor settlements two decades ago and those existing today, Kaztman (2004) asks the same question in relation to residential segregation in Montevideo and reaches three conclusions which I think are valid for Greater Buenos Aires (although it is necessary to undertake more research to empirically contrast the proposals). The first difference is quantitative. Space segregation in Greater Buenos Aires goes a long way back. However,

today it is more severe than in the past[60]. The second difference is that the homogenously poor neighborhoods of Greater Buenos Aires are less integrated today to the rest of urban society than they were in the recent past when their links to the labor market were stronger, more stable and more protected, and they were closer to what Castel called "the wage earning society". [61] The third difference refers to framework from which the residents of the poor neighborhoods evaluate their situation. The households that were established precariously on the city fringes were the result of population movements either from rural areas or small towns. Many of the people who were migrating had high hopes of improving their quality of life, which included the symbolic acquisition of urban citizenship, actual access to consumer goods and services of a more varied nature than those obtained in their places of origin, work opportunities arising from the expansion of internal markets offering work, stimulated by import substitution and enhancement of the role of the State, all this helping to keep the mechanism to social mobility open. From the eighties the situation changes. In the first place it is an urban population moving from other urban areas. That is to say, if the first underprivileged settlements from the mid-last century originated as a result of the attraction the city held for many people, those arising in the eighties on, are marked by a process of expulsion from the cities. Secondly, what

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[60] There is no systematic register on population dwelling precarious settlements. Recurring to different sources it is possible to asset that this population has been growing. In 1956 there were about 112.350 dwellers in precarious settlements in Buenos Aires city and the Greater Buenos Aires area. By 1981 the figure raised to 304.000. The Socioeconomic Census on Slums done by the State of Buenos Aires in 1981 counted 290.072 personas in shantytowns. According to the National Census of 1991 the number had raised to 370.345 persons.

[61] In Greater Buenos Aires the neighborhoods with high working class composition have been pretty homogeneous in their composition. It was, however, a "virtuous homogeneity" coming from a good mix from the working place and the neighborhood. Its harmony was apparent in the solidarity and in the local institutionality. In the conformation of present precarious neighborhoods, on the other side, the higher fragility of working ties, and higher levels of vulnerability, limit the conformations of networks of reciprocity and the possibility of maintaining local institutions.

characterized the urban poor in the fifties was the expansion of their mobilization capacity, but today it is immobilization.

Summarizing, the present processes of space concentration faced by the poor in Greater Buenos Aires tend to generate situations of vulnerability and social exclusion. Therefore they are the basis for social isolation processes.

Regarding the second question, this thesis is based on the hypothesis that due to the characteristics described regarding history and the present conformation of slums and squatter settlements, it can be expected that the population of Greater Buenos Aires slums possess higher degree of social isolation than squatter inhabitants. I aim to support this hypothesis by the empirical evidence obtained through thesis. No study has been presented in the country on the question which I propose answering, that is to say, contrasting the degree of social isolation between types of poor settlements and its consequences on their populations. My hypothesis that the population of squatter settlements is less socially isolated than slum communities is supported by the following: 1. as squatters are more recent than slums, their population is more likely to belong to social networks and have links with persons outside the settlement; 2. the degree of organizing skills needed to become squatters, may possibly give its inhabitants a type of 'inside' and 'outside' settlement social capital featuring more numerous and more effective networks, and 3. possibly their past and present work backgrounds are better than those of the poverty stricken slum dwellers. In short, these squatters have probably descended the social ladder more recently.

I have chosen four settlements for this research work, two of them are slums and the other two squatter settlements. The four settlements belong to the Northwestern

suburbs of Buenos Aires. The slums are Villa Hidalgo and Villa Mitre. The first is a middle sized slum in the district of San Martín. Villa Mitre is one of the largest and oldest slums in Greater Buenos Aires; it is located in the city of San Miguel. The squatter settlements are Santa Elena in the Moreno district, and Barrufaldi in the district of San Miguel. The first is small and the second medium seize. Santa Elena land was occupied in 1984. It is public land, classified as "suitable for living purposes". Barrufaldi is also a public land and was classified as "not suitable for living purposes".

Before describing each of the settlements in more detail, I will briefly describe the context of Greater Buenos Aires to which the districts of my four settlements belong to.

Socio-demographic and socio-economic features of the urban agglomerates in which the settlements chosen are located

The 24 districts (or counties) belonging to Greater Buenos Aires, according to the 2001 National Census, concentrate 8.684.437 inhabitants, representing 23.8 percent of the whole country population. Of the three districts of Greater Buenos Aires, chosen for this thesis, San Martín offers the largest population concentration (403,107), followed by Moreno with 380,503 and San Miguel with 253,086. San Martín registered a decrease in population growth during the last two census, whilst in the two remaining districts an increase was registered (See Table 4.1). Moreno registered one of the highest growth rates in Greater Buenos Aires (Table 4.1).[62]

INDEC (National Statistics and Census Institute) proposes a subdivision of the metropolitan area of Greater Buenos Aires in four large district groups called Greater

[62] See also table 3.1 in the previous Chapter

Buenos Aires1, 2, 3 and 4 (GBA1), (GBA2), (GBA3) and (GBA4), delimited by similar internal statistics[63]. San Martín –where Villa Hidalgo is- belongs to GBA2 and the other two to GBA4. San Miguel and Moreno therefore, are among the worst placed as to their demographic and socio-economic indicators within Greater Buenos Aires. See Map 4.1 for the grouping of these 24 districts of Greater Buenos Aires according to this criterion.

Concentration of structural poverty levels in the districts of Moreno and San Miguel 'structural' goes a long way back, and is higher than that for the rest of Greater Buenos Aires; while in San Martín the levels are slightly lower. The basic needs of a quarter of the population in Moreno are unsatisfied[64] (Table 4.2).

The degree of structural poverty shown in the Unsatisfied Basic Needs indicator also reflects the percentage of population living in inadequate dwellings. Adding up those who live in type B dwellings[65], shacks and huts, in Moreno a third of the population live in this type of dwelling, whilst in San Martín the percentage is 1 in 10 of the population. San Miguel presents intermediate figures (Table 4.2).

When the state of Buenos Aires carried out the Socioeconomic census in slums in 1981, there were two 'consolidated' slums in the district of San Martín, classified as

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[63] The National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), classifies Greater Buenos Aires in these four areas according to their degree of poverty. The criterions of classification are the following: 1. percentage of people with health insurance; 2. percentage of dwellings with bathrooms inside; 3. percentage of households in the lowest income per capita decile; and, 4. percentage of households whose head did not complete the elementary education (INDEC 1999).

[64] The 'Unsatisfied Basic Needs Method' –NBI classifies as poor the following households: a. those in which there are three of more persons per room; b. households that live in dwellings considered 'risky'; c. households without a bathroom inside the house; d) households in which there a child between 6 and 12 years not attending school; and e. households in which there are four or more unemployed members and in which the head has low education. A household is considered poor if it fits at least one of the above five criteria. Once a household is classified as poor, all its members are also considered poor.

[65] This is a Census classification that identifies as Houses Type B those ones that do not meet a minimum building standard.

large[66] with a total of 10,638 inhabitants. There was only one poor settlement with 5,687 inhabitants in the district of General Sarmiento, which San Miguel then belonged to. At that time in Moreno no slum was registered. The population living in slums calculated by this census was of 900 persons. The National Population census of 1991 registered a total of 370,345 persons living in slums in Greater Buenos Aires. Of this total, 19,028 lived in San Martín, 45,843 in General Sarmiento district and 2,275 in Moreno.

There is no updated data regarding the amount of poor settlements per district. According to data obtained by PROHA, squatting was mostly carried out in the farthest districts of Greater Buenos Aires. Since this phenomenon the population in poor settlements in San Miguel and Moreno has grown considerably. In 1991 there were 4,500 persons living in six settlements in Moreno, and 3,500 in San Miguel.The squatting phenomenon was practically unknown in the San Martín district, as it was the district with the lowest quantity of people living in poor settlements in Greater Buenos Aires. In 1991 there were 3 small settlements with an average of 350 people living in each (PROHA, 1990). We can conclude that the population living in poor settlements in the three districts of the study, mostly live in slums in the San Martín district, and in squatter settlements in Moreno and San Miguel.

San Martín belongs to the area that the INDEC has classified as GBA2, and the remaining two districts to GBA4. GBA4 is the only agglomerate with a relative population increase between 1991-2000. Although its inhabitants have always had the highest participation in the work market, they are the ones who added to it less in the

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[66] These are settlements with more than 500 houses (Socioeconomic Census on Slums, State of Buenos Aires).

decade. The increase that did occur was caused by women of all ages participation, but specially the younger ones (up to 29 years of age). The deterioration in the labor situation of the remaining active persons of the households seriously impaired their capacity to survive, making women with small children with scarce possibilities for institutional care, become ever more vulnerable. The significant drop on the employment rate, a fall of 8.4%, places the increase in unemployment in context, heading the ranking for Greater Buenos Aires. Household heads present the highest unemployment rates in the region, being one of the groups with the riskiest labor situation: nearly 5 out of 10 unemployed heads in the area (47%) are found in this area.

Characterization of the Settlements Chosen for the Dissertation

I have chosen four settlements from which to choose the households to interview for this thesis. Two are slums and two are squatter settlements. Of these four settlements, in two of them I have done more qualitative work, Santa Elena and Barrufaldi, For them I shall carry out a more exhaustive characterization. For the other two, Villa Mitre and Hidalgo, it shall be a short description.

The characterization of the settlements is based on interviews to employees of the Department of Social Action of the Municipalities; people in charge of the different institutions aiding these settlements (school Heads and teachers, Parish priests and parsons, etc). The information offered by the interviewees proved also to be of great help. Lastly, visiting the settlements on many occasions gave me first class experience of the reality of the place.

Santa Elena squatter settlement

This settlement is located in east of the district of Moreno. It is part of an extension of settlements located on the margins of the Arroyo Catonas (Catonas stream) made up of 460 plots of land. It has seven blocks; currently 110 families live there. There are an estimated 400 inhabitants.

This settlement was founded in 1984. The land was occupied after a serious flooding in the Moreno district. It also coincided with the uprooting of a very large slum in the city of Buenos Aires. Many of the inhabitants of that slum went to live in the new settlement. Originally the land belonged to a private factory. The land where the settlement grew was a very low land, but the Catonas stream was dredged and widened.

This neighborhood has a Child Development Center and the Santa Elena football club with a field on the other side of the stream. On this land there are three primary grade schools and two kindergartens. Owing to the size of the settlement and its proximity to other ones, there are no other institutions inside. There is a proposal in hand to build a recreational park and a multiple activity hall on the land located on the other side of the stream, through a neighborhood improvement state program. In regards to the outside institutions aiding Santa Elena, apart from the Municipality, there is an NGO called Madre Tierra (Mother Earth)[67] that intervenes strategically to support the growth of the neighborhood. Services in this settlement consist of community water and electricity (there is a transformer for the settlement) but there is no gas and no drains.

Going back to the history of this settlement, a short time after it was seized several proceedings started with the Municipality of Moreno with the aim of becoming

[67] Madre Tierra is a Civic Association. Its aim is to consolidate neighborhoods.

owners of the occupied land. In 1990 Madre Tierra helped the inhabitants of the settlement to gain information on the legal state of those lands and what their possibilities were of obtaining legal possession of them. In 1991 the neighborhood is organized under a cooperative. In 1992 it obtains legal standing. In 1999 a Foundation called Vivienda y Comunidad (Housing and Community) offered them loans to build their houses. A few accepted and were able to build their homes.

Currently a state program is on execution in the settlement, which among other issues, offers the possibility of obtaining the title deed to their land and homes. Under this plan the neighborhoods were asked to organize its cooperative once again, get their paper work up to date, and help the inhabitants to organize themselves and to participate in implementing the Plan.

This settlement, in comparison to the other three, is highly organized internally, and thanks to this they have been able to obtain important improvements for its inhabitants. Each block has a delegate. When asked about turnover of the people participating in neighborhood affairs, they manifest that there are always people willing to work, the general rule being that everybody should be concerned with neighborhood improvement. It seems to be a very active neighborhood, not only because they have a very positive political "puntero" who works unconditionally for them, but also due to the organizing shills shown by neighbors, who are always in agreement at the moment of obtaining resources, and also due to the support and training obtained from Madre Tierra to achieve this organization.

Some of the conflicting aspects of the settlement are related to the following: a. Floods. In 1989 the floods occurring resulted in evacuation (outside the neighborhood).

Currently, when the stream rises the people are evacuated. B. Gangs. Some of them are in conflicting positions. Many of the interviewed claimed that internal insecurity is related to the thefts and pillaging carried out by these gangs. C. Drugs. The neighbors know who the dealers are but they are afraid to turn them in to the police.

Of the four settlements chosen, Santa Elena is the one that has achieved relatively successful community participation and neighborhood self development. Support obtained from the municipality, the competence of the settlement representative, Madre Tierra´s support and the university's backing contributed enormously for this outcome.

Barrufaldi settlement

Barrufaldi neighborhood is located in the southeastern side of the San Miguel district. It comprises approximately 40 blocks and it is inhabited by around 5000 persons. It is one of the areas of this district that concentrates the highest degrees of poverty.

Although there is not much information to this respect, it can be ascertained from the information received that except for the non-delimited public land bordering the river, on unlimited fiscal land, the remaining urbanization was carried out on land divided into plots, which started to be occupied in the forties, as was the practice in all suburban Buenos Aires, initially as an extension of Barrio Mataldi, founded in 1932.

In 1958 a school was inaugurated, Escuela 24, Gabriela Mistral, (currently N° 12), the only primary school in the neighborhood, sponsored originally by the Chilean Embassy and the Campo de Mayo Military Cavalry School. In 1964 Barrufaldi's first street were paved, although the neighborhood did not exist as such, and had no

boundaries or name. Through a Frontage Association in Bella Vista, the neighbors were able to have other streets paved by paying for installments, after having gathered signatures and validated them in the municipality according to municipal paving laws. The paved streets nearest to the river, including those where the school and first aid building were located, were only paved in 1990.

The population of this settlement has come from different places; in the middle sectors there are families who have a long history in Bella Vista, mainly in the land next to Mataldi Park, the first neighborhood in Bella Vista; families who had some members in the army; and in the poorer areas those migrants coming from different parts of the country, mainly from Misiones; from other countries, Paraguayans and Bolivians; some persons uprooted from slums in the city of Buenos Aires at the end of the seventies and others who were expelled from the land on the other side of the river in the Hurlingham district towards the end of the seventies also, when the Buen Ayre highway was built.

The areas nearest to the river, where the least privileged sectors are located, experienced important changes in the mid eighties (1986) in comparison to the other sector where the population has kept stable. Owing to serious flooding in the area, most of the precarious dwellings were evacuated. These vacated lands were later slowly occupied by other migrants. This is evidenced by the great amount of people arriving from the state of Misiones.

At the end of the nineties the Reconquista river underwent various dredging works which stopped the flooding of all the neighborhood, although the homes built on the edges of the river still suffer when the river rises after heavy rain. Many neighbors still remember the terrible floods of 1959, when the river reached the Tucumán and

Paraná intersection. And also the flood that took place in 1967, after which the Ministry of Public Works of the state of Buenos Aires promised to build a dam at the source of the river in the district of Moreno. In 1986 there were further floods which resulted in many families being evacuated, the last one occurring in 2000. Due to these floods, the poorest people of this population have always lost all their belongings and generally ended up being evacuated in institutions of the area.

Some families living on the extension of land bordering the river were favored by a subsidy given by the state. This subsidy in the form of construction materials was given to enable them to build more stable homes. Thus many homes are now built of brick and cement masonry. Today one can observe these homes that have practically no free ground and are built on the embankment bordering the river.

There are many formal and informal public and private institutions in Barrufaldi, with different degrees of insertion and activity, among which there is a primary school, a kindergarten, a development fostering center, two community kitchens, two Catholic churches and two Evangelical churches. Nearby, outside the neighborhood there is another primary school and a secondary school both with close ties to the neighborhood.

One of the outstanding points emerging from the interviews and from analyzing the work of the various neighborhood aid institutions, is the degree of institutional fragmentation that exists. They hardly ever work jointly and in a coordinated way. Project 95 community kitchen is barely a block away from Tortuguitas but they do not relate in any way although both are administered by the same institution. Its relationship with institution incharged is not good As it is a “political” kitchen it was used to working directly with the municipality to whom they did not have to give explanations or draw up

projects. They also get on badly with the development fostering center, who gathered neighbors' signatures to prosecute them after a youth caught stealing was killed in the neighborhood and whom the coordinator of the kitchen defended.

In contrast to the Santa Elena settlement, internal diversity is widespread in this neighborhood and institutions are constantly in conflict. Thus carrying out improvements has become very difficult.

Neighborhoods Mitre and Villa Hidalgo

Barrio Mitre is in the district of San Miguel. The whole neighborhood includes 90 heterogeneous and densely populated squares, with practically no registers or official statistics. In spite of its easy geographic delimitations, Mitre does not possess the characteristics of an undivided neighborhood. Within it there are many internal subdivisions, as a result of historical and socioeconomic factors. Among the sectors making up this internal division, the best known is the great populated area whose inhabitants are "de facto occupants" of a 40 hectare extension of rural land. This area has been called "the slum" right from its beginnings. This slum is the second largest of the almost 500 slums in Greater Buenos Aires according to INDEC estimates during the last national census in 1991.

Its supposedly underprivileged characteristics of a "slum" have given the whole neighborhood this name and it is popularly and derogatorily known as Mitre slum. Thus the existing internal divisions are reinforced socially due to prejudices and isolation.

Villa Hidalgo in the district of San Martín, on the boundary with San Isidro, extends homogenously all along seven blocks located inside the Necochea neighborhood. It is dwelled by approximately 5,000 persons occupying 1,000 dwellings (1991 Census).

Five streets cut through this slum, two of which have been recently paved by the Municipality; no public transport goes down them.

Similarly to Mitre, all the houses have electricity but hardly any of them have it legally. Thanks to National program belonging to the Province of Buenos Aires, almost all the dwellings have running water. Until this Plan was implemented the lack of running water on both settlements caused severe problems.

Villa Hidalgo suffers from serious internal strife. Similarly to Barrufaldi, its institutions face serious confrontations. There are three delinquent gangs associated to the drug problem; each one of them is in "charge" of a certain jurisdiction of the slum. Their leaders, who have committed serious offenses, are feared by all but at the same time respected; any action which the settlement decides to carry out must be approved by these leaders. Five years ago the most feared gang leader was assassinated in the slum in a "settling of accounts" dispute between gangs. After his death, according to some testimonies, internal violence in the settlement diminished.

There are also three political activists -"punteros"- in conflict; each one following a different political line. They slow down any type of community action, content to offer aid to whoever joins their political party.

Owing to these characteristics, the slum is considered as extremely dangerous, both by its own inhabitants and by people living outside the slum. This circumstance deepens its underprivileged and isolated situation within the district.

TABLES

Table 4.1 Greater Buenos Aires and the three counties selected for the study. Population censed in 1980, 1991 y 2001 and Relative Intercensus Variation 1991-2001

County	**Population**		**Relative Variation %**
	1991	*2001*	
24 Greater Buenos Aires counties	7.952.624	8.684.437	9.2
General San Martín	406.809	403.107	-0.9
Moreno	287.715	380.503	32.2
San Miguel (*)	212.692	253.086	19.0

(*) It is created with lands from de County of General Sarmiento. State Law 11.551 from 20/10/1994

Source: National Population Census 1991- 2001. INDEC

Table 4.2 Total Greater Buenos Aires and the 3 counties selected for this study. Unsatisfied Basic Needs and Precarious Houses

Indicators	**GBA**	**San Martín**	**San Miguel**	**Moreno**
Porcentge of Poor Households (with UBN)	13,0	11,0	15,1	22,0
Porcentge of poor people (with UBN)	15,8	13,0	18,2	26,0
Porcentage of population dwelling houses type B or precarious houses	19,5	9,3	25,2	34,2

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the National Population Census 2001. INDEC

CHAPTER 5:

SETTLEMENTS HOUSEHOLD´S SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC VULNERABILITY. NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL COMPOSITION AND RISK BEHAVIOUR

This chapter compares the socio-demographic and labor situation of households in settlements with households of Greater Buenos Aires. I also analyze the incidence of living in urban settlements upon risk behavior. My objective is to understand how living in poor neighborhoods affects the vulnerability of impoverished households. The importance of the analysis performed in this chapter is that it places the problems of settlement households within the whole Greater Buenos Aires context. I processed the database of 100 settlement households drawn up for this research during 2001[68], and the Household Permanent Survey of October 2001 corresponding to Greater Buenos Aires.

The concept of vulnerability furthers a static approach on poverty, by understanding the conditions, resources and opportunities of groups going through poverty and non-poverty situations, and for whom poverty is a permanent risk. In other words, vulnerability refers to the insecurity and fragility of households when facing changes occurring in a socioeconomic environment. According to different approaches focused on classic survival strategies model, this insecurity and fragility is directly linked to the stock of assets a households counts on and how they adapt to the opportunities offered by their environment. (Moser 1998).

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[68] Both surveys, the Permanent Household Survey and one based on 100 households on settlements –the one I obtained for this research- are based on random principles, and they are representatives of those settlements. The 25 households selected on each of the four settlements allow making generalizations only to the overall households on those neighborhoods. It is necessary to highlight therefore that the comparisons among the population on settlements and the overall Greater Buenos Aires cannot be generalized to the total settlements of Greater Buenos Aires, but only to those chosen for the study.

From a more structural perspective the concept of vulnerability gives the idea of growing weakness in the social integration system suffered by some population groups (Kaztman et al., 1999; Merklen 2000). This perspective, as opposed to the one centered on the households' assets, places its emphasis in changes occurring in the job market, the supply and access to social services, etc. In this sense, vulnerability has two main dimensions: an economic one, in which job market ties are being threatened or weakened; and a social one, characterized by the fragility of social integration networks –of families and/or communities- and access to public services. Job market vulnerability refers to the fears felt by some groups of being excluded from good quality positions – regarding income, benefits, work conditions, etc.- and experiencing unemployment and job instability in the labor aspect of their lives. In its social extent, vulnerability mainly refers to the loss of social capital and growing difficulties to gain access to basic social services, which increases the uncertainty and lack of protection of the households. Mainly, these authors place vulnerability as an intermediate situation between the extremes of integration and social exclusion which results not only in deterioration of the living conditions of low-income groups, but also in growing impoverishment (not only of incomes), and the fragility experienced during recent years by middle class groups.

Socio-demographic and Labor Characteristics of Settlement Households. Comparison with total Buenos Aires Suburban Households

The analysis on the socio-demographic and job vulnerability characteristics of settlement households is done by comparing the 100 interviewed settlement households with the Buenos Aires suburb households on the following aspects: 1. The incidence and

extension of poverty according to Poverty Line and Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBN) approaches; 2. Household structure and composition; 3. Participation of household members in the job market; 4. Labor insertion of household members; 5. Educational level and school attendance.

This socio-demographic and labor analysis allows to describe the serious social labor situation which those households are going through. The following analysis shows that the population living in urban settlements is trapped in a dead end road, which in view of the present job market context, increases their marginal situation.[69] Their tendency to enter the job market is strong, but it is frustrated by the barriers imposed by that market.

Labor segmentation negatively influences the growing isolation of these households. And their poor educational level does not help them to overcome these obstacles.

Likewise, an analysis is performed as to whether the type of settlement (squatter – slums) introduces significant differences in some of these socio-demographic and labor variables. In effect, and as expected, the population of slums presents higher degrees of vulnerability than squatter population.

Incidence and Extent of Poverty

During 2001 a strong increase in incidence and extent of poverty measured by income in Buenos Aires was registered, this being even higher in suburban Buenos Aires.

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[69] It is to highlight that the data has been collected during 2001 –period of huge crises in Argentina- and that I am analyzing data from the 2001 Permanent Household Survey. Therefore I am referring to that period in my analysis.

In October 2001 one out of three households were under the poverty line in Buenos Aires suburbs, affecting 43.2% of that population. Poverty incidence registered a strong increase with respect to 2000, registering its highest figure since 1993, which was the year with the lowest figure, after which a constant increase of poverty has been registered (Table 5.1a).

The constant increase in poverty during the past decade specially affects the most marginal households, 85.4% are under the poverty line, and half of those do not have enough income to cover the basic family food expenditure (Table 5.1b). Almost all households in marginal areas are not able to cover their basic needs. This strong indicator affecting marginal areas follows an opposite trend to the one of total urban agglomeration group, which tended to decrease during last decade. This can be expected because three out of five indicators of UBN are built on habitat variables. Nevertheless, it is interesting to underline the strong incidence of the UBN indicator on survival ability. Almost a fourth of the settlement households have four or more members for every working member and their household head possesses a low educational level. In synthesis, the strong poverty incidence in PL as well as in UBN sets the adverse context in which poor settlement households manage to survive, and also limits their possibilities of overcoming exclusion.

The type of settlement offers no important differences. In slums, nine out of ten persons live without the necessary income to cover their needs, whilst in squatter settlements, 8.4 persons suffer the same situation. Neither does the type of settlement influence poverty measured by UBN. Nevertheless, leaving out the three dwelling-related indicators, some minor differences are observed in detriment to slum households.

The UBN, according to survival ability and to children not attending class in elementary school, is higher in slum households (Table 5.1b).

These differences in poverty incidence according to settlement type, suggests that poverty in slums is greater than in squatter settlements. This is expressed both as insufficient income as well as the social characteristics of their inhabitants, which means their social composition.

Structure and Composition of Households

For the analysis of *home structure* the following aspects were taken into account: average persons per home, of children, teenagers, youths and over 64 years of age; salaried employees, average per home of inactive, active, employed, unemployed, income earners, persons per active person, persons per income earner, home composition and sex of head of family.

The households' average size in marginal urban settlements is 5.9 persons, about 2.25 more persons than in all Suburban Buenos Aires households. The large child population[70] is responsible for the recorded differences between urban settlement households and all suburban households. For the first case the average is 2.9 children per home, and for the second 0.94; that is to say that there are two more children per home for those living in settlements. Also teenage population (from 14 to 19) although to a lesser degree, contributes to increasing the average size of marginal households; there is an average 0.29 more teenagers in settlement households than in all suburban areas.

[70]Infant population is composed of people less than 14 years old. Adolescents are those between 14 -19 years. Young people are those between 20-24 years. Adutls are 25 y 64 years old. Finally old people are more that 64 years old.

From what has just been mentioned it can be stated that the quantity of children per adult is higher in poor households; there are in fact 1.75 children per adult, while in suburban households the number is only 0.60 (Table 5.2).

It is important to underline that regarding home structure, the type of settlement (slums – squatter settlements), offers little difference (Table 5.2). The values recorded for each chosen aspect are similar in both types of settlement.

Comparing *household composition* of both populations, the main difference is the higher incidence of extended households in poor settlements than in all suburban households. More than a third of settlement households are extended, while in the total suburban area the incidence is 19.5%. Nevertheless in both populations, core-family households are the ones with the largest incidence. Nevertheless, the presence of that type of households is larger for total suburban households (Table 5.3).

Households in slums have a higher tendency to become extended households and with an incomplete nucleous than households in squatter settlements. The mentioned tendency is related to a bigger incidence of female headed households.

There are many causes behind extended households. One of these causes, which I believe one important aspect is associated to how they overcome the shortage of resources and the scarce possibilities of obtaining them. Household members help each other by covering these shortages. Therefore, this decision to expand the home is a deliberate family strategy. Nevertheless, more research is needed to find out which family members extend the home. If they are adult family members (son in law, brothers, brothers in law, etc), this is very different than if they are young age members (grandchildren, nephew/niece, etc.).

Analyses focused on issues of exclusion tend to consider that the problems linked to exclusion are associated, among other issues, to changes in family composition and structure.[71] The relationship between family structure and exclusion, may be understood, according to these points of view, due to the negative incidence of single-parent families on the social and cultural capital structure of children growing up in those households. The great presence of households with women as family head in slum households could nurture this hypothesis, suggesting at the same time greater vulnerability of households in those marginal areas (Table 5.3). Therefore, considering the above-mentioned hypothesis, this research suggests that family composition is more vulnerable among inhabitants of poor settlements.

Job Market Participation

Participation of household members in the job market will be described through the populations' activity and unemployment rates, and through the average of employed and unemployed persons per household. I analyze the population's link to the job market considering sex, household position, and age group. I consider the following age groups: population between 14 and 19 years old, young people (age 20-24), adults (age 25-64), and lastly people over 64 years old.

The activity rate of the population of over 14 years old in poor settlements is a slighlty higher than in all Buenos Aires suburban area (65.5 and 56.6 respectively). Therefore, the population's working tendency is high. When analyzing the rate by sex, it

[71] See for example Kaztman (1999). His research is based on an analysis on marginality on Uruguay. See also studies on USA marginality (Wilson 1996, Jencks y Mayer 1990, among others)

is observed that while the figure for men living in settlements and in all Greater Buenos Aires is similar (around 75% in both cases), women in urban settlements have an activity rate of almost 13 points above women of the total Greater Buenos Aires (53.9 and 41 respectively), having more participation in the job market than the total of women in Buenos Aires suburbs (Table 5.4). It is interesting to highlight the differences. Causes that mainly inhibit higher possibilities of job market participation for women with low incomes – such as younger and more abundant pregnancies, higher fecundity, childcare cost, as well as causes linked to discouragement in trying to get into the job market - do not appear to be a barrier to participate in the job market at present. Since the Permanent Household Survey does not reflect the aspects to tackle these causes, analyzing them surpasses the scope of the current thesis.

The analysis of participation in the job market according household position shows a higher rate of participation of settlement spouses than spouses of overall suburban areas. There is a difference of around 20 points in average between activity rates of wives in one and the other population groups. The activity rate of other household members (excepting sons/daughters or spouses) is also a little bit higher in settlement population (Table 5.4). Therefore it is possible to conclude that settlement households tend to get one or more family members into the job market than Greater Buenos Aires households do. In other words: head of family participation in the job market tends to be accompanied by other family members to a higher degree in settlement households than in the total of Greater Buenos households.

Unemployment[72] is considerably higher for poor households members in urban settlements. Thirty seven point six percent of active population over 13 years old in urban settlements cannot find jobs; while 21.2 percent of all suburban households are in the same situation. Unemployment rates increase significantly in the young population and among wives (45.5 and 45.8 respectively). Regarding spouses, the gap with total suburban population reaches a 30.5 percent difference. A similar gap is registered between unemployment rate of women in settlements and women from the Greater Buenos Aires total.

Considering the household structures in urban settlements and in total of suburban households, the percentage of employed persons is similar (1.29 and 1.21 respectively). To the contrary, the percentage of unemployed persons is higher in very poor households; there is 0.75% unemployed persons per home, which means that out of every four households, three have one person unable to enter the job market. On the other hand, in all Greater Buenos Aires households, approximately one out of four households has an unemployed person. Likewise as with average for employed persons, differences are not observed in the average for income earners between settlement households and total of Buenos Aires suburb households. Considering that settlement households have the highest percentage of people living in them, it can be concluded that very poor households, even though having the same number of income earners than the whole of Greater Buenos Aires households, they have to support more people. In fact, the relationship between total household members and income earners is 3.90 persons in

[72] I am considering "open unemployment" as the INDEC defines it. These are people that are actively searching for a job. I am excluding those people that while searching for jobs are inserted in precarious and instable jobs (INDEC 2001).

settlement households and 2.6 in total suburban households. In other words, there are 1.3 more persons per income earners in settlement households than in suburban households (Table 5.2).

It can be concluded that the higher tendency to participate in the job market by population of urban settlements does not imply more inclusion in the job market. This population finds it very hard to actually be included in the job market. At the same time, households in urban settlements only get frustrating results when trying to get more than one family member to generate income through work.

Household Members Job Insertion

Activity and job rates of the population under study shows that an important part of the population over 14 is inserted in the job market. How is this job insertion? An analysis of this aspect allows us to understand some main facts of marginal situations in which an important part of urban settlement population is immersed. I analyze job market insertion taking the following aspects into account: job category, job type, tenure, social benefits, daily working hours, and income.

The analysis of job category shows that almost half of all working persons living in poor urban settlements are self-employed.[73] This figure more than doubles the number of self-employed workers of the total Buenos Aires suburbs. Only one third of all salaried workers receive some or all social benefits (Table 5.5).

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[73] A Self-employed worker is one that "performs his activity using only his own labour force, therefore without employing salaried workers. He uses his own instruments, machinery and installations" (Argentina, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, Encuesta Permanente de Hogares: marco teórico y metodológico de la investigación empírica, Buenos Aires, s.f.

Job instability is extremely high among workers in urban settlements. Less than a third have a permanent job. The rest perform part-time jobs, seasonal jobs, or jobs with unknown duration. Instead 83.6 percent of working people from the total of suburban areas have permanent jobs (Table 5.8). Among salaried workers, less than a fourth get all social benefits, while half of salaried workers in suburban areas are in the same situation. Job instability has a bearing on the high vulnerability of the population under study. As already analyzed, there is a high percentage of the population who are unemployed, and those who do enter the job market do so in a very precarious manner. It is very important to underline that those who have unstable and precarious jobs are permanently searching for work. In this way the jobs they perform are just used as relief to generate income to survive. Generally these workers are defined as unemployed.

Precarious job insertion is associated with low income earnings. Workers of urban settlements receive an average salary[74] of $ 256.51 a month. For the group of Greater Buenos Aires workers the average income is $ 563.

Thus, summarizing, the levels of uncertainty and instability of job insertion among workers are higher for urban settlement dwellers than for the total of working group of the area. The higher presence of self-employed, of part-time workers, of unprotected workers; the less job stability, and lower incomes, clearly confirm the argument. I believe that precarious job insertion is the base of the high degree of vulnerability in poor settlement households. As I will analyze further on, low and fluctuating incomes contribute to make the precarious labor situation even worse. This creates a high degree of uncertainty, felt by workers and their households, exposing them

[74] I am considering only workers with monetary incomes.

to situations of high social vulnerability, expressed among other things, by the lack of social protection coverage. Added to this, households experience important changes in their way of living, influencing not only their well-being, but also their behavior, life strategies and family relationships.

At the same time, the unstable and precarious job situation promotes further isolation of those living in poor settlement households. As will be analyzed further on, and as many studies have shown, work, specially if precarious and unstable, is no longer a reality which people rely on in their daily lives. Its role as identity builder, as generator of solidarity among the job community and its emerging institutions, become weakened, and as stable job participation is reduced and organizations weakened, an important source to defend rights and promote citizenship is closed down. (Kaztman 2001). Therefore the fragile link to the job market expressed in the precarious and unstable work situation becomes one of the mechanisms nourishing the social isolation of urban poverty.

Education

Educational Level and School Attendance

The disadvantageous situation in which settlement household members is also observed when taking into account the educational level reached by the population over 13 years old. Almost three quarters of them have not reached high school. For the total suburban population slightly under half are in the same situation. The fact that it is the youngest poor population, makes these differences even worse due to the expansion of the education system. The type of settlement introduces slight differences. The

inhabitants of slums have a lower level of education than their counterparts in squatter settlements. (Table 5.6). This means that the higher the isolation and poverty of the urban areas the lower the educational achievements.

At the same time, school attendance is an aspect showing greater fragility of the link existing between the formal education system and poor populations. Among poor teenagers, four out of ten are school dropouts; there are almost no young people in the formal education system. In the Buenos Aires suburbs group only two out of ten teenagers have dropped out of school, and almost a third of young people receive education (Table 5.7).

In the majority of settlement households, the most educated member has only finished elementary school, and in four out of ten households, at least one member has incomplete high school level.

Instead, in the suburban group of households, the greatest concentration is observed in the highest levels of education. In just over a fourth of mentioned households, at least one member began higher education (Table 5.8).

Another measure indicating the education level and human resources of households is the *household human capital*. I measured it calculating the average years of formal education of household members I have considered family members over 15 year old.

In Buenos Aires suburbs the average schooling years of household members is 9.2 with a standard deviation of 3.3 years. In the100 interviewed settlement households, the average schooling years of 15 year olds and older, decreases to 6.5 years, with a standard deviation of 2.7. This means that on average adult members and teenagers of

urban settlement households do not reach the minimum years required to finish elementary school. Once again the type of settlement introduces a slight difference. Households in slums have an average of one year less education than their counterparts in squatter settlements (Table 5.9). There are only 22 percent of households in the poorest areas whose members have an average of over 7 years of schooling; a similar situation occurs to more than a third of households in squatter settlements (Table 5.9bis).

It can be concluded that the population in urban settlements are trapped in a dead end road, which, in the current job market context, increases their marginal status. Their tendency to enter the job market is high, but it is frustrated by the barriers imposed by that market. Their education level does not help them to overcome these obstacles. At the same time slight differences were found between households in slums and households in squatter settlements, suggesting that social vulnerability is greater among those households settled in areas with higher isolation and marginal backgrounds.

The comparison carried out between settlement households and the rest of the suburban areas, and between settlement type, indicates that the population living in settlements present a more fragile or precarious social composition than the group from suburban areas. It can also be stated that this composition also varies according to settlement type. Those settlements with deeper marginal and isolation backgrounds, such as slums, are generally characterized by a more precarious social composition. The social composition of neighborhoods is important because its impact enables or blocks the accumulation of human and social capital in children and young people. The results of this impact shall be discussed in the second part of this Chapter.

Social Composition of the Neighborhood and Risk Behaviors

The objective of this second part of the Chapter is to perform an analysis which will allow us to understand if the social composition of the neighborhood directly influences the way its inhabitants behave. The leading question is: Does the social structure of the neighborhood influence its inhabitants' strategies and behavior?[75] To measure the impact of type of neighborhood on the well-being of households, the risk behavior of its inhabitant is taken as an important variable. This behavior is a component of their course of action. Therefore, neighborhood impact is measured indirectly, through the influence exerted by type of neighborhood (regarding their social composition) on the risk behavior of the neighborhoods' inhabitants. The hypothesis to be looked into here is if urban settlement inhabitants present greater risk behavior than those not living in marginal neighborhoods, and if living in marginal areas influences this behavior or not. Likewise I carry out an analysis see whether settlement type introduces important differences.

As I argued in the first part of this Chapter, the social composition of settlements is more fragile and precarious than in the total of Buenos Aires suburbs. There are differences in social composition according to settlement type. Those settlements with a longer history of poverty, such as slums, show a more precarious social composition than the more recent squatter settlements.

Risk behaviors refer to courses of action that can block the accumulation of human resources and social capital assets. The object, in short, of this analysis is to see

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[75] A detailed American literature review on the neighborhood effects in relation with different behaviors can be found in: Christopher Jencks and Susan Mayer, "*The Social consequences of growing up in a poor neighborhood"*, in Laurence Lynn and Michael McGeary, eds, *Inner City Poverty in the United States*. National Academy Press, Washington, 199: 111-186

whether the social composition of neighborhoods influences risk behaviors. I chose two risk behavior indicators: a. school lagging or educational system drop-outs, and b. young boys and girls between the ages of 15 and 24 who do not study, work or actively look for work.

The variable related to children who lag behind in school is focused on risk behavior identified in very young children. This is a measure expressed as an average of all those children, between 8 and 15 whose educational achievements are lower than those, which according to their ages, they would have achieved if they had not failed or dropped out of school. It is a variable that allows measuring indirectly the obstacles children faced in order to continue their formal education. It is considered risk behavior because it could act as an obstacle to the accumulation of assets that enable competent insertion in the job market.

The second variable is related to risk behaviors observed in teenagers and young people. It is identified a population between 15 and 24 that, at the moment of this survey, were not part of the educational system, were not inserted in the job market, and were not searching for jobs. That is to say, young people that are not performing any of the expected activities (school or work) according to their age. Their integration with society is practically null and that is why they are considered a risk behavior group.

The variation-determining factor in these indicators has been deeply analyzed by scholar. The literature review done by Jenck and Mayer compiles results that confirm the significant impact of neighborhoods on this behavior. Even though a similar compilation for Latin American countries has not been done yet, it can practically be assured that the

advances in this field of research are mostly focused on how home characteristics and their living conditions affect risk behavior.[76]

To assign the values of my independent variable: social composition of the neighborhood I undertook the following steps. Since settlement type, as already analyzed, has an impact on the social composition of neighborhoods, slums were considered as those urban agglomerations with the lowest social composition within the continuum. The second value of the variable is squatter settlements, indicating a less precarious social composition. The Permanent Household Survey does not allow to group by neighborhoods. As the purpose is to compare settlement households against total of suburban areas, the option I had to come up with the third value of my independent variable, was to perform the following approach to households not situated in marginal suburban areas: I selected those households not classified as having Unsatisfied Basic Needs. I assumed that Buenos Aires suburb towns not classified as UBN, mostly live in non-precarious neighborhoods, or at least their possibility of living in marginal urban areas is much lower. Therefore, suburb households without UBN are placed as the third variable of neighborhoods' social composition, indicating the high social composition of the neighborhood.

In the Buenos Aires suburb population without UBN, 32.0% of children between 8 and 15 years old are lagging behind in school. For settlements interviewed this percentage increased to 48%. For young people who are inactive and outside the educational system, living in the suburbs without UBN, the percentage is 9.6% among young people between the ages of 15 to 24. Whilst in settlements the percentage

[76] See for instance, the editions of "Panorama social de América Latina" de CEPAL (ECLA) from 1991 on.

increases to 34.6% regarding mentioned group. These percentages indicate that children and young people living in urban settlements are more inclined to present risk behavior (Table 5.10).

For the population living settlements, settlement type introduces slight differences. Even though differences are small and statistics can be questioned due to small quantity of cases, the differences take place in the direction expected. Children and young people living in slums are more inclined to show risk behavior than their counterparts in squatter settlements (Table 5.10).

Risk behavior shows, as stated in the hypothesis presented at the beginning of the second part of this Chapter, a clear association with neighborhoods' social composition. Nevertheless, this statistic back-up could be understood as basically ratifying the established image that poor children and young people present more problems than those who are not poor. To avoid this argument it is necessary to study whether the neighborhood context has important effects on the risk behavior of children and young people that is not explained by the household's set of assets living in those neighborhoods. For this, it is necessary to understand those household characteristics affecting the changes in risk behavior. In 1999 Kaztman posed a similar question for his research on marginal towns in Uruguay. Following his methodology and know-how, I selected as a control variable the household human capital.

There is a wide array of literature showing the effect of household human capital on determining the school lagging characteristic.[77] A rich household human capital is

[77] In the different editions of the Social Panorama of Latin America – ECLA- that covers most of Latin American countries, evidence is shown that confirms the relevance of household human capital in getting behind at school.

one of the most important resources parents can transfer to their children. Based on this fact, I will try to evaluate the influence of the neighborhood on the same dependent variable (risk behavior) establishing controls that are able to sustain the effects of a good household human capital. Then, the same analysis is performed for the second variable chosen of risk behavior: young people not working, not searching for jobs and outside the educational system. In short, I carry out an analysis that examines the percentage of children between 8 and 15 with school lagging problems, and young people who do not work or study, for interviewed population and the total of the suburban areas without UBN measured by educational climate existing in the home.

Household human capital is a measure that condenses the human resources of households. For the purpose of this research this has been constructed as the average years spent within the formal education system for household members older than 14 years. I have grouped the averages in three categories: up to 6 years of education (meaning that in average they do not reach the required amount of years to complete elementary school); children between 6 and 7.1 years of schooling; and over 7.1 years of schooling.

Table 5.11 shows the effect of the neighborhoods' social composition on the behavior of children undergoing situations of greater vulnerability. Results are conclusive and reflect previous conclusions related to the great effect of neighborhoods' social composition on children with greater family needs. In Buenos Aires suburbs in households without UBN, children from households with relatively rich human capital present school lagging problems approximately 22.3% less than for those children from households with a similar structure but living in settlements. This possibility increases to

32.7% when compared with children living in the most marginal settlements, that is to say slums.

Analyzing Table 5.12, it can be stated that the social composition of neighborhoods has a strong bearing on the fact that young people do not work, do not study or do not search for jobs. In Buenos Aires suburbs, the possibility that young people between 15 and 24, living in households without UBN show mentioned risk behavior, is 52.2% times less than those households with the same family structure regarding educational level, but living in settlements. As stated for school lagging problems, the possibility rises to 68.4% when compared to slum populations.

It is interesting to underline that the analysis carried out on differences between settlements, settlement type and population without UBN, suggests that children and young people coming from resourceful households, are more exposed to the influences of the environment. In fact, depending on the neighborhood's social composition, the main percentage differences between school lagging and young people not working or studying, occurs among children and young people in households with richer human capital. To the contrary, in households with poor education, differences are almost nil.

Finally, the collected data implies that the probability of children or young people incurring in risk behavior is directly related to the influence of the neighborhood. Living in marginal areas which are becoming increasingly isolated from the rest of society is a drawback and introduces negative differences.

Conclusions

As shown in the first part of this Chapter, inhabitants of marginal urban areas of Greater Buenos Aires present very precarious socio-demographic characteristics. From structure and family composition indicators, the greater presence of children stands out, making adult/child and especially active/inactive dependent relationships a negative factor in marginal areas. This population has a strong work tendency, but has enormous difficulties to effectively enter the job market. The greatest difficulties appear in those family members, e.g. spouses, whom the family tries to insert in the job market to satisfy their needs. At the same time, those settlement inhabitants who are inserted in the job market do so in a more precarious, insecure and unstable way, than the rest of suburban area population. These difficulties appear in the form of lower and fluctuating monthly incomes. Their relationship with the formal education system is also precarious, showing lower attendance rates and less time spent in the education system. Therefore, education level is lower than those of total suburban areas. Considering the household as a whole, those living in marginal urban areas, have only a precarious human resource force.

The degree of neighborhood marginality introduces important differences, especially regarding the provision of human resource. This confirms the argument that the greater the marginality and the degree of neighborhoods' residential isolation, the worse will be the socio-demographic situation of their inhabitants. The socio-demographic differences within precarious settlements and the suburban areas, confirms that the neighborhood's social composition is related to the degree of marginality and isolation of those neighborhoods.

I then performed an analysis to understand if and how the neighborhood influences its members' behavior. The results indicate that categories of children and young people with same asset family structure (expressed by the family human capital), showed significant differences regarding frequency of risk behavior according to the neighborhood's social composition. This is a first analysis. It would be advisable to perform a more complex analysis introducing other control variables. Nevertheless, I believe that this allows us to argue that neighborhoods do matter. In other words, the degree of marginality and social isolation of a neighborhood introduces important differences in its members' behavior. The greater the social marginality and residential segregation, the greater will be the possibility of risk behavior amongst its members.

The neighborhood's social composition matters and influences its inhabitants' behavior. What explains this relationship? To answer this question, I should analyze the mechanisms at work. This is impossible with the indicators used in this Chapter. The Permanent Household Survey does not offer variables useful for this purpose. As the objective of this Chapter is to compare the social composition of settlements against total Buenos Aires suburban areas, we have encountered limitations to analyze the mechanisms whereby neighborhoods impact on risk behavior. The arguments set forth in the remaining part of the conclusion are mere hypothesis that aim at encouraging future qualitative research on the mechanisms that link neighborhoods social composition with their inhabitants.

On the first place I believe that in the relationship between neighborhood social composition and its members´ risk behavior, the type of social capital that members of marginal areas accumulate plays an important role. Risk behavior was defined as an

obstruction of the accumulation of assets needed to take advantage of the opportunities leading to well being. They are, likewise, obstacles for the type of social capital needed to help overcome marginal situations.

This assertion links this analysis with the general concern guiding this thesis: the erosion of social capital in settlements. What kind of social capital can be accumulated in marginal areas? I believe that living in areas where social composition is too homogeneous, limits the type of social capital their inhabitants can achieve, and therefore, the type of resources moving in the social networks in which settlement inhabitants are inserted.

The social isolation in which inhabitants of precarious settlements increasingly live, generates a type of ¨mutual support¨ which at the same time emphasizes their isolation. Residential segregation reduces contact between people of different socio-economic condition, leading to an increasing isolation between social classes. This means poor people getting in touch mainly with poor people. The resources of networks in this type of environment are obviously precarious. It is a fragile society, one of its effects being the loss of role models. As W. Wilson states, there is an increasing lack of exposure to ¨successful¨ people. Those who are able to improve and overcome poverty do not live in precarious settlements (Wilson 1993, 1996). The lack of role models discourages people's expectations regarding the feasibility of effort and instills mistrust in the formal channels of activity.

Another of the effects of types of sociability characterizing marginal areas, which at the same time is one of the mechanisms causing the impact of neighborhoods on risk behavior, is how effective the rules and regulations of the neighborhood are, which is

transformed into sub-cultures which reinforce risk behavior. I believe that social isolation generates a growing imbalance between goals and institutional means. Those who are less favored by the prevailing rules or values, develop sub-cultures that include social codes, rules and values different from those of other social classes. Once these sub-cultural elements are inserted in poor neighborhoods, an inter-generational reproductive process is activated which tends to consolidate it.

The neighborhoods limit the structure of opportunities offered by society to the most immediate environment, households. The effectiveness of regulations, the presence of role models, and the resources flowing in neighborhood relationship networks are only some elements of that opportunity structure (Kaztman 1999:299).

Finally, the social composition of neighborhoods appears to have important self-governing effects on risk behavior. If more evidence is gathered in this sense, this means it is interesting from a social policy point of view. It is very important to take into account all those facts that lead to residential segregation. In the first place it is necessary to apply housing policies which will discourage the configuration of homogeneously marginal neighborhoods. But at the same time it is essential to reinforce all those policies leading to the universality of education and health services, etc. In other words, it is very important to reinforce policies willing to look for ways of providing a public space in which all social classes can interact and benefit in the same way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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TABLES

Table 5.1a Poverty Incidence: Percentage of Households and People below the Poverty Line and with Unsatisfied Basic Needs- Greater Buenos Aires. October 1991-2001

	POVERTY LINE				UBN
Period	Greater Buenos Aires (without the city of Bs As)		Greater Buenos Aires		Greater Buenos Aires
	Households	Individuals	Individuals	Households	Households
October 1991	21,1	26,4	21,5	16,2	15,1
October 1992	17,9	22,3	17,8	13,5	
October 1993	16,6	20,4	16,8	13,0	13,1
October 1994	18,2	23,0	19,0	14,2	
October 1995	23,9	30,5	24,8	18,2	11,9
October 1996	26,6	34,8	27,9	20,1	
October 1997	25,0	32,0	26,0	19,0	
October 1998	24,8	32,4	25,9	18,2	
October 1999	24,7	32,5	26,7	18,9	
October 2000	26,9	35,0	28,9	20,8	
October 2001	33,3	43,2	35,4	25,5	9,4

SOURCE: INDEC. Press information. Buenos Aires. Febrero 20th 2002 (for the PL)
Informe Económico. Segundo semestre de 1995, octubre, Año 4, nro. 14 (for UBN until 1995).
Prepared by the author using data from the Permanent Household Survey oct. 2001 (for UBN 2001)

Table 5.1b Poverty Incidence: Percentage of Households and Individuals below the Poverty Line and with Unsatisfied Basic Needs. Settlements

	Households			Individuals		
	Slums	Seized L.	Total	Slums	Seized L.	Total
Poverty Line (*)	88,9	81,8	85,4	90,5	83,8	86,9
Indigence Line	42,2	40,9	41,6	45,7	45,5	45,6
UBN	96,9	96,9	96,9			
Baño sin arrastre de agua	84,0	88,0	86,0			
Vivienda inconveniente	94,0	96,0	95,0			
Hacinamiento	34,0	42,0	38,0			
Presencia de niño que no concurre a la escuela	8,0	0,0	4,0			
Capacidad de subsistencia	24,2	21,4	22,7			

(*) El 11% of households did not reported their incomes (it represents 11.9% of the people). We excluded them from the calculation of the Poverty Line.
SOURCE: Prepared by the author using data from the households interviewed -EPU

Table 5.2 Average Household Members by Age Group. Average number of Employed, Unemployed, Inactive, and Income Perceivers by Household. Dependency Relationship. Household Members per Active, and per Income Perceivers. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires. 2001

	Settlements (EPU *)			G.Buenos Aires (EPH)
	Slums	Seized l.	Total	
HOUSEHOLD AVERAGE				
Individuals	5,7	6,12	5.90	3.65
Pop. less than 14 years	2,72	3,08	2.90	0.94
Pop. 14-19 y .	0,66	0,76	0.71	0.42
Pop. 20-24 y.	0,36	0,26	0.31	0.33
Pop. 25-64 y.	1,8	1,9	1.85	1.62
Pop. older than 64 y.	0,14	0,12	0.13	0.35
DEPENDENCY RELATIONSHIP				
Younger than 14 y. by adult (adult:25-64y.)	1,71	1,77	1.75	0.60
HOUSEHOLD AVERAGE				
Inactives	3,65	4,05	3.85	2.11
Actives	2,03	2,07	2.05	1.60
Employed	1,30	1,28	1.29	1.21
Unemployed	0,73	0,78	0.75	0.33
Income Perceivers	1,36	1,40	1.38	1.37
People per active member	3,48	3,48	3.48	2.60
People per income perceiver			3.90	2.60

SOURCE: Prepared by the author using data from the households interviewed for the Dissertation - EPU 2001. And self processing of the Permanent Household Survey –EPH- from October 2001. INDEC Buenos Aires.

***** EPU is the abbreviation of the name of the Interview I carried out to 100 households in my study

Table 5.3 Households by their Composition and Sex of the Head. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires

	Settlements (EPU)			Greater Buenos Aires (EPH)
	Slums	Seized l.	Total	
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION				
Unipersonal	6	0	3.0	12.3
Family Nuclear Complete	40	56	48.0	56.2
Family Nuclear incompl	12	8	10.0	11.4
Familiar Extended	40	36	38.0	19.5
Familiar composted	2	0	1.0	0.2
Non family based	0	0	0.0	0.3
Total	100	100	100.0	100.0
SEX OF THE HEAD				
Male	72	88	80.0	74.9
Female	28	12	20.0	25.1
Total	100	100	100.0	100.0
	(50)	(50)	(100)	(2452)

SOURCE: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.4 Activity and Unemployment Rates of the total Population and of the Population over 13 years old, by Age Group and Sex. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires

	ACTIVITY RATES		UNEMPLOMENT RATES	
	Settlements	Greater Buenos Aires	Settlements	Greater Buenos Aires
TOTAL POPULATION	34.8 (586)	42.1 (8955)	36.8 (204)	21.2 (3772)
AGE GROUP				
	31.0	20.3	36.4	37.5
14-19ª.	78.6	69.1	45.5	32.0
20-24ª.	80.4	73.1	37.2	18.1
25-64ª.				
POPULATION OVER 13 YEARS OLD	65.0 (296)	56.6 (6659)	37.6 (194)	21.2 (3767)
SEX				
Male	77.8	73.6	30.4	21.6
Female	53.9	41.0	47.6	20.6
HOUSEHOLD POSITION				
Head	91.0	74.0	29.7	16.9
Spouse	61.5	40.2	45.8	15.3
Son/Daughter	45.0	51.8	41.7	30.2
Other Members	50.0	44.9	47.4	30.5

Source: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.5 Employed Population by Occupational Category, Type of Occupation, Tenure, Social Benefits, and Weekly Hours Worked. Average Income. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires

	Settlements	**Greater Buenos Aires**
OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY		
Employer	0.8	3.5
Self-Employed	48.4	23.8
Employed	39.1	72.0
Family Worker	11.7	0.7
Total	100.0 (128)	100.0 (2973)
TYPE OF OCCUPATION		
Permanent	29.4	83.6
A Temporary Job	15.7	3.7
Occasional Job	40.2	2.3
Of Unknown Duration (unstable)	14.7	10.4
Total	100.0 (102)	100.0 (2966)
TENURE		
Less than 1 year	26.0	22.9
1 - 5 y.	41.7	39.4
More than 5y.	32.3	37.7
Total	100.0 (96)	100.0 (2953)
SOCIAL BENEFITS (*)		
None	64.6	40.5
Some benefits	12.5	8.1
All the benefits	22.9	51.3
Total	100.0 (48)	100.0 (748)
WEEKLY HOURS WORKED		
Less than 20hs.	12.8	17.7
20 to 29 hs.	12.8	12.2
30 - 40	23.9	13.6
41 or more	50.5	56.6
Total	100.0 (109)	100.0 (2537)
AVERAGE INCOME OF MAIN OCCUPATION.(**)	256.51	563.8

* Only for employed ** Workers without monetary income were excluded

SOURCE: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.6 People 14 years old or older by Level of Education. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires

	Settlements (EPU)			Greater Buenos Aires (EPH)
	Slums	Seized L.	Total	
No education	3,4	2,7	3.1	1.2
Elementary incomplete	34,5	24,9	29.6	11.6
Elementary	40,0	45,0	42.5	31.2
High Sch. incomplete	19,3	24,2	21.8	26.2
High School	2,1	1,3	1.7	14.9
More than High Sch.	0,7	2,0	1.3	15.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(50)	(50)	(294)	(6659)

SOURCE: idem Table 4.2

Table 5.7 School Attendance by Age Group. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires

Age Group		Settlements (EPU)	Greater Buenos Aires (EPH)
6-13	Attends	95.7	98.2
	Attended	3.7	0.7
	Never attended	0.6	1.1
	Total	100	100
		(164)	(1364)
14-19	Attends	59.2	77.1
	Attended	40.8	22.6
	Never attended	0	0.3
	Total	100	100
		(71)	(1024)
20-24	Attends	3.6	29.8
	Attended	96.4	70.0
	Never attended	0,0	0.1
	Total	100	100
		(28)	(811)
Rest	Attends	1.0	3.7
	Attended	95.4	95.0
	Never attended	3.6	2.3
	Total	100	100
		(195)	(4824)

SOURCE: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.8 Households by the Highest Level of Education of their Members. Settlements and Greater Buenos Aires

	Settlements	Greater Buenos Aires
	(EPU)	(EPH)
No education	0.0	0.4
Elementary incomplete	7.2	6.0
Elementary	44.9	19.2
High Sch. Incomplete	40.8	27.2
High School	4,1	20.3
More than High School	3.0	26.9
Total	100	100
	(98)	(2452)

SOURCE: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.9 Household Human Capital. Households in Settlements and in Greater Buenos Aires

	Household Human Capital	
	Average Household Years of Education	Standard Deviation
Settlements		
Slums	5,9	2,7
Seized lands	7	2,9
Total	6,5	2,7
Greater Buenos Aires	9,2	3,3

Source: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.9bis Settlement Dwellers by Household Human Capital and Type of Settlement

Household Human Capital	Type of Settlement			
	Seized Lands (%)	Slums (%)	Total (%)	Dif. porcentual
Up to 6 years of education	34,7	44,0	39,4	-9,3
6,1 to7,1 years	28,6	34,0	31,3	-5,4
More than 7,1 years	36,7	22,0	29,3	14,7
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	
	(49)	(50)	(99)	

Source: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.10 Percentage of Children aged 8-15 Lagging Behind at School, and Youth that do not Study, Work or Seek for a Job. Households in Settlements and in Greater Buenos Aires

	Settlements			Greater Buenos Aires	
	Slums	Seized lands	Total	No UBN	Total
Children aged 8-15 lagging behind at school	50,6	44,9	48,0	32,0	37,1
Youth aged 15-24 that do not study, work or seek for a job	42,9	25,6	34,6	9,6	12,6

Source: idem Table 5.2

Table 5.11 Percentage of Children Aged 8-15 Lagging behind at School, by Household Human Capital and by Neighborhood Social Composition. Greater Buenos Aires, 2001

Household Human Capital	Settlements			Greater Buenos Aires (Households without UBN) (4)	Percentage relative variation (3)-(4)/(3)x100	Percentage relative variation (1)-(4)/(1)x100
	Slums (1)	Seized Lands (2)	Total (3)			
Up to 6 years of education	55,6	53,1	54,2	54,4	-0,37	2,1
6,1 to7,1 years	54,2	44,0	49,0	37,2	24,1	31,7
More than 7,1 years	44,4	25,0	38,5	29,9	22,3	32,7

Table 5.12 Percentage of Young People that do not Study, Work or Search for a Job, by Household Human Capital and by Neighborhood Social Composition. Greater Buenos Aires, 2001

Household Human Capital	Settlements			Greater Buenos Aires (Households without UBN) (4)	Percentage relative variation (3)-(4)/(3)x100	Percentage relative variation (1)-(4)/(1)x100
	Slums (1)	Seized Lands (2)	Total (3)			
Up to 6 years of education	25,0	23,1	23,8	21,1	11,34	15,6
6,1 to7,1 years	61,1	46,2	54,8	19,8	63,9	67,6
More than 7,1 years	31,3	7,7	20,7	9,9	52,2	68,4
TOTAL	42,9	25,6	34,6	11,3	67,3	73,7

Source: idem Table 5.2

CHAPTER 6:

EROSION OF WORK. HOUSEHOLD WORK STRATEGIES IN CRISIS

This chapter analyzes work. I am interested in studying the resources offered by the labor market. Two are the issues I am addressing. The first ones relates to the influence education and neighborhood's social composition have on labor performance. My questions for this issue are ¿how does education influence in labor outcomes? ¿Does the neighborhood social composition affect the labor performance of their inhabitants? ¿Do and how education and location interact affecting labor performance? In the second place in this chapter I focus in the people I interviewed and describe their labour market participation and their occupational situation.

To address the first issue I used a methodology similar to that used in the previous chapter where I analyzed how neighborhoods influence the risk behavior of their inhabitants according to their degree of marginality. To answer the second question, I performed a detailed analysis of work carried out by the different members of a household, according to if they are salaried workers or self- employed. As living close to the workplace has an important effect on work performance, I analyzed labor market insertion of settlement inhabitants, under a heading which considers this aspect. This analysis shows the fragility of the labor situation of marginal households and how living in ecologically segregated areas has a negative effect.

To conclude, I address the different work strategies implemented by households. The aim is to identify the most successful strategies and to find out how successful they can be in contexts of segregation.

Erosion of work as a basic resource to cope with survival and guarantee social integration

The idea of a variety of resources available to the poor is central to the survival strategy approach. According to this approach the use of different resources is what enables poor people to cope with poverty. The survival strategy approach made the argument that the poor use multiple resources to develop their income generating activities. Among the many resources, the most important are salaried work, home made goods and services for sale and for home consumption, unpaid domestic work, taking advantage of the few State subsidies and social benefits, and social resources provided by the goods and services flowing through relationships such as friends, neighbors and godparents. As stated in the introduction and in Chapter 1 of this thesis, the survival strategy approach has many shortcomings and does not seem to be able to explain the complexity of growing social isolation. My vulnerability-focused approach recognizes that the labor market determines activities and practices carried out within each household. It sets forth that the salary obtained in exchange for work is not just another resource among many, which can be replaced by self employment, self provisioning and "social capital" activities. Work, from this viewpoint, is the main resource which poor urban people possess (Moser 1996, González de la Rocha and Grinspun 2001) and lack of work erodes the ability to make use of the other survival resources. As Gónzalez de la Rocha states, it produces a perverse process of accumulation of disadvantages.

I therefore think that owing to the importance of work as a household resource, this chapter shall analyze the characteristics it takes on in the more socially isolated and

segregated households, and how lack of work and its strong erosion affects these sectors. I believe that a deep study of this aspect will help to understand my hypothesis: social capital cannot replace stable work. On the contrary, in the absence of stable work, social capital is rapidly eroded.

I believe that recent urban poverty, marked by the absence of work options and the poor quality of existing ones, is characterized by growing social isolation, the dismantling of the web of relationships, atomization of individuals and fragmentation of social ties and connections. Relatively stable salaried work is not just one more of the many survival resources. It is in fact the most important resource and cannot be replaced if it is to fend off the social exclusion process.

Up to the mid seventies, Argentina's social structure was relatively integrated, as compared to the other countries in Latin America. Social integration was backed mainly by the labor market and formal education. Together with the Southern Cone neighbors, Argentina was going through an exceptional period in terms of low rates for underused labor force, high educational levels and relatively low salary dispersion. The vast channels leading to social improvement which helped to build a strong middle class, was also a remarkable issue. This situation placed the country in a privileged position in the region, not only in terms of high social integration but also because of low levels of inequality (Bayón and Saraví 2002). From the forties up to mid seventies, the labor market through the formal economy, especially the public sector and private industry, was able to absorb the work force. This was the result of a growing industrialization[78]

[78] Between 1964-1974 the industrial product raised constantly at an annual rate of 7%, labor productivity raised at an annual rate of 5% , and industrial employment expanded at an annual rate of 2% (Katz et al., 1995).

process and slow growth of the active population. This process took place together with the implementation of a welfare system claiming universality, especially in education and health services. On average, urban unemployment reached 5.6% between 1963 and 1978 (Godio et al. 1998), whilst the informal sector, although beginning to grow, did not present the 'refuge' or subsistence characteristic as in the case for other Latin American countries. On the contrary it created a stable self-employed sector with high incomes[79]. The creation of a welfare system was the result of growing social demands, a strong labor union movement, and a State with corporate characteristics backing increasing social rights. Thus, with the exception of health and education, officially universalized, most social security services were linked to formal work. From a structure of opportunities approach it can be argued that in Argentina, until mid seventies, integrating mechanisms were the ones that predominated (Kaztman et al. 1999). Work and formal education served as the most important means of social integration.

Traditional social integration mechanisms have weakened during the last two decades. Social poverty and vulnerability are becoming a central issue in contemporary Argentina. The new millenium's labor market is characterized by unprecedented levels of unemployment, instability, precariousness and casual work. Inequality of salaries and income distribution has reached its highest level.

For the last 25 years, Argentina's labor market behavior characteristics can be summed up as follows: increase of open unemployment; growing quantity of unregistered salaried jobs and decrease of quantity of registered salaried and non-salaried workers. As

[79] Altimir et al. (1999) show that the average income of self-employed workers was, at the beginning of the seventies, higher that the one of salaried workers.

a result the degree of job instability grew among the more stable members, and the gap between qualified and non-qualified workers' salaries has expanded (Beccaria 2002:40).

These issues affected households of the different social classes in many ways. On the one hand, occupational problems such as underemployment, poorer quality jobs, and more job instability, although generalized, affected certain sectors more than others. A similar dynamic took place with incomes. On the other hand, these labor issues strongly influenced the dimensions of household wellbeing.

Finally, these labor market processes influence the patterns of social integration, especially for the less educated population (Kaztman 2002). Firstly, work looses its influence as the place where adults can build their identities, which was the role it has had since the industrial revolution. Secondly, low and unstable incomes do not allow these groups to partially replace their working world by the consumer world as their place for self-identity and social integration. Thirdly, contract instability, precariousness of social security, and closing down of big enterprises have undermined citizenship-favoring conditions. In the Western world, these conditions were closely linked to gaining social rights through labor participation. Lack of participation in the labor unions and lack of contact with more qualified workers has similar effects, where problems, destinies and institutions (enterprise and labor union) are no longer shared. Finally, unless policies are specifically drawn up to remedy this, the increase or permanence of income inequality between qualified and non-qualified workers might transfer to other social spheres. This will result in interaction segmentation between neighbors, schools, health services, transport and leisure sites, thus socially isolating the urban poor.

How do these processes affect the interviewed population, in other words the most marginal households? How does neighborhood marginality influence the work achievements of its residents? Is education an effective tool to overcome marginality? How do education and location interact and affect labor achievements? How do people in poor settlements face the mentioned labor market characteristics? How do the poorest households relate with labor market? How has the perception of work as a surviving resource changed? To what kind of jobs do they gain access and what are the characteristics of these jobs? How do they obtain their different jobs? The following paragraphs address these questions. First I analyze how the neighborhood's social composition influences work achievements. Next, I analyze how households in poor settlements relate to work, to enable analysis of their participation in the labor market. Finally I will analyze labor market insertion characteristics of employed residents living in marginal areas.

Relationship among Education, Neighborhood Social Composition, and Labor Achievements. Education and Labour Market Participation

There is agreement among scholars that education affects labor achievements. The analysis over the Greater Buenos Aires area confirms this argument. The higher the education the higher the labor market participation, and the lower the unemployment rates (Table 6.1). Different aspects of labor market participation also improve with education. Table 6.2 shows that for the Greater Buenos Aires area, the higher the education, there is more job stability and income improves.

When analyzing education over the poor settlements population, the positive influence of instruction is less clear. Neither labor participation rates nor unemployment rates improve with higher levels of education. However important aspects of labor market insertion do improve with education. Education positively affects job stability and income, and it improves the probability of getting a job out of informal networks (Table 6.3).

How do education and marginality interact and affect labor achievements? To answer this question I looked at neighborhoods´ social composition, as I did in the previous Chapter. Social composition of slums is the most precarious in this issue having the highest levels of vulnerability. Squatter settlements are slightly better off. Finally to be able to compare this with the total suburban group, I have chosen the households in areas without UBN. The control variable is the maximum level of education obtained by workers. Thus I am using the same categories that I used when analyzing neighborhood influence on risk behavior. The difference is that in last Chapter I used household human capital, and now I am using workers' education. As a dependent variable, I chose the worker's monthly income, calculating average income.

Therefore, the question is, does the neighborhood's social composition have a bearing on the income of its inhabitants?

Table 6.4 shows the results of the analysis. A twofold study of the analysis shows that neighborhood marginality and education levels independently influence the average income. In regards to education levels, those workers possessing higher levels are paid more than those less qualified, as of course may be expected. Notwithstanding type of settlement, to complete at least primary school level seems to mark the point of inflection

of its inhabitants, as there seems to be little difference between incomplete and complete primary level of education. At the same time the twofold analysis between income and neighborhood social composition seems to go down the expected path. The higher the neighborhood poverty, the lower will be the average income of its employed residents.

What I would like to highlight is how neighborhood marginality influences incomes, measured by education levels. We may believe that differences between neighborhoods would disappear, however this is not so. The differences existing between the two extremes of type of neighborhood (without UBN and slums) are strongly accentuated. Workers living in areas without UBN and having the highest education levels, have a 67.5% higher probability of better incomes than those workers with equal education levels but living in slums. At the same time, type of settlement makes a difference. Workers in squatter settlements receive 30% higher incomes than their counterparts in slums, notwithstanding their education levels.

This same analysis was carried out, using as the dependent variable job seniority, size of company, type and category of job, but the results were not those expected. The fact that the income variable did have the expected results, is highly suggestive. This fact must be studied in depth to find out the mechanisms whereby persons living in the poorest dwelling places obtain lower incomes. It clearly indicates that the social composition of the neighborhood matters.

From these results I can argue that neighborhood poverty and segregation are associated to the work performance of its inhabitants. Notwithstanding educational level of workers, the fact that they live in areas of poverty territorial concentration, places them in a disadvantageous position.

Participation in Labor Market, Unemployment and Social Network Support when looking for Jobs

As already analyzed in the previous chapter, the work tendency of the population living in urban settlements is higher than for total Buenos Aires suburbs. Activity rates for the population over 14 years old in poor settlements are slightly higher than for total Buenos Aires suburbs (65.5 and 56.6 respectively). Therefore, work tendency for both populations is high. This confirms the analysis to be performed under the above heading: work is an ongoing reality of the population of poor urban settlements and a resource they permanently seek for.

The activity rate for settlement populations is higher for both women and men in settlements than in total Buenos Aires suburbs, however the differences between activity rates of both populations is higher for women. Measured by sex, figures for men both in settlements and in total suburbs are similar (approximately 75% in both cases), whereas activity rates for women in urban settlements are 13 points higher than for total suburban women (53.9 and 41% respectively), in other words their participation in labor market is higher than for women in total Buenos Aires suburbs. I would like to highlight this difference. The factors inhibiting higher participation in the labor market of low income women, such as earlier and more numerous pregnancies, cost of childcare, discouragement when looking for jobs, do not seem to set barriers to labor market insertion at present.

For poor settlements, higher woman participation is due to women carrying out more home based productive ventures, specially in the case of wives. Therefore, this is

considered work situated somewhere between the labor market and domestic work. Settlement populations are involved in this type of situation. These are work and income generating strategies which seem to grow in times of crisis and economic recess. In most cases these productive ventures include most members of a household on a varied and irregular basis. I will analyze these ventures in another part of this thesis. I must point out though that household members carrying out this type of work, mostly consider themselves "unemployed" and when interviewed answer to that category. Mostly this is a resort to generate income. In my 100 household sample, 30 households carry out some type of home based productive activity (cook pasties to sell in the neighborhood, collect cardboard and other refuse for recycling purposes, have a small convenience store in the home, carry out odd jobs for some workshop, etc.). Home-based productive ventures are an important way women have of participating in the labor market. Flexible working hours and the way household and production responsibilities fit easily together, explain this situation.

Incorporation into the labor market of husbands and inactive children in times of crisis and decreased incomes has been widely documented by scholars. However when additional members of a household are incorporated into the labor market, this means adjustments, conflicts and negotiations arising within the household. Just because they are at an age to become an active member, does not mean that they are available for integration in the labor market.

Certain factors operate either to promote or limit access of household members to the labor market. Some of these factors being children's ages, assessment of other actives (for example, education), job opportunities, aspects concerning space, cultural factors

such as the concept of role distribution within the home, and other more personal factors related to their expectations on actually finding a job. Three of these factors I have found repeatedly during this study. Space issues, cultural factors, and issues linked to household role distribution and personal hopes of actually finding a job. These situations sometimes combine, generating a process of accumulation of disadvantages, which results in more household vulnerability and less coping abilities (Bayón and Saraví, 2002).

Unemployment is a significantly larger feature for populations living in poor urban settlements than to the rest of Buenos Aires inhabitants. Approximately a third of the economically active population over 13 years old in urban settlements cannot find work, whilst a fourth are in the same situation in total suburban households. Unemployment rates are much higher for the younger population and among wives or women partners (45.5 and 45.8 respectively). Among these women the breach with total suburban group reaches a difference of 30.5%. The breach between unemployment of settlement women and total suburban group is similar. Taking into account household structure in urban settlements and total suburban households the average for working population is similar (1.29 and 1.21 respectively). The average for unemployed population, however, is higher in poorer homes; there is 0.75% unemployed per home, in other words, for each four households three have one person who is unable to form part of the labor market. Whereas for total suburban group approximately one in every four households has an unemployed person.

Frustrations when looking for work lead to discouragement and inactivity which at the same time help to create the “risk” behaviors which I mentioned in the previous

chapter: young people who neither study nor look for work. These young people make up 34.6% of the population between 15 and 24 living in poor settlements. Within this percentage, the total number of unemployed are new workers. In fact, the total number of unemployed new workers represent 11% of unemployed population; these are young people under 22 years.

An important discouraging factor is the tendency to blame themselves for not finding work. Remarks such as those expressed by María, who is 16, are commonly heard: *"I'm a timorous person and that's why I don't go to the places offering work …… I'm sure they won't take me on*". Or phrases such as *"I'm a loafer*" or *"my son likes to bum around, he doesn't even go out to look for work*". This leads to added discouragement as the difficulties encountered when looking for work lead young people to blame others or themselves.

One of the most important job-searching factors among the unemployed is the social networks they take part in. When asked how they had looked for work in recent weeks, three quarters of the interviewed population said that they had consulted relations or friends.

What does it actually mean to look for and obtain jobs through social networks? Firstly, that looking for work through social networks shows how important social ties are as a resource to gain access to an excluding and diminishing labor market, in fact I could say these ties are almost indispensable. On the other hand, one could say that this method of gaining access to the labor market is a crucial aspect of poverty reproduction.

Exchange social networks operate 'horizontally'.[80] This means that family or acquaintances helping to find work are in the same situation of poverty and vulnerability, involved in precarious work. The information and job opportunities offered through these types of relationships among poverty stricken populations, do not in fact offer 'opportunities' to overcome poverty through quality and stable work. Thus my basic hypothesis for this thesis: in contexts of recession and high unemployment, fundamental resources such as reciprocal and self-help (family, friends, neighbors) social networks loose effectiveness in the search for work. This decline affects the quality of these networks rather than their continuation. Resources circulating in these networks are used up and loose effectiveness.

Job Characteristics

As I have just described, activity and employment rates for interviewed population indicate that an important part of the population over 14 years old are inserted in the labor market. How does this integration come about? An analysis of this issue explains the main aspects of the poverty in which these urban settlement populations are submerged. The following key themes emerge from the analysis of job insertion of the population living in poor urban settlements, many of which depend one upon the other: their ecological segmentation, job precariousness and limited ways to access work. All these factors give work special characteristics as a mean to survive. At the same time they are factors which condition and are conditioned by the type of social capital being construed by residents in poverty stricken areas.

[80] Horizontal networks are shaped however, within unequal relationships of power (See Alvarez 2001)

Type of labor market insertion of interviewed population which I shall describe hereunder, allows me to argue that the residents of poor urban areas gain access to certain sectors of a segmented labor market which are also the most precarious type of jobs. Type of job, how it is obtained, and work background of interviewed population explains the first factor: segmentation. Type of social relationships, lack of social security and low incomes clearly show how precarious these jobs are.

Ecological segregation is demonstrated in the fact that most of the interviewed persons work very close to their own homes, and some even in their own homes. To describe this I can confirm that for most interviewees the labor market is not only segmented by difficulty to access quality jobs but by geographical segmentation too. This market has definite limits: settlements and their surroundings. Thus, a lot of the productive activities performed are directed to the very people living in these settlements. The labor ties involved in these occupations are basically established among the inhabitants of the poor areas where they live.

Ecological segregation is connected to the way jobs are found. As mentioned throughout this work, in most cases, interviewees have found work through informal networks generally made up by friends, acquaintances or relations.

As in the comparison made in Chapter 5 between labor insertion of population under study and total suburban group, *social connections* created during work performance among interviewed population show a majority of self-employed workers. Only four out of every ten workers are salaried employees (Table 5.5).

As a first approach to this analysis on job integration of the population under study, I will carry out a brief labor characterization regarding job category. I will first

analyze which of the workers are salaried which are self-employed taking into account, sex, kinship relationship and age. Secondly, an analysis of the labor insertion of salaried and self employed will be carried out in regards to branch of activity, size of establishment, social benefits, length of working day and income.

Among salaried workers, men are the dominant force (86%), whilst for self-employed, there is a balance between men and women. At the same time, salaried workers are mostly head of family members (64%); few wives/ /women partners are salaried workers, being surpassed by their sons/daughters in this category (18%). Whereas for self-employed, head of family members represent only half of workers in this category and the presence of spouses is high (35.5%). Half of salaried workers are adults between the ages 25 and 40; just over a fifth are young people up to 24 years old. Among self-employed half of them are adults up to 40 years old, but the presence of young people is lower than for salaried workers (Table 6.5).

Taking this information to analyze the influence of sex, kinship and age on job category allows to confirm that salaried workers are mostly men and household heads. Women head the self-employed category. The probability of finding wives/spouses among the self-employed is higher than for salaried workers. Age does not pose a big difference, although there are a larger number of young people among salaried workers.

How does job insertion come about for salaried and self-employed workers?

Services is the branch of activity of most salaried workers, absorbing 42% of that population, followed in order of importance by construction (22%), and then evenly between industry and commerce (18 and 16% respectively). Self-employed are spread

evenly between commerce, services, excluding domestic service, and domestic service. Only 6.6% belong to industry (Table 6.5).

Regarding *size of establishment*, there is a very high degree of salaried workers carrying out their activities in small establishments which have only about 5 employees (56.%). I must also highlight the fact that a very high percentage of these workers have no *labor protection*. As pointed out in the previous chapter, when compared to total suburban group, 64.6% have no social benefits (pension, bonus, leave of absence, vacations) (Table 5.5). This situation exposes the precarious and informal nature of jobs carried out by these salaried workers. They are generally workers not registered for social benefits and tax purposes.

Although the type of occupations carried out by interviewees are vastly different, they are all part of the group situated on the lowest rung of the occupational ladder. The biggest job concentrations among salaried workers are: bricklayers, factory worker and cleaning staff, followed in order of importance though not reaching 10% of them, are: odd job workers, garbage collectors and employees. Among self-employed in order of importance are domestic service on an hourly basis, cardboard collecting for recycling purposes, piecework and convenience and family stores.

Regarding *working day intensity*, taken by average daily hours worked[81], and as mentioned in previous chapter, there are no significant differences between this population and total suburban salaried workers. For the principal occupation, there is a difference between self-employed and salaried workers of poor urban settlements of an average of 35.6 and 44 hours respectively. As shall be seen further on in this study, this

[81] The average was calculated with a labor week of 6 days.

data indicates the difficulties encountered by many self employed workers (Table 6.5). An analysis of the reasons given for this job dedication indicates that they would be willing to work longer hours if they were able to find more work; they are, therefore, underemployed. In the other extreme, a lot of the people working an average of eight hours are forced to do so to make ends meet; in this case they are the interviewees who work in their own homes, regulating their own work hours.

Two thirds of self employed interviewees could not say how many hours they spent working. Most of them work in their homes, as I will analyze later. This data is important. It supports the idea that there is no distinction between productive tasks and the rest[82], and that many of the productive area tasks are not perceived as such, they are simply "*the things we do when we are at home*". Job dedication is more stable among salaried workers than for the self- employed, however for a fifth of them it can be unstable.

The precarious labor insertion situation of interviewees is reflected in the amount of *income* received for their work, specially its fluctuating and unstable nature. Self-employed monthly average income calculated for the main occupation is $216.5 and for salaried workers $344. Taking into account all monthly incomes (mainly adding secondary occupations), average income for self-employed is hardly modified; on the other hand, for salaried workers it rises to $409.7 (Table 6.5). As shall be seen later in this study, many salaried workers perform secondary work, most of it being informal, among which the most important is helping out in the home-based productive family venture.

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[82] See Gallart et al, 1992 to see more on this aspect for Argentina.

Considering my overall sample of 131workers, including not only salaried and self-employed but also family-help work, I will describe and analyze two work related aspects: how jobs are obtained and the place where work is carried out. These two aspects are important, because they allow us to understand the type and quality of this population's work, and also because they are linked to the social networks of workers in poor settlements.

How jobs are obtained shows that the search for work is carried out through informal channels. Seventy eight percent of interviewees found work through relations or friends. Finding work is closely associated to their links with informal social contacts. It is usually a family member included in some productive activity they are involved in, or relations or neighbors who pass on information about a job or offer them work.

In the other extreme, the number of workers who obtained their jobs through the open market is insignificant.

The place where work is mostly carried out shows how important the neighborhood is for labor market insertion. A fourth of the interviewees did not need to leave the neighborhood to carry out their work. A large part of these workers carry out their productive activities in their own homes. As I will later analyze, this type of very informal do-whatever-you-get jobs are family strategies to obtain income. A third of the workers leave the neighborhood to work, but this is situated in the surroundings of the settlement. In fact they walk or cycle to work. A little over one in every ten workers works in the district in which their settlement is situated, but far from their neighborhood. A large part of these interviewees cycle to work or take public transportation. Finally a

little under a third of the workers go to other districts to work. Of these, a very minor group works in Buenos Aires city. (Table 6.6).

To conclude, the neighborhood, or in other words the settlement and its surroundings, takes on a special dimension regarding work. For over half of the workers the settlement is a place not only where they live but also where they carry out their income generating activities. Therefore, settlements take on a special dimension in households' income generating strategies.

Given the importance of neighborhoods in the labor insertion of workers living in poor urban areas, and to be able to answer some of the above questions, I have considered performing an in-depth analysis of the characteristics of job by grouping workers according to their geographical work situation. As those carried out in the settlement are mostly home based activities, either their own or a neighbor's or friend's home, I have perfume and in-depth analysis of homebased productive activities. I believe this analysis will shed a light on the important dimensions of work as a resource to generate income, and also on those aspects related to the type of social capital which workers make use of.

Occupations carried out within the household: home-based-family-ventures

Approximately four out of every ten workers carry out their main or secondary job in a home based productive venture. A third of sample households do this kind of home based work. Home based work is identified as any productive venture carried out mainly from the home; this may mean using their own work tools. Workers doing this type of productive work include: a. shop-owner or shop assistant, b. cardboard

collector[83], c. piecework carried out in the home, d. seamstress; e. very informal cab drivers, f. carpenters with own workshop, g. repair technician with own workshop (Table 6.7).

The purpose of these types of jobs is closely linked to households' survival. They are an important strategy for family work and income. Home-based family productivity is a strategy used for income generation which includes various members of a household. Children and women (spouse) usually described as "housewife", generally participate. These women have an important role coordinating and distributing the productive tasks. Many times, household members give a hand with the family business when they come back from their work outside the home.

Another distinguishing factor is that these jobs are typically informal and marginal. As it is easy to access some of the home-based productive activities, theoretically they are "looking for work" but in practice they are not because they are already working at home.

These productive activities specially influence the involved persons' social capital. When carrying out these activities, social relationships involved are among members of one same household or with other settlement residents. On very few occasions their work involve them with people outside the settlement.

In regards to the involved workers, home based production characteristics offer very little difference between work and home environment. Neither does there seem to be any difference between time spent working and time spent not working. In this sense I was surprised to discover that these home based jobs are not perceived as 'work'. In

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[83] This activity consists on private garbish recolection and comercialization.

many cases this type of work constitutes the main source of income for households. However, they do not consider the time spent working as 'work hours" but more likely 'that which we do when we are at home'. In fact, none of the interviewed families are conscious of the fact that children who contribute are really working and producing income for the household.

I want to point out that women are generally the organizers of work, and are generally defined as "housewives", in other words they '*the ones who do not work'*. This occupational modality enables the involved women to fit domestic and productive work together, regulating their work hours within the limits of their reproductive role and according to needs. At the same time, this type of productivity easily allows children to become involved.

This type of home-based productivity becomes a 'refuge' for unemployed families looking for work.

From the perspective of poor homes, among the factors which help to keep up and apparently increase this type of business is that it is easy to set up, qualifications are not needed, and it is flexible, all this making it attractive for women and children to be incorporated. But I think that its main up-keep aspect is related to the urgency-factor which pushes these poor homes. It is imperative that they generate income to survive. For this reason in spite of the very difficult conditions of most of these jobs and almost nil gains generated by them, they guarantee income to buy the most basic goods.

Capital needed to start up business differs according to each household venture. Those wanting to set up a shop, do piecework such as sewing or driving a cab, need initial capital to invest in the tools or machinery for the job. However, this aspect, which

indicates a type of initial ‘advantage’, does not always result in a more successful enterprise; the remaining jobs do not escape this strong degree of instability and vulnerability.

A last aspect which I want to highlight, is the importance of the neighborhood. It becomes the environment where a heterogeneous number of economic activities are performed. Therefore the neighborhood should not only be considered as a place where most of the urban poor live but as a dynamic economic site for material reproduction and maker of the basic social ties of its inhabitants’ social capital. This situation strengthens the dead-end effect for these households.

Hereunder, I will describe home-based family businesses undertaken by households interviewed.

Having an informal shop in their own homes

Households following this income generating strategy have set up shops in their own homes or next to them. These are generally food ‘stores’ but in some cases they even sell household wares and in two some type of clothing.

None of these shops are more than five years old, and were generally set up after interviewees had left home and started their own families. The shop is set up in one of the household’s rooms. In three cases these shops can be accessed from the street.

Half of these shops are well equipped showing a process of capitalization. The aim of the acquired machinery is to preserve and fraction food, such as weighing machines, cold meats cutting machines, refrigerators and exceptionally freezers. Some also have other types of equipment such as a bread baking earth oven. In spite of all this,

business is very informal and highly precarious; in fact they have no legal authorization. The remaining half have no equipment. They are very informal convenience stores; some use their own refrigerators for the sale of soft drinks. In many of these family businesses they sell home-made food (cakes, pasties, etc.).

These shops are mostly assisted by women, most of them being household spouses. In fact, in role division to carry out the venture, with a few exceptions, women – spouses- are mainly in charge of the business and their function is to assist the customers; they are also in charge of keeping the shop clean and placing goods on the shelves. Heads of family and sometimes their children are in charge of replacing goods. For most heads of family helping in the store is their second job.

Other members of the household also carry out shop-assistant activities. This together with the fact that the stores are part of the households, explains their long working hours. It is the home-based business with the longest working hours. On average these activities involve 52 hours a week, and family members who put in the longest hours claim they work up to 90 hours a week. These people declare that owing to the characteristics of the settlement customers who buy their goods daily and on returning from their jobs, stores must be kept open all the time. *"People go by before and after work. Working at night is better. I can't tell people to leave*" "Having the store open all day is the only way we can make any profit. Sunday is the best day for selling" state the interviewees.

Another feature of these stores is that they find it impossible to stock up on goods. Their vulnerability is inevitable. They go practically every day to the nearby provision centers and cannot make it to the centers offering better prices. Roberto, head of one of

the interviewed households, described the productive activity as follows, "*We buy drinks in Norte Supermarket, bring them back in a small wooden cart, store them in our fridge and sell them. We buy the drinks for $1.50 each and sell them for $1.90. It's only a few coins profit but it's better than nothing"*.

Many of the interviewees stated that they could not calculate the full amount of monthly income, as the money made in the store is used to meet their daily needs. This makes it impossible to carry out any type of accounting. "*When we have money we buy goods or keep some for the home. No I don't know how much we make but we survive"*. When some of the family members receive monthly or bi-monthly salaries, receiving daily amounts can be an important palliative in low-income contexts. In spite of the varied nature and difficulty to calculate income, I have estimated an average $200 per household owning a store of these characteristics (Table 6.8).

Another singular aspect of these stores is that they fraction the food and sell on credit. Eladio, head of one of the interviewed households, stated, "*if we don't sell this way, people just don't buy"*. He told us, for example that they sell 2 eggs, ¼ kilo flour, etc.

In short, the possibility of setting up this kind of store most requires some kind of capitalization which will enable them to invest in machinery and the first stock of goods. This characteristic in the remaining stores is not necessary. Generally, this capital is obtained thanks to redundancy pay obtained from loosing salaried work. This double situation, loss of job (generally household head or spouse) and obtaining redundancy payment, helps them to decide to set up this type of business.

This type of business, therefore, is set up in households with families who have young children or teenagers who can help out in these stores. These youngsters usually start out their active lives in this type of work or they are included in it when they lose their jobs.

Collectors of cardboard and other objects

I have included this type of home-based productive activity as most of the work carried out for this activity is done in the home. Besides, leaving the home to collect garbage, involves practically no interaction with people outside their activity. This job is carried out in the following manner: one or more household members go out with their small cart pulled by a horse or bicycle to look for waste materials in certain places near the settlement. They take these materials to their homes where they are classified, dismantled if necessary, worthless material discarded and got ready to sell to warehouses. Their work process finishes when they sell the material to the warehouses.

This refuge collecting mostly involves household men with a high presence of household heads. Most households have been performing this work for over 10 years, but it has intensified since 2001. María (33) for example is a daughter of 'cartoneros'. She was born in the slum and this is the only productive activity she has ever done. She started out together with her parents and brothers when she was 9 years old. Her 3 children work with her at present.

From interviewees descriptions and some comments made by settlement inhabitants, even though it seems to be a simple job, it is not so easy to start up in this

activity as there is much control among 'cartoneros' who are in fact a very closed group. Deolindo thus describes this situation:

> This collecting job is carried out after we have been notified of available material, it's not like the scavenger who looks anywhere. My wife Marta, is already well known and certain homes keep things for her. The important thing is never to steal each others customers, each one knows where he has to go and they cannot go to the Suarez's traders. She used to have problems with the police, but not anymore. Things have become so strict that in some places they let her in but not her brother who does the same type of job".

This productive activity was described in the following terms: (Juan tells the story)

> María goes with her three kids, or maybe one or two, pulling her cart to certain places where she is known as a 'customer', and she takes away the waste objects they have kept for her. For example, she goes to Frávega (large retail TV store) or Banco Provincia. They know that she will be around and they leave her the refuse outside for her to pick up. She brings back the things in her cart and puts them in the yard, on Tuesdays the truck comes round and picks up everything. They take cardboard, TVs (a few days ago they gave her 10 TV sets which were out of use), signs and posters. From the signs we take out the cables, burn them and use the copper. The warehouse people pay $9 the kilo. Cardboard $0.5 the kilo, bottles $0.5 each (specially cider bottles), iron $0.2 the kilo. Prices have gone down a lot, last year we used to get $35 for a kilo of cardboard". Deolindo told us that they take everything to the same warehouse, four blocks from the settlement. They then resell everything.

Thanks to this collecting job, many households carry out sales activities in the neighborhood with the many things they find on their collecting trips. This is how Elsa describes the situation: "*Sometimes we bring back sneakers or clothes which we sell among the people of the neighborhood. For example, sneakers we sell for $1. A few days ago we brought back a toaster and sold it for $1*".

Working hours for this type of productive activity is varied and difficult to calculate. On average it is around 38 hours a week per worker. Income is even more

difficult to calculate owing to its varying and unstable nature. However, I reached an estimate of around $110 a month for this activity (Table 6.8).

Piecework at home

This type of work carried out in the settlements under study consists of the following: preparation of fishing lines, folding bags for use in shops, different tasks for Kodak labs, and mixing materials to make cleaning products.

Home-based piecework has the following in common:

The work process is coordinated from a factory/workshop located near the settlement. Here part of the work process is carried out and the remaining part is done outside. Certain parts of the process are carried out by settlement inhabitants as piecework in the following manner: the factory/workshop hand out goods in process to a worker (whether or not working in the workshop) living in the slum or nearby; this person shares it out with various settlement inhabitants, who must finish it in the agreed time. This person is in charge of handing out the raw materials for the work and paying for the work carried out. Although workers are given all the material needed for the job, they must have their own simple gear and tools for the work; in the case of workers in settlements under study, having this gear and tools means that they must invest in a table which will allow them to carry out the work or at least guarantee a minimum space to do so (knowing that this is scarce in this type of dwellings). There is no contract binding pieceworkers to the factory/workshops. Salaries are paid as per finished product. Piecework generally involves various members of a household and therefore it becomes a family venture. This type of work requires no qualifications; they are very simple jobs.

As in the case of *'cartoneros'*, the presence of children in piecework is high. This is why it is the labor activity with the lowest average age. (Table 6.8). There are few or no ties among settlement workers involved in the same type of job. They all say that various persons in the settlement carry out the same type of job but that they do not know them. Labor ties are only established between the persons offering work and the households.

This work is characterized by its uncertain nature. Monica told us "we never know when we will have work. This varies. Sometimes we go whole months with no work. Other times it arrives and they want it for next day. We have to rush, and we hardly sleep". This ingrained job uncertainty makes is impossible to calculate the amount of hours put in and monthly income. Based on the week before the interview, I calculated an average of 16 hours per week for all involved workers and a monthly average income of $113 (Table 6.8).

Sewing work

This is a home-based venture which shares various of the characteristics of piecework, mentioned above. However, it differs from that because workers require a certain degree of qualification and their own machines. These two characteristics turn this type of work into a more individual venture, in other words in comparison to other home-based work it tends to involve only one household member.

These subcontracted home-based seamstresses are self-employed and sometimes carry out dressmaking work as well. After setting up their own family households, they had the possibility of leaving their jobs when they were able to buy a sewing machine

helped by their husbands who had stable work. When I carried out the interviews, one of them was stitching cloth pencil cases for a workshop and another was sewing clothing. Apart from being heavily exploited, this work is seasonal. Their income is the lowest of all home-based work. Based on work carried out the month before the interview, I calculated a monthly income of $60 putting in 14 hours work a week (Table 6.8).

Summarizing, some of the points I would like to highlight both for subcontracted seamstresses and for home based piecework are:

These systems bear certain advantages for the owners of the business: they can stop placing orders with the home-workers without having to worry about any breach in contract or work tie or having to reemploy the idle workforce.

Workers do not have to carry out the whole process as though it were their trade, but only that which the owners of the business decide. This stage could be carried out in the production workshop but to economize, and to guarantee more accumulation, the businessman decides to give to a third party. The businessman's main objective is to save on workforce expenses within the factory.

Workers can easily 'fall into' this type of work owing to the prevailing conditions of the current labor market. Although they can freely offer their workforce to a competitive and open labor market, they are faced with a recessive economy with growing unemployment. Their negotiating margins are thinning out and they are forced to depend on the conditions which are imposed upon them.

When carrying out piecework in their homes they become part of a productive process about which they know very little, which is the part that involves them. They

work for the factory but are 'outside' it. They are constantly in an urgent and paradoxical situation where they have to permanently sell their workforce by selling their production.

Conclusion

In this Chapter I addressed two issues. In the first place I was interested in analyzing the relationship among education, neighborhood social composition and labor achievement. Secondly I wanted to understand how dwellers of marginal areas relate with job income activities. The analysis of my first point allows arguing that neighborhood poverty and segregation are associated to the work performance of its inhabitants. Notwithstanding educational level of workers, the fact that they live in areas of poverty territorial concentration, places them in a disadvantageous position.

To put work resources into motion is important for the well-being of households. It is an extremely important resource round which they plan their survival strategies. This chapter's analysis shows that the labor market is still considered an alternative for survival. But household members increasingly find income opportunities outside the job market. These opportunities are created by them, and are used to mask their unemployed status. For most households, this informal economy or self-generated employment, offers them small spaces in which to make their living.

From this description of occupations carried out by the residents of poverty stricken areas, two aspects stand out and I consider to be crucial in determining the work strategies of the households: whether the work is home-based or not, and the stable or occasional nature of the job.

For the first aspect, the great number of homes carrying out some kind of home-based work indicates that the most affected households by the crisis have great resilient powers and are able to create income generating alternatives. In this aspect, I agree with other studies focused on household survival strategies. When we take a deeper look at households we find out that they are capable of generating alternatives to the lack of opportunities offered by the labor market. The analysis showed that these home-based ventures are characterized by their typically informal and marginal natures. It is relatively easy to carry out some of these home-based occupations, and this situation hides the fact that many of these household members are 'looking for work', but in practice they are not because they do carry out productive activities.

This is an income generating strategy which usually involves many family members, and usually children participate actively, and the women, who is supposedly are housewives, play a very important role as coordinators and distributors of productive work. Also in many cases, members of the household carrying out "outside household work", but when returning home help out with the family venture.

Added to this large percentage of home-based work, there is the odd job or 'take-what-you-get' type of work. Both types of job market activities show the very informal nature of the occupations of these households.

The large growth of informal activities is linked to the need to create options to face unemployment and flexible alternative work which will enable the incorporation of various members of a household. Thus this wide range of occupations is related to survival more than to accumulation.

The possible combinations together with the mentioned aspects (place where work is performed and work stability) prove the heterogeneousness of occupations within the households. In other words in one same household there is more than one type of labor insertion.

The link between the amount of household labor insertion and number of actual household workers indicates that whilst there are one or two household members working outside the home, for home based work there are more than two involved.
Continuing work precariousness influences the make up and feasibility of economic survival strategies. In order to face income scarcity and uncertainty, the studied households supplement them with new occupational insertions giving rise to combined economic strategies. In spite of the different types of household composition and which stage of life they are in, the most successful economic strategies, in terms of stability and income amounts, are those which combine various incomes, in connection with a stable job. The highest degree of precariousness is found in those households not receiving a regular income, either because their members only carry out odd jobs or only do home-based work, or because they combine the two types of activities.

The neighborhood, as the place directly involving the work strategies of studied population, is a key subject running through various aspects of this chapter. For over half of the workers, it is the place where they live and carry out their income generating productive activities. It thus becomes an important economic site where income is generated. Therefore, settlements take on a special dimension within the households' income generating strategies and these acquire special characteristics. Most work considered informal is carried out in the neighborhood. Belonging to the neighborhood

becomes most important to those carrying out home-based work, and also to those doing odd jobs. In many cases it is the place where they 'go out to' for their productive activities. However, closeness of their neighborhood to the place they 'go out to' to work in stable jobs shows that it is important to these people too.

The neighborhood exerts its influence on getting work no matter the type of labor insertion. It appears as the place where contacts are made to obtain work. This is a key aspect to understand the functioning of the circle of poverty of households situated in ecologically isolated areas.

The intention of this analysis is to show that living in segregated areas sets a limit to job hunting. It becomes clear that the incorporation of new members to the labor market is still the most extended strategy to face increasingly vulnerable situations. This chapter has given evidence that for my studied population this strategy comes up against obstacles. It becomes difficult to incorporate new members to the labor market when there is no work. Factors such as household composition, their stage in life, the value of distribution of domestic and other active roles, together with space aspects tend to limit the use of this work resource. I can therefore conclude that these aspects usually combine to generate a process of accumulation of disadvantages which increases households' vulnerability and limits their coping abilities.

As analyzed in this chapter, the ability to cope of households in poor settlements, in other words the way in which they manage their work strategies in order to generate income to survive, is one of the mechanisms fostering social isolation in poor urban settlements. These strategies trap 'workers' even further in the neighborhood, and submerge them in the poor 'occupational' opportunities it has to offer. They become

experts at ‘take-whatever-you-get’ type of work, but this definitely does not help them to overcome poverty. These strategies are of the search for income rather than work for income type. All this just sinks them deeper in poverty.

The interviews showed that these households may compensate unemployment or their members’ vulnerability, but in the long run this process will lead to erosion of reciprocal networks, and abolish their hard earned conquests of better times.

I believe that the analysis presented provides elements which meet the basic objectives of this work: during recession and high unemployment, fundamental assets such as social networks based on reciprocity and self help mechanisms –family, friends, neighbors- tend to lose their effectiveness in helping to obtain work. This decline fundamentally affects the quality of these networks and not their extension. In other words the resources circulating in these networks are exhausted and lose effectiveness.

TABLES

Table 6.1 Activity and Unemployment Rates. Greater Buenos Aires Active Population (Over 13 years Old) by Education

	Activity Rates	Unemployment Rates
Level of Education		
GREATER BUENOS AIRES		
Elementary incomplete	43,2	25,4
Elementary complete	56,4	22,5
Secondary incomplete and complete	53,7	22,1
Tertiary	75,9	15,1
Total	*56,6*	*21,1*
SETTLEMENTS		
Elementary incomplete	58,5	30,6
Elementary complete	75,0	42,5
Secondary incomplete and complete and more	61,1	42,4
Total	*65,5*	*38,0*

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the Permanent Household Survey-October 2001, and Data form the 100 households interviewed

Table 6.2 Labor Insertion of Greater Buenos Aires Workers by Education

	Elementary Incomplete	Elementary complete	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY					
Employer	1,1	2,6	4,1	5,3	3.6
Self-Employed	36,9	29,1	22,1	15,6	24.2
Employed	62,0	67,6	73,2	78,3	71.6
Family Worker	0,0	0,7	0,6	0,8	0.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100.0 (2853)
TYPE OF OCCUPATION					
Permanent	76,4	78,8	87,1	90,4	84.3
A temporary job	6,5	3,7	2,6	4,1	3.6
Occasional Job	2,7	3,4	2,0	0,9	2.3
Of Unknow duration (Unstable)	14,4	14,1	8,3	4,6	9.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100.0 (2847)
TENURE					
Less than 1 y.	26,8	25,5	20,4	16,2	21.6
1 -5 y	35,6	36,4	43,1	40,4	39.8
More than 5 y.	37,5	38,1	36,5	43,4	38.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100.0 (2835)
WEEKLY HOURS WORKED					
Less than 20 hs	27,8	21,2	13,2	13,5	17.1
20 to 29 hs.	14,3	11,7	8,5	17,3	12.0
30 to 40 hs.	13,9	12,7	12,5	16,9	13.7
41 or more	43,9	54,4	65,8	52,4	57.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100 (2432)
AVERGE INCOME OF MAIN OCCUPATION.(**)	268,01	340,9	511,3	799,4	500,9

* Only for salaried workers

SOURCE: Prepared by the author using data from the Permanent Household Survey. Buenos Aires October 2001

Table 6.3 Labor Insertion of Settlements Inhabitants Workers by Education

	Elementary Incomplete	Elementary complete	Secondary and more	Total
OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY				
Employer	2,4	0,0	0,0	0,9
Self-Employed	57,1	51,0	41,1	51,9
Employed	40,5	44,9	52,9	44,4
Family Worker	0,0	4,1	5,9	2,8
Total	100	100	100	100.0 (108)
TYPE OF OCCUPATION				
Permanent	26,3	28,9	46,7	30,6
A Temporary Job	18,4	20,0	13,3	18,4
An Occasional Job	36,8	37,8	26,7	35,7
Of Unknown Duration (Unstable)	18,4	13,3	13,3	15,3
Total	100	100	100	100.0 (98)
TENURE				
Less than 1 y.	29,4	27,5	28,6	28,4
1 to 5 y.	35,3	40,0	42,9	38,6
More than 5a.	35,3	32,5	28,6	33,0
Total	100	100	100	100.0 (88)
BRANCH OF ACTIVITY				
Industry	11,4	6,1	23,5	10,9
Commerce	18,2	20,4	29,4	20,9
Services	34,1	36,7	23,5	33,6
Domestic Services	18,2	18,4	5,9	16,4
Construction	15,9	16,3	17,6	16,4
Rural	2,3	2,0	0,0	1,8
Total	100	100	100	100 (110)
HOW THE JOB WAS OBTAINED				
By Family or Friends Networks	73,1	71,4	38,5	66,2
Other	26,9	28,6	61,5	33,8
Total	100	100	100	100
AVERAGE INCOME OF MAIN OCCUPATION.(**)	271,4	251,1	393,6	282,4

* Only for salaried workers

SOURCE: Self Processing of data from the 100 households interviewed for this Thesis

Table 6.4 Income by Education controlled by Neighborhood Social Composition

Level of Education		**Income**						
		G. Bs As Non-poor Non-poor (1)	Type of Settlement Toma (2)	Slum (3)	Total (4)	Dif % (2-3)	Dif% (1-4)	Dif% (1-3)
Elementary Incomplete	Mean	314,5	303,13	198,33	243,65	34,57	22,53	36,94
	N	213	16	21	37			
	St.D	202,62	194,892	169,302	185,797			
Elementary Complete	Mean	403,35	290,42	192,26	236,67	33,80	41,32	52,33
	N	791	19	23	42			
	St.D	312,9	194,574	183,658	192,783			
Secondary incomplete or more	Mean	857,61	433,33	279,09	333,53	35,59	61,11	67,46
	N	2326	6	11	17			
	St.D	908,4	186,19	233,686	225,248			
Total	Mean	714,96	316,29	211,95	256,51	**32,99**	**64,12**	**70,35**
	N	3330	41	55	96			
	St.D	806,04	195,078	188,749	197,399			
Dif income Low/high educ		**-543,11**	**-130,2**	**-80,76**				

Source: Idem Table 6.1
Mean; N: Number of cases; St D.: Standard Deviation

Table 6.5 Settlements Workers by Occupational Category, by Sex, Household Position, Age, Branch of Activity, Employers in the Firm, Average Weekly Hours Worked and Income

Sex	**Self-employed**	**Employed**
Male	45,2	86,0
Female	54,8	14,0
Total	100,0	100,0
	(62)	(50)
Household Position		
Head	50,0	64,0
Spouse	35,5	8,0
Son/Daughter	11,3	18,0
Other relatives	3,2	10,0
Total	100,0	100,0
	(62)	(50)
Age Group		
Less than 25 y.	11,3	22,0
25-40 y	51,6	52,0
41 or more	37,1	26,0
Total	100,0	100,0
	(62)	(50)
Branch of Activity		
Industry	6,6	18,0
Commerce	29,5	16,0
Service	24,6	42,0
Domestic Service	29,5	0,0
Construction	9,8	22,0
Rural	0,0	2,0
Total	100,0	100,0
	(61)	(50)
Workers in the Firm		
2 – 5		56,7
6 – 15		33,3
16 – 25		6,7
26 – 40		3,3
Total		100,0
Unknown		32,0
Weekly Hours worked on the main occupation	35,6 (*)	44
Average Income of Main occupation	216,5	344
Average of all personal incomes	226,9	409,7

(*) For self employed 63,9% has a very unstable schedule. Therefore their weekly dedication to work is estimated. For employed workers the percentage goes down to 22,0%

Source: Idem Table 6.3

Table 6.6 Settlement Workers by the location of their jobs

Place	**%**
In the settlement of residence	25,9
Very nearby (within 15 block) the settlement of residence	32,7
In the same county of residence	11,2
In another County	20,7
In Buenos Aires City	9,5
Total	100,0 (116)

Source: Idem Table 6.3

Table 6.7 Workers in Home-Base productive Activities by type of Activity

Type of homebased Productive Activity	%
Informal home-based shop	40,0
Cardboard collection	29,1
Seamstress	3,6
PieceWork	14,5
Informal Cab Driver	3,6
Carpentry with own workshop	5,4
Repair Technician with own workshop	1,8
Other	1,8
Total	100,0 (55)

Source: Idem Table 6.3

Table 6.8 Average Age, weekly hours worked and Monthly income by Type of Homebased Productive Activity

Type of Homebased Productive Activity	Age	Weekly hours worked	Monthly Incomes
Informal home-based shop	36,4	52,1	200,7
Cardboard collection	31,4	37,9	110,8
Seamstress	40,5	14	60,0
PieceWork	26,5	16,7	113,0
Informal Cab Driver	39,5	70,0	300,0
Others	33,0	33,2	270,7

Source: Idem Table 6.3

CHAPTER 7:

CIRCUIT OF BASIC NEEDS SATISFACTION. TRAPPED IN POVERTY STRICKEN NEIGHBORHOODS

This chapter describes the circuits whereby the residents of poverty stricken settlements gain access to the goods and services needed to live. In other words, the circuits whereby certain needs of these settlement households are satisfied. The channels, social networks and links which help to obtain these goods and services and the advantages and limitations entailed in using these links and networks, are herein analyzed for each aspect. Likewise, it is important to detect the mechanisms used when choosing certain circuits for the satisfaction of certain basic needs. In short, to analyze how effective social networks, links and social mechanisms are in reference to the quality of the goods and services which they are able to obtain.

These needs satisfaction circuits include diverse units, agents, processes, flows and exchanges which result in systems which are not always as efficient as they should be. Bearing this in mind, these circuits can be considered as "social-organizational models" (Borsotti, 1981). These circuits channel all the demands of the different social sectors for each type of good or service (food, health, clothing, housing, etc.) Analysis is focused on the following aspects: access to food and clothing; access to the different dimensions of human capital (education and health); and lastly the circuit whereby they gain access to entertainment, focused on the way in which the members of a household make use of their free time, specially time dedicated to recreation.

Access to food and clothing

The way in which the interviewed households gain access to food varies. EPU's analysis shows the following ways to access daily meals: purchasing it in stores using the social subsidy they receive, through barter clubs (Club del Trueque), producing it at home, in exchange for a service, or asking for leftovers in nearby stores. The first two being the most commonly practiced.

In all these households their main, and in some cases only expense is food. This expense is carried out in stores. All these households frequently visit stores situated either in their settlement or nearby. The large amount of stores situated in the settlement makes life much easier.[84] About a fourth of the households interviewed carry out their purchases exclusively in the stores in the settlements or their surroundings.

When questioned on the suitability of buying in these stores, it was surprising to hear that their prices were higher, contrary to what would have been expected. The advantages are that they are easy to get to, have favorable paying conditions for the dwellers of the settlement. They often sell on a buy-now- pay-later basis, and many times they sell goods in a fragmented manner (one egg, ¼ kilo flour, 100 gr. sugar, etc.). These purchasing conditions are unheard of in other stores outside the settlement. Considering the precarious and unstable status of their income, it is understandable that these people should purchase their food in settlement stores.

[84] The seemingly disproportionate amount of stores in the settlements was surprising. These are generally simply very small convenience stores ("kioskitos") where different types of goods can be bought, grocery goods, ready made food, small household goods, etc. Each corridor of the settlement has at least one of these stores.

Besides buying their food in the stores in the settlement, they periodically go to small nearby supermarkets because there they find lower prices, but the distance and lack of the minimum amount of cash justifying these trips, prevent them from purchasing there frequently. Both these difficulties hinder many households from using this alternative.

Apart from purchasing in settlement stores or small supermarkets, about a fifth of the interviewed households make use of the big chain supermarkets with certain frequency. This of course has its advantages: lower prices and bargains. But the disadvantages are also significant: distance, lack of cash, food vouchers or credit cards. Besides, these supermarkets refuse to go into these settlements to deliver goods. One of the persons interviewed said "we try to go to Carrefour every month or every other month (they have good bargains ....), but of course we have to have at least $20 to go there. When we manage to collect this we do go, otherwise we just do our shopping around here. We have to walk there, which takes us about 40 minutes, and we take a cab back". Only 10% of the interviewed households own some type of vehicle. It is mostly these households who do their shopping in supermarkets.

It is worth highlighting that any decisions made on the purchase of food are carried out in the realm of each household. Each one has its own purchasing strategy depending on their income. None of these households partake of community purchasing to obtain their food.

Receiving welfare to gain access to their food is becoming more and more significant to these sectors. The subject of social welfare will be seen more extensively in

Chapter 8. The welfare that is received by 85% of the interviewed households who benefit from a social aid program consists of some type of food.

Public schools and day care centers for small children are another way of gaining access to their food. There, 8 out of 10 children between 5 and 14 years of age attending school, have at least one meal a day. This is a huge benefit and lessens the burden for those families who are assured daily sustenance for their children. This way of accessing food also helps those who are employed in soup kitchens –*comedores*-. Four of the interviewed households had some member of their family working in these school kitchens either for money or as voluntary workers. These people commented that they regularly took home a ration of food. One of the women interviewed, who worked in the baby day-care center, said "until about 3 months ago I was paid a monthly wage of $160 for this work, now I am not paid for the job but I keep on coming because at the end of the day we share out the left over food with the other day care workers, and that way I am assured a meal for the evening".

Bartering is another alternative to access food. In four of the interviewed households, some member of the family dedicates a good deal of time to this activity. This alternative is also linked to the production of home made goods. One in ten of the interviewed households produces something which they consume. Some of these households exchange any left over product for another in the barter club (club del trueque)[85].

[85] The practice of exchanging goods at the Club del Trueque has lost weight lately. In 2001 when carrying out the first part of our field work, many of the people interviewed mentioned going to these Clubs sporadically or at least considering them an alternative in their lives. During the second stage of our field work in 2002, the bartering modality had lost weight and was hardly mentioned.

Other food accessing alternatives are a vegetable patch or poultry raising. One out of every ten homes has a vegetable patch or a chicken run in their patch of land. Some of the people interviewed had thought about these possibilities, but problems arising from flooding, lack of space, etc. made it impractical.

In some homes, access to food is achieved through exchange for some type of service. The most common of these services is house-work or child-care. These "arrangements" are usually carried out in the family circle. The most extreme case encountered was a 58 year old woman who, having two rooms in her little shack, rented out one of them in exchange for a daily meal. This person confirmed that in spite of not receiving any type of income, in this way her survival is assured.

Finally, another method of accessing food is to visit the stores in the area in hope of being handed out the leftovers. Many homes combine this method with one of the other methods of food accessing.

Access to the different dimensions of human capital

Access to Education

In regards to schools attended by the population under study, children between 5 and 14 years old, that is to say, any age between preschool or any of the EGB (general basic education) levels, 91.2% go to public schools located in the settlements or nearby. The remaining 8.8% go to private schools located very near these settlements[86]. They

[86] In one of the settlements surveyed, there is a State subsidized private school where the children who live there attend. Most of these children do so by means of scholarships granted by the school.

attend school during 4 hours every day, where besides studying they have a meal, either lunch and breakfast or lunch and an afternoon snack, according to their shift.

This population has access to the schools located in the worst segment of the circuit. The quality of the education they receive is border line, and they will never be able to make up for this poor level in the next education levels. The people interviewed are fully aware of this. One of them commented: "*The educational quality of school N° 79 is very poor, children learn nothing, but as soon as it way inaugurated 3 years ago, it filled up. I also send my children there, it is only 5 blocks away and my kids can go there by themselves"*

Distance is an important factor when choosing a school for the children. For the households that have decided to send their children to better schools, distance is always a big obstacle. One of the persons interviewed commented, "*whilst we can afford it, we will carry on sending our children to Mitre school, a public school in San Miguel (a large town in Greater Buenos Aires), as it is far better than those around here*". But to get there we have to go through the open spaced residential areas. In summer I can walk the children to school, but in winter my children feel the cold bitterly. There are no buses. I arranged with a cab driver and pay him $40 to drive them to school and back every day".

The only extracurricular activity the school offers is the children's dining room where they have a meal every day. There are no counselors at the school, at the most there is a social worker whose main task is to visit the family of the child who is away from school too often. In other words these schools offer very little psychological or any other type of support for these children.

Regarding access to junior high school mentioned above, when analyzing the level of education reached by the population of over 14 years old, we found that none or very few of the people interviewed have gained access to junior high school. Only half of the children between 15 and 17 years of age are currently going to school, and of these a lot have not achieved the grades to continue into high school . The drop- outs are mostly those who left at the end of the second level of EGB (42.2%). This information needs further analysis, but at first sight it can be said that the classical primary school (up till 7th grade, and maybe the trend is up to the end of the second level of EGB) is the inflexion point among the population of the poverty stricken urban areas. Actually, of those who are able to finish the first two cycles of primary school, very few start the third cycle, and of those who do, very few go on to finish high school.

Attending the primary level is supported by the families. This support makes it possible to go through the first years of this level. But later and in spite of the fact that they have not finished the second cycle of EGB, a lot of families need these children to be breadwinners. Their "credit" or preparation phase is up, and they must now contribute towards the sustenance of the home by making a living.

This situation is decisive in making these young people perceive finishing high school as something unattainable for them, something that is out of their range. In fact it would be impossible for them to dedicate 5 hours a day to their self improvement. These young people and their parents perceive that the best thing is for them to finish the second cycle of primary school, they know that their working skills would be enhanced if they

finished high school, but they know that to get there is difficult, if not impossible, thus secondary school is wishful thinking and unattainable for them. [87]

Both young people and their parents believe that the difficulties encountered to finish their studies can be attributed to factors outside the education system, some of these difficulties being limited intellectual skills, over age, or financial limitations. The first of these factors is in fact the one most used as an excuse to blame themselves or blame their children for dropping out of school. Comments such as "I can't do secondary school, I'm just not intelligent enough" or "my kid is just not cut out to study" are often heard. This fact is surprising because looking into the background characteristics of each one of these youngsters, they have all undergone family pressures to bring in some kind of income. However the decision process is an individual task, with all the responsibility this entails.

I must be pointed out though, that a great deal of the decision to flunk secondary school is the fact that there are much fewer secondary schools to choose from than primary ones. They are much further away (contrary to those for primary school) from the poor areas where these young people live. The geographical area in which these dwellers move is very limited, and easy access and proximity to their homes are the main factors when choosing a school.

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[87] See Gallart M.A., Jacinto C. and Suárez, A.L. (1996); and Moreno, M., Suárez, A.L. y Binstock (1994)

Entertainment. Recreation and the use made of "free time"

One of the aspects studied directly or indirectly by EPU's survey is the subject regarding the use of free time. By 'free time' is meant the time not dedicated to work, or in the case of children or teenagers, the time not spent at school.

For women, especially those over 12 years old, household work takes up a great part of the day. This work is seldom shared with the men, in fact it is seen as work activities only women can perform. Generally speaking, the dominant view among interviewed population is that the specific domain of the woman is in the home. This view influences the fact that the most important jobs carried out are home based for the housewives or flexible ones such as domestic service which permits combining the productive role with the reproductive one.

With regards to children, it was surprising to hear the comments in various homes saying that whilst the girls remain at home all day, the boys play out on the 'street' with other boys. The general view is that 'the neighborhood or the street is a risky place', meaning that it is not a place for girls.

In the case of teenagers and young people not attending school, some of them work. Those who are not part of the work market or who only do odd jobs, spend long hours out on the 'street', specially the boys. Girls, on the other hand, spend most of the day doing household chores.

Around a third of the population interviewed under 10 years of age, are members of some sort of association. In 73.3% of the cases these associations or groups are in the settlement. In most cases these associations are related to football (where the boys participate) or they are churches, specially the ones of evangelical denomination.

Most of the dwellers spend their weekends in the settlement. They either participate in the activities offered by the above mentioned associations, stay at home or visit friends or relations in the settlement. Their incomes are not sufficient to carry out any other activity outside the settlement. One of the persons interviewed commented "*each time I visit my sister who lives in another area of Greater Buenos Aires, I have to take two buses, and it's just too expensive to get there, I hardly ever go any more. She sometimes visits me. Travelling is expensive and when we have a few bucks, my husband Juan uses them to go out to find work*".

Besides the economic constraint, safety is another major problem. It surprised me to learn that many of the people interviewed were afraid to leave their homes without people inside for fear of being burgled. Many of these people declared that they have been victims of some kind of assault, mostly by neighbors in their own settlement. They went on to say that delinquent gangs have been formed in the settlement, many times related to drug abuse. In general most of the persons interviewed say they do not interact with fellow settlement dwellers except with relations who live there.

To conclude, I would like to highlight that access by the population under study to different goods is obviously made extremely difficult by the scarce income generated by the households. Apart from being scarce these incomes are not steady and are very vulnerable. To this we can add that they live in faulty environmental areas. These two factors contribute to making these households' needs satisfaction circuits drastically in disadvantage with the rest of society, making it very difficult to leave behind the poverty in which they are immersed.

They are able to eat every day, but more expensively than those with a steady income who can more easily access stores offering lower prices. They have access to education but it is the lowest segment within the education system. Thus its quality is not sufficient to access the work market or higher education. Recreation is mostly carried out in the settlement and now they spend more time in their own homes because they increasingly lack protection from assaults from their own neighbors.

In short, this population is at a disadvantage right from the word go, and it becomes increasingly more difficult for them to break away from this situation because the circuits in which they move do not allow them to enlarge their social and cultural capital. Day by day they are immersed in the need to survive, thus they are prevented from furthering their horizons and planning or investing in better alternatives.

This analysis shows us how the mechanism of social segmentation operates. The analysis of the circuits through which the marginally poor have access to the goods and services necessary for survival, tend to produce social barriers and to lessen the opportunities for interaction between socio-economically different persons.

CHAPTER 8:

REPERCUSSION OF SOCIAL HELP OBTAINED BY DWELLERS THROUGH PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Introduction

In spite of its controversial nature, at the end of the 1960s, the Argentine Welfare State, based on a principle of citizenship, guaranteed access to education, health, sometimes welfare housing, pensions and different levels of social protection. Already in the 1980s, the increasing crisis suffered by the Welfare State and the rescheduling of the regulatory role of the State changed the course of the country' social policies. The Government's answer to increasing poverty and "unprotected" social groups was the creation of focused social policies and "specific" public assistance programs mostly during the 1990s. It is through these types of focused and selective social policies that many dwellers have access to primary resources to survive. The method used by the State to manage these resources in order to face the problems of "marginal people", are gaining importance as a component of dwellers' survival strategies.

The most marginal and precarious neighborhoods, a central objective of this thesis, are mostly the main focus of social policies, thus becoming "Neighborhoods under public assistance".[88] In this way a Public assisted slum community emerged. The dwellers of these slums live surrounded and sustained by government-sponsored programs. Thus, through these programs the State is systematically present on a local level. This presence is a new issue, which influences the social behavior of the

[88] For greater explanation on this subject see Andrenacci, Raggio, Neufeld 2002

neighborhood and the social relationships among beneficiaries. The effort and lobby involved to obtain the resources granted by the State, become a main subject in the analysis of social policies, and a new component of the strategies used by families to obtain those resources.

This chapter has two objectives. One is to analyze how resources supplied by the State through public assistance programs created to fight poverty, influence the living conditions of settlement communities. The second one is to analyze the influences this type of social policy exerts on the beneficiaries' social capital. My hypothesis is that these focused social policies not only lead to the social fragmentation process being experimented by Argentina's social structure, but that it reinforces it, since these policies damage the social capital of the households. Their dynamics hinder social integration, thus increasing social segregation and isolation.

The main question in this chapter is: How do current social policies influence the living conditions and strategies of poor communities in a context of social fragmentation and exclusion? More accurately, the questions are: What do welfare programs mean in terms of their living conditions, future perspectives and specially in terms of the neighborhood's communal social capital?; How do they perceive it?; What strategies do the beneficiaries use to gain access to welfare?; What type of situations are created, inside and outside the neighborhood, by this new type of State intervention?

The purpose of this chapter is to study these social policies, taking beneficiaries as the subject of the analysis. This chapter relates two aspects of main importance to understand the dynamics and perspectives of poverty and social exclusion of the country:

1. Social policies[89] intended to mitigate poverty in the country; and 2. Survival strategies of increasingly marginal homes. The study is focused on the beneficiaries of these social policies. It is important to point out that investigating beneficiaries of social policies– which in many cases conclude in stressing the weaknesses of these policies (Wacquant, 2001) - does not mean to lose sight of the significance of their macro structural conditioning. This, in the end, is what creates these populations with the need to be assisted. My intention, to possess greater knowledge of the prospects of this assisted population, stems from my interest in observing how structural problems, such as unemployment and poverty, manifest and are processed at a micro-social level. Finally, to know how State policies influence social connections. These policies are not intentionally created by individuals but are done so during situations of social crises.

The introduction of this Chapter presents my viewpoint on how this country's social policies have developed and which are the challenges that it faces at present. I Also describe the most significant social programs received by the interviewed population. The description of social assistance received periodically was the one taking place at the moment of performing the fieldwork for this thesis (mid 2001). Therefore the analysis was based on the data obtained through interviews performed on the 100 sampled homes.[90] The description was made taking into account the intervention strategy used by the State. Therefore, programs of direct monetary assistance, and then those related to allowances granted for the performance of temporary jobs, are described. Then the scope

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[89] I understand social policy as social state interventions which are part of the accumulative system specifically directed towards the life conditions, and life reproduction, of different social levels and social groups, operating specially at the moment of secondary income distributions

[90] Twenty life's histories were excluded from the analysis. These were performed in the mid 2002, when *"Plan Jefes y Jefas de Hogar"* (Home Chief Sponsored Plans) was introduced.

and extent of assistance programs are analyzed. I study differences between beneficiary households and non beneficiary households. And the access to the program, that is to say, strategies used to obtain the benefit. I approach also how the people value and perceive the assistance received, paying particular attention to temporary job programs. Finally the role of neighborhood representatives, specially *"manzaneras"* , as social actors in the focused assistance to neighborhoods is analyzed; specially their influence on social links and relationships.

Argentina's Current Social Policies [91]

The ways of social intervention by the State (SIE)[92] are the conflictive result of well thought out designs to favor political ambitions as well as of contexts and enforced relationships which have over determined the means by which the State intervenes. These controversies are behind the ways in which the Argentine State socially intervened during the stages of full employment, import substitution models and huge public sector (1930-1975), and are still doing so at present. In fact, during the 1990s the use of a new SIE model has tended to appear, deeply involved with State Reform, with fiscal difficulties of National and Provincial States, with the deterioration of jobs and living conditions of an important part of the population, and the way in which the political and economically hegemonic thought perceives the causes and consequences of those difficulties and deteriorated conditions. This reform is carried out within the international context of

[91] The development of this section was based on Luciano Andrenacci, María Rosa Neufeld and Liliana Raggio field work (2002).

[92] For an overview of this concept see CORTÉS, Rosalía and MARSHALL, Adriana: "Growth Model, State Social Intervenion and Labor Regulation. Argentina, 1890-1990"; Geneva, International Institute for Labor Studies, 1991.

applying neo-liberal policies that began in Great Britain and USA and that were proposed for Latin American countries by international financial agencies, as a way to escape the debt crises. This means structural reforms in economy and politics. In the social policy field it meant focusing on poverty and decentralization of public services such as health and education. In the case of social benefits (pensions and social security) within the framework of this reform, changes were directed towards privatizing the system, which would allow control of public spending and reinforcement of capital markets. The reform has a marked tendency towards the commercialization of social rights.

Focalization implies an increasing degree of population selectivity to which public interventions are directed, justifying this by the need for efficacy and efficiency in social public spending. In this way the State changes its usual regulatory intervention in the labor market, more or less of universal criterion, for strategic interventions carried out on the sideline, particularly directed to risk-related groups and territories. Social policy is progressively transformed into specialized intervention that takes as accurate "data" the labor market and the behavior of the accumulation system in general. It works in this way, for instance, with labor policies going from the protection of a work contract to an open deregulation of the system, with new contract methods and emergency intervention systems in the form of active work policies. Decentralization sometimes transfers the responsibilities of spending, administration and/or execution of the social policy at provincial or municipal levels, to non-government organizations. The same occurs with education and sanitation systems. Finally, privatization introduces whole sections of these social policies to the competitive logic of the market, as occurs with the social security system and partially with the reform to the public health system.

In this context, social programs offering food, sanitation or temporary job assistance, has gained a central position, to the point that even the name "social policies" is progressively identified with them in public speeches, leaving behind the more comprehensive classic vision of social policy as the component of state social intervention, so linked to innumerable aspects of economic policy. At the same time due to typical formal or informal decentralization processes, the key territorial domain of these social policies are the provinces and increasingly, the municipalities. SIE, in contemporary Argentina, is more and more, a group of special programs financed by national and provincial states, as well as international agencies managed by provinces and municipalities.

Challenges faced by Focalized Social Policies

The main principle of focalization is efficiency to reach the "really" poor population, thanks to the selection made in resource allocation, and to important cuts in state costs. Nevertheless both principles face great challenges and problems that question the efficacy of focalization. Many surveys carried out in the field of social sciences have pointed out that the main problems of focalization are related to clientelistic practices to assign benefits, to lack of transparency, to financing instability, to fragmentation and to program overlapping.[93]

The problems entailed in focalized assignment programs as well as those related to information, conspire against mentioned principles.[94] Delimitation of beneficiaries and

[93] See among other papers, C. Vilas (1997); A. Solimano (1999); Tenti Fanfani, Golbert and Lumi (1992); L. Andrenacci, M. R. Neufeld and L. Raggio (2002)
[94] To compare both problems see A. Solimano (1999).

related aspects is not an easy task, as to its growing complexity can be added growing poverty. Many vulnerable groups have been left out. The lack of a solid decentralized state capable of reaching the target population, clearly results in an overlapping of institutions (domestic, regional and national levels), which compete to obtain funds, as well as in a flight of funds. Lack of efficiency and corruption are the main problems related to focalization in Argentina, as well as in many other countries that followed focused social policies during the 1990s.

It is possible to believe that time will improve these administrative and informative problems. Nevertheless a focalizing problem hard to solve is the one related to social structure and social solidarity. This policy deteriorates the country's solidarity bases when turning beneficiaries into passive "victims", [95] and might be stated that this is related to the emergence of new social conflicts. The intention of this chapter is mainly to deal with these type of problems, laying emphasis on beneficiaries' social assistance in terms of their social capital.

From a citizenship viewpoint, focalization limits originate in the precarious and conditional execution of their rights (Tenti Fanfani, Golbert and Lumi, 1992). In social policies overseeing poverty, in social assistance and nowadays in programs focalized on fighting poverty, it is possible to identify components of social integrity, political cooperation, social control, and conflict neutralization, but most of the programs miss out on the effective guaranteeing of rights of those groups barred from the labor market or people unable to generate their own income.

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[95] See A. See (1987) The Standard of Living Cambridge University Press

Social Programs received by Interviewed Population[96]

During 2001 there were 58 national programs focalized on poverty.[97] Social programs might be analyzed according to the following dimensions: manner of intervention, manner of implementation, financing, focalization criteria, target population and budget amount. The manner of intervention is related to the type of assistance program; the following were identified: goods supplied as food, medicine, clothing, building materials, housing, etc., waterworks , sanitation, electricity, health, family allowance, technical assistance, financial assistance, training and institutional enhancement, individual training and entertainment activities. The manner in which intervention is carried out allows us to acquire knowledge into the type of poverty being assisted and its possible implications in poverty reduction. Implementation is related to level of decentralization of expenditure (national, provincial or municipal) and its potential links with NGO. The analysis according to type of beneficiary population, allows identification of the programs directed to those groups. For instance, small-scale rural producers, native population, families or groups with Unsatisfied Needs, individuals (children, elders, women, disabled), institutional or neighborhood or municipal communities. The analysis of target population, the manner of intervention and the

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[96] Implementation of different programs during the social outbreak and institutional and economic crisis that marked the setting at the end of year 2001, has been modified. Even though it might sound obvious, it is necessary to clarify here that these surveys' conclusions are connected to a near past and to a scene which is quickly changing. During year 2002, the Nation made very important social policy changes, under law number 25.561 related to Public Emergency and to Foreign Exchange rate Regime Reform, Decree 108/2002 of Food Assistance Emergency, Decree 165/2002 of National Job Emergency, and Decree 486/02 of Health National Emergency were legislated. Through these Decrees the Food Program, and *"Plan de Jefes y Jefas de hogar desocupados"* (Head of household Unemployed Aid Program), and the National Program of Universal Access to Medicines, emerged.

[97] Forty-five of these programs remained in force during budget 2002, with some cuts in the money assigned to the programs and with changes in neighborhoods receiving this assistance. During 2002, two new very important national programs were created: *"Plan de Jefes y Jefas de hogar desocupados"* (Head of household Unemployed Aid Program) and Food Emergency program

focalization criteria are useful tools to determine to what type of poverty situation (Unsatisfied Basic Needs, New Poor) these programs are directed.

With the intention of presenting the most important programs reaching the population interviewed for this thesis, I have created groups related to the way of social intervention. I will first present those programs consisting of direct material assistance and then those consisting of a subsidy in exchange for temporary work.[98]

Direct Material Assistance Programs

Two of the most important programs related to direct material assistance are *"Plan Vida"* and *"Plan Asoma"*. The first one is a state program and the second one a national program. These are direct action programs focused on structural poverty. *"Plan Vida"* was introduced in 1995. It covers institutional, communitarian and food and health subjects. One of its main objectives is to decrease child morbidity and to encourage mother-child healthcare. This program chooses beneficiaries after locating dwellers in places with a census of more than 40% of UBN, with children from 0 to 5 years of age and/or pregnant and/or nursing women. [99] This is coordinated between provincial and municipal authorities as well as through the "manzaneras"[100] (Andrenacci

[98] During 2001, the programs related to infrastructure services supply have been in force in the four neighborhoods chosen for this survey. Two of those neighborhoods were in the process of regularizing their ownership. I won't analyze any of those two cases in this survey. I will only undertake those related to direct material assistance and temporary job programs. Nor will I delve deeply into the PROMIN impact. (PROMIN: program included in the global decentralization change of health system, focused not only in food assistance but also in basic needs). Said program has a strong presence in one of the chosen settlements

[99] Plan Vida beneficiaries receive daily provisions of milk, weekly provisions of wheat and eggs, and monthly provisions of sugar

[100] The characteristic of *"Plan Vida"* is its singular mechanism of operation. The volunteer neighborhood workers commonly know as *"manzaneras"*, are the direct administrators within the neighborhood. The program procedure states that each *"manzanera"* has under her responsibility 4 blocks and every 20

et. Al. 2002). The program *"Plan Asoma"* supplies monthly food assistance to persons over 60 years of age who do not receive retirement payments, pensions or any other type of social assistance. Another provincial program received by people under this survey is *"Plan Comadre"*. This program is sponsored by the "Consejo Provincial de la Familia y Desarrollo Humano" (Family and Human Development Provincial Council). Its aim is to detect and support women during their pregnancy with their routine controls. Pregnant women also receive a crib, baby clothes and diapers to receive the newborn baby.

There are some other local programs that are related to periodical direct material assistance. While the first mentioned programs are received by the four chosen settlements, these other programs are specific to each town. Usually these are municipal programs of weekly or monthly goods distribution in which schools, churches or Caritas (a charity organization of the Catholic Church) are involved. Reception of mentioned assistance is administered at a local level.

Temporary Job Program

The temporary job programs for the groups surveyed are *"Plan Trabajar"* and *"Plan Barrios Bonaerenses"*. *"Plan Trabajar"* program is administered by the "Ministerio Nacional de Trabajo y Seguridad Social" (National Ministry of Labor and Social Security). Its main objective is to improve the impact of economic assistance to the poorest homes and to strengthen relevancy and quality of the social infrastructure jobs generated through this program. Most of the operative aspects of *"Barrios Bonaerenses"*

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workers a coordinator has to be named. Coordinators and neighborhood workers are the direct interlocutors of official body and pass on their training skills to others. At the beginning of the program these workers were in charge of censing potential receptors in their neighborhood.

(Buenos Aires Neighborhoods) Program were a state adaptation of *"Programa Trabajar"* (Job Program). The main objective of this program is to contribute towards the family income of unemployed family heads and to enhance their job possibilities through job training programs related to projects for the improvement of their neighborhoods. At the same time, the program tries to satisfy relevant social needs through specific job programs of neighborhood interest; that is to say that the program performs improvements according to their needs: sidewalks, electricity, waterworks, signaling systems, etc. (Andrenacci e. al. 2002). Both programs are self-focalized by offering low payment and rudimentary jobs. They are based on the geographical place and socioeconomic characteristics of beneficiaries. Hopefully these community based programs could generate long lasting effects, building up community resources and adding resources to the existing ones.

Specific and Occasional Assistance Programs

Apart from the periodical assistance, some of the households of the four interviewed settlements have received along the year some kind of free assistance, specific to certain situations. Mostly sneakers and/or school frocks at the beginning of the school year, and blankets and mattresses after floods (specially in Barrufaldi settlement). Another assistance received was the free issuing of *"Documento Nacional de Identidad"* (National Identity Document), seeds to start a vegetable garden, medicines thanks to Caritas intervention, etc. Finally, another benefit is the possibility of having access to free food at soup kitchens, located in some of the chosen settlements.

Scope and Coverage of Assistance Programs

The scope and coverage of social policies of periodical assistance varies a lot in the chosen settlements due to the large number of households with unmet basic needs and high risk, which is to be expected due to the fact that they are "program receiving" neighbohoods. [101]85.1% of households receive some kind of periodical assistance (see Table 8.2).[102]

Three quarters of beneficiary households have at least one family member under *"Plan Vida"* (Table 8.1). This represents the total of homes receiving *"Plan Vida"* with kids under the age of 6. In other words all polled homes had at least one kid up to 6 years of age receiving this program. The total benefit supplied by *"Plan Vida"* in the surveyed households, shows the universal nature of the benefit managed by the provincial administration. Nevertheless, as it will be analyzed, the requirements to enter this program are not difficult to comply with. These are negotiations within the neighborhood and with the corresponding *"Manzanera"*. *"Plan Comadre"* is received by four households, one in each polled settlement. The program does not reach all of the target population.

"Plan Asoma", is received by 11.9% of polled homes who are beneficiaries of some social aid program (See Table 8.1). Even though the scope is high, it does not reach the total target population as *"Plan Vida"does*: from 12 interviewed homes, with at least one member over 64 year old, three are not receiving the benefit. Said homes are

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[101] 85.4% of the interviewed homes are under poverty line, and half of them do not have enough income to have access to basic food. Most of homes in marginal areas do not cover their basic needs

[102] During 1997 in the group area of GBA4, 26% of homes were receiving some kind of assistance, according to data reported by General Sarmiento University through the project on Popular Urban Economy (Kohan and Fournier 1998).

located in two settlements: Santa Elena and Villa Hidalgo. Some of the interviewed confessed some difficulties in obtaining the benefit. Difficulties varied depending on the settlements, as will be analyzed later on. 46.5% of homes receiving some benefit also have access to some periodical social assistance through local programs. The assistance comes through Caritas, as in Barrufaldi settlement, or directly received from the Municipality, as in the other three settlements. One of the most important local programs is the one carried out in the Santa Elena settlement. Assistance consists of a weekly bag of 15 Kg of vegetables. For this benefit beneficiaries pay $ 2 a bag. Half of the population interviewed at Santa Elena participated in this program. Even though this is the only program requesting a payment, its extensive coverage is the result of the efficiency of its application.

Apart from the periodical material assistance received throughout the year by the majority of the interviewed homes, a third of the households, received some kind of specific material assistance. Mostly, as mentioned before, these are sneakers, and or school frocks supplied to students attending public schools, medicines and blankets and/or mattresses after a flood. Two homes reported the benefit of having IDs issued free of charge for their children.

Finally, adult members from five homes quite often attended soup kitchens. This benefit only reached Barrufaldi and Villa Hidalgo settlements, since soup kitchens exist in those places. These benefits are highly appreciated by beneficiaries. Nevertheless some interviewed people reported partial arbitrary criterion in the distribution logistic (especially in the supply of sneakers and school frocks).

A fifth of the 84 homes receiving some kind of regular social assistance, have at least one family member in the *"Programa de Empleo Temporario"*(Temporary Job Program) (Table 8.1). Most of them are in *"Plan Trabajar"* (13 homes), and 6 of them received the benefit from *"Plan Barrios Bonaerenses"*. It is interesting to point out that 5 homes had family members receiving this benefit and for different reasons they are no longer receiving it.

Assisted Households. Impact on their Living Conditions

How do these social programs impact on the way these people live? To explore this matter I have grouped homes depending on whether they receive or not social assistance programs, and for those receiving social assistance, I have taken into account their needs according to each line of poverty. Thus, there are four categories. The first formed by those homes living exclusively from social assistance programs with no other income. The second one formed by those receiving social assistance in addition to some other kind of income under the poverty line. The third one formed by those homes receiving social assistance as well as receiving incomes over the poverty line. Finally, the last category is for those households not receiving any kind of social assistance. The sense of constructing the variable in this way is to prioritize their needs as well as to measure the impact of these social assistance programs on their homes. It is quiet acceptable to suppose that for the first category group, living only from social assistance to survive, the impact is pretty strong. The other way around should be expected from the last one. The two other categories are in between.

The only survival resource for a fifth of total surveyed households, came exclusively from social assistance programs. These are homes with no income from jobs or other sources (pension, retirements, rent, etc.). Another fifth, out of the total, receive social assistance and income, which is still not enough to place them over the poverty line. Just a bit more than four out of ten homes receive a social benefit, and at the same time receive a regular income to put them over the poverty line. Finally, 14.9% of urban settlement households survive without receiving any of the focalized social policy programs (Table 8.2).

To analyze the different characteristics within the four categories of homes, I considered the following aspects: household size, family structure, average of kids under 14 years of age, average of persons with income, average of total family income and level of education. Table 3 shows the data supporting this characterization.

On analyzing this table it can be observed that none of the considered data introduces clear differences as expected. The most interesting aspect to analyze is the average of family income. Contrary to what was expected, those homes not receiving social programs, have less income than those who do receive the assistance, but are over the line of poverty. [103] Besides the average of this group receiving the income varies in regards to the ones that receive social assistance and generate their own income. It is possible to believe that the lack of social assistance is related to the absence of family members with the characteristics required to be included in one of the programs.[104] The slightly less

[103] Considering the home group receiving social assistance, the average of monthly income of homes receiving but not getting assistance programs, are even greater among the first ones - $ 398 and $ 391 respectively

[104] For instance, to be under 6 years of age in order to receive *¨Plan Vida¨* and over 60 to receive *¨Plan Asoma*

than average number of kids under 14 years of age in the homes as opposed to the rest of the categories, confirms this idea. This proves one of the drawbacks in limiting social assistance to specific groups. Depending on family structures, it is easy for a poor home to be excluded from social policies.

For those homes surviving only on social assistance it is important to point out that 2 out of 3, were inhabited by one person. Both cases related to women over 64 years of age, not receiving retirement or pension. These are homes similar to the rest in size. Together with homes under poverty line, they share the same characteristics as those having more children. Probably this aspect makes it easier for them to enter *¨Plan Vida¨*. It is important to point out that homes living without income tend to concentrate in shantytowns in a grater average than others. This aspect confirms what was analyzed in Chapter 4 regarding the negative effect of social exclusion. At the same time these are homes with slightly less educational level than the rest. Therefore, it is possible to suppose that these homes represent the most disadvantageous qualities of living in precarious settlements (with low levels of education, marginal dwelling areas and with larger quantities of children), which exclude them from the Labor Market, and leads them to increasingly depend on social assistance granted by the State.

Access to Programs – Strategies to Obtain the Benefit

Almost a third of the interviewed people reported to be unaware of how the programs granted to them are executed. Adding to it the fact that about 10% of interviewed people did not answer the question. That is to say that only approximately half of interviewed people have any knowledge of the national, provincial, or municipal

office managing the benefit. Some of the interviewed people don't even know or have doubts about the name of the received program [105]. The knowledge improves with *¨Plan Vida¨*. The interviewed people receiving this program certainly knew that the assistance was coming from Buenos Aires Province.

In all cases to become a beneficiary is a matter of connections and arrangements within the neighborhood. That is to say that basically it is through neighborhood connections that homes get to know about the existence of the programs and have access to them. When the program's scope is universal for a target population (as in *¨Plan Vida¨*) local arrangements show clearer characteristics. To the contrary, when the resources are scarce and only some households have access to them, benefits are obtained only through clientelism and personal influences. That is the case with Temporary Job programs and with some local programs. No matter how they get to know about the benefit, access to it is in many cases carried out by arrangements made between them and a person appointed, openly or not, by the State to this purpose. Most of them are *¨Manzaneras¨* or *punteros politicos* (political activists). *Plan Vida¨* is relatively one of the easiest and most open benefit programs to gain access to. These are neighborhood arrangements mostly with their corresponding *¨Manzanera¨*. The interviewed people have not reported major problems in gaining access to the benefit. Many households had access to the program by getting in touch directly with their corresponding *¨Manzanera¨*. Others gained access to it after the neighborhood underwent a census by a social worker or a *¨Manzanera¨*. Receiving food assistance has become a ¨human right¨ for those included in previously established State criteria. The neighborhood workers have to

[105] In many cases the reporter named the program after the interviewed person made a description about the kind of program he/she was receiving

supply equal quantity of food to every household with kids from 0 to 5 years of age and to pregnant women. The dwellers of neighborhoods ¨under programs¨ know that the neighborhood worker has the duty to supply daily rations to them.

One of the few things *¨Manzaneras¨* object to when supplying the milk, is when the women are not punctual in coming for their goods. This seems to be the most conflictive matter between *¨Manzaneras¨* and beneficiaries. This situation clearly shows why, from the ¨beneficiaries¨ point of view, the *¨Manzaneras¨* task is not seen as a favor.

In this frame *¨Manzaneras¨* find more difficulties in distributing resources to those persons closer to them by friendship, loyalty or family bonds. Nevertheless it is important to emphasize that a good relationship with the *¨Manzaneras¨*, is a very relevant matter which mothers of beneficiaries try to maintain, since admission to the program has a slight degree of arbitrariness to it. To have a good relationship with *¨Manzaneras¨* in some cases enables extra rations, and time flexibility to pick up the goods, etc. One of the homes that no longer receives any assistance, gets, once in a while, some ration from the program for one of its family members whose benefit was cut a year ago, due to his age. The mother of the former beneficiary, explained: ¨She – the *¨Manzanera¨* - knows that I do not have money to feed Dario, so when she has some leftovers, she gives them to me… Sometimes (for that favor) I look after her kids…¨ . To the contrary another former beneficiary, explained: ¨My youngest child became 6 at a bad moment. But anyway they took my assistance away, Victor – her husband – has undergone surgery… I didn't have money… I didn't know how to feed my children, it was terrible… The *¨Manzanera¨* had a bad attitude, she cut my assistance anyway. I spoke to the person in charge of the program. He gave the order to restore the assistance to me, but the

¨*Manzanera*¨ never gave me milk… Luckily I got in touch with another ¨*Manzanera*¨ from my neighborhood, and once in a while, she gives me some milk… not every day… only once in a while… Everything we do, we do it secretly, without my ¨*Manzanera*¨ knowing it, she was so bossy ¨

Many of the interviewed persons reported having problems in trying to enter ¨*Plan Asoma*¨, considered universal for the poor elderly population. The program does not have a representative within the neighborhood, responsible for application to the program. Each neighborhood manages its own way of obtaining the benefit when applicable. At Santa Elena settlement, the ones interested in receiving the program, have the opportunity of applying for it through a woman who lives in their neighborhood and works at the Municipality. In the other three neighborhoods, the interested people have to go to the Municipality and then, as one of the beneficiaries explained: ¨You never know if they are going to receive you… I went many times… and waited for a long time until finally I got the benefit¨. Once they get the benefit, the monthly ¨box¨ also varies depending on level and type of local organization. At Santa Elena, the boxes go directly to the neighborhood and beneficiaries pick them up at one of the neighbor's house. In some other places they have to pick boxes up outside the settlement. One of the beneficiaries declared: ¨*I walk 20 blocks every month and then I come back by taxi…*¨.

Access to social assistance programs executed locally, in many cases is made difficult by strategies of ¨clientelism¨ or ¨personal influence¨. The worst case was with a monthly bag of goods supplied by a soup kitchen in Villa Hidalgo. In order to obtain the benefit the person applying must join the political party of the partisan (*puntero político*) supplying the benefit at that Municipality. Every beneficiary of said program remarked

how arbitrary the application was, but also recognized that they have joined and ¨are backing¨ the political party in order to receive the goods.

Some homes not receiving municipal or local assistance, declared that they knew about the existence of the programs, but that they didn't know what to do to apply and receive them. That is to say that they do not possess the necessary social contacts, to access said programs.

Contacts and personal ties are very important to access Temporary Job Programs. In most of the cases this access is related to ¨political¨ contacts linked to local organizations. Three quarters of the beneficiaries manifested having had access to the programs due to the intervention of a partisan (*puntero político*) or of a person they knew who worked at the Municipality. Permanence in the program mainly depends on political ¨favoritisms¨. One beneficiary explained: *¨They use us politically, they make us go to political meetings… You can't say ¨no¨ or they will take away our benefit*¨. One of the interviewed persons commented that during the first months of receiving the benefit, one councilman kept for himself part of the beneficiary money. One former beneficiary commented the same irregularity, but as he protested against it, the beneficiary lost his benefit.[106]

The analysis of the way in which beneficiaries have access to social assistance indicates the random condition by which a right is exercised, as well as how hard it is to have access to an institutional resource which is publicly available. Most interviewed people commented about friends or family that haven't gained access to the program, and

[106] R. Villalón explains that the growing clientelism of ¨Plan Trabajar¨ was one of the reasons why groups of demonstrators appearing at the beginning of 1997, claimed benefit revocation. See R. Villalón (2002) ¨Cacerolazos y Asambleas Populares: New Social Protests in Argentina, 1997-2002. University of Texas at Austin

they don't know why or what to do to find out. The possibility to have access to public resources seems to work only through intermediate institutions and in some cases lack of information leads to a confusing practice of a right.

Appreciation and Perception of the Benefits Received

Uncertainty is a distinctive note perceived by beneficiaries of all programs. Even though they have gained access to the benefit, they are pretty afraid of loosing it at any moment. Although they perceive it as their right , this does not guarantee continuity in receiving the benefit. Interviewed people know that quantity and quality of received goods – in the cases of the ones receiving direct material assistance – is not steady; or money received for temporary jobs might be cut off or suddenly reduced.

Most mothers of the beneficiaries of ¨*Plan Vida*¨ (66.6%), appreciated the program (Table 8.4), arguing that it guarantees a relevant part of their children's daily food. Many of them argued that it is a help, not only feeding their little kids but the whole family. Nevertheless many of interviewed people commented about the poor quality and quantity of rations. Some of them declared that lately they were not delivering eggs or that there were no cereals. The following comments were frequent: ¨*Quality is not good and now there is less variety. Less eggs and more pasta…*¨ Another mother declared: *the milk bags leak and there is not enough*¨.

This daily or monthly uncertainty in receiving goods makes beneficiaries visualize the program as ¨not a reliable¨ strategy to feed their children. Some of the interviewed persons even declared to be afraid the programs might suddenly be cut off.

As with ¨*Plan Vida*¨, most beneficiaries of ¨*Plan Asoma*¨, appreciate the assistance. Some beneficiaries declared that during last year there were irregularities in the reception and periodicity to receive goods. Some of them commented that the benefit was cut off for a couple of months with no prior notice.

In fact material resources received by homes through different programs are becoming increasingly important for the survival of people facing difficulties to obtain steady income to live on. Nevertheless its transitory status and that it is perceived as unsteady and unpredictable, gives this program an uphill characteristic as a resource to survive. The program is perceived as assistance that might suddenly disappear.

Temporary Job Programs

It is interesting to undertake a profound analysis of Job Programs regarding beneficiaries' appreciation of them, their influence on their life strategies, since these are social programs which become particularly relevant due to their specific connection with the labor market. Being indirectly connected to the labor market, these programs are a social policy resource that beneficiaries perceive as a steadier way to leave poverty behind. In addition, these are the only programs in which beneficiaries receive an amount of money; this allows them to choose a wider range of resources and goods than those received from programs of material assistance.

Those persons receiving job programs, think that temporary job programs are good, in spite of their deficiencies. Interviewed population in general, declared to support this type of program and made positive comments about them. As one interviewed man said: ¨If these programs worked properly they would be the best

option…¨ Another interviewed woman said: ¨(Feeding us) is like making fun of people. We should have jobs to be able to eat whatever we wish …¨

A survey performed in May 2001, by General Sarmiento University[107], about beneficiaries of *Vida, PROMIN, Trabajar* and *Barrios Bonaerenses* Programs, at Moreno, José C. Paz, Malvinas Argentinas and San Miguel Municipalities, also concluded that *Plan Trabajar* beneficiaries absolutely support the necessary dignified work feeling and point out Job Programs to be the best policy. Previous surveys on beneficiaries[108] of social programs, had already manifested their preference for job programs among assistance programs. In those surveys most food program beneficiaries protested against this type of program and claimed jobs from the State. The argument was that assistance programs are for disabled people and equivalent to charity.

Which are the characteristics of programs among the most marginal areas? How do they influence their life strategies? How are the programs appreciated and perceived regarding the future work course of these people? What do they mean in terms of social capital and training? I will answer these questions using the data compiled through interviews specially performed for this work.

As mentioned before there are 19 interviewed persons, from the sample, receiving job program benefits. They belong to 18 sampled households. That is to say that a fifth of interviewed families have a member taking part in a job program.

What are the characteristics of households with a family member receiving a job program? Background and structure of households receiving this type of benefit follows

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[107] See Andrenacci et. al. (2002).

[108] See Lumi, S, Gobert, L and Tenti Fanfani, E.

the same pattern as sampled households. These are homes with an average of 5.9 family members. The smallest has 3 family members and the biggest 11. Most of them are complete family groups; only one third are incomplete or extended families.

Beneficiaries of the different homes do not show differences regarding social status: educational level among beneficiaries and all households with some active family member show a similar distribution. They come from households in which approximately 40% of family members did not attend school for more than 6 years, a third have between 6 and 7 years of formal education and the other third have over 7 years schooling. Nevertheless total home income is a little bit under those participating in the job market group sampled (Table 8.6).

What is the importance of income received through job programs in the total of household incomes? From the total of households receiving the benefit of temporary job programs, a third of them received income exclusively from the program. That is to say that they do not have any family member working or receiving any other income. I have called these households ¨Assisted homes with no other resource to survive¨. These are households in which job programs are the main resource to survive. At the same time, not much more than another third of the households, receive an additional income, apart from the job program, but this is very limited; lower amounts than the ones received by Job Programs – programs pay an average of $160 – In half of the cases said income comes from other family members' jobs, and the other half comes from beneficiaries' secondary jobs - *¨changas¨* (odd jobs) – I have named this group of households ¨Assisted homes with other indigent income¨. Finally, there are 5 households- less than a third of the whole – that apart from receiving income from the Job Program, receive other

equivalent or higher income. These are assisted homes, which manage to accumulate income that places them over the income average of the whole 100 sampled homes.

The low income received by beneficiaries of job programs, together with the lack or very limited households' complementary income, place beneficiaries in a very disadvantageous position. It is possible to confirm that job programs are a strategy to produce income at basic survival levels; For this reason many beneficiaries perform odd jobs and 5 of them have some type of relatively steady secondary work. Nevertheless, these are homes that can easily access material resources supplied by other social assistance programs. Due to the structure of these households, all of them, but 3, receive *¨Plan Vida¨*. Likewise, two of them receive *¨Plan Asoma¨*, and most of them receive different types of specific assistance or get benefits from local goods assistance programs. It is important to point out that the same local connections which allowed them to enter Job Programs, are the ones facilitating the access to other assistance programs. In this way, it is possible to assure that even though they receive lower incomes than average, they receive benefits from other material resources supplied through social programs.

Which are the characteristics of beneficiaries of job programs? From a total of 19 beneficiary households, in 11 the head of family receives the benefit and in the rest their spouse receives it. Regarding the whole active population object of this study, among beneficiaries there is strong feminine presence, since only five of them are men.

The average age of beneficiaries is 35 years of age, with a deviation of 7.5 years. This is a bit over the average age of the active population. Nevertheless, these do not differ from the whole active population regarding their job experience characteristics.

Only 15.8% have experienced relatively regular salaried work, 31.8% have experienced some kind of inclusion as regular or semi-regular salaried workers. Half of the population has never been included in stable or regular salaried work. The unemployment time previous to the program application, is not different from the whole of interviewed unemployed population (Table 8.6).

Finally, regarding the whole target active population, the main differences were, the greater presence of women among beneficiaries, a bit over the average age, and income generated individually and by group of households a little bit under the whole target population. Work experience, which might seem to be related to gaining access to the benefit, does not appear to have any influence; neither does previous unemployment period prior to inclusion in the job program.

As mentioned before, *program access* is related to arbitrary criterion, primarily linked to beneficiaries' social relationships. 15 out of 19 beneficiaries mentioned that they have obtained the benefits thanks to the intervention of powerful contacts. These are mainly partisans/punteros politicos or people with social contacts inside the municipality.

Benefit Characteristics

Work agreements for beneficiaries of temporary job programs are renewed each 3 to 4 months, thus producing a deep sense of job instability. Nevertheless, all beneficiaries, but two, have been receiving the benefit for more than a year. However, they feel that they might lose it at any moment, since generally, renewals are quite arbitrary. They receive a monthly payment of around $ 160, without social insurance benefits.

A working group under the orders of one beneficiary organizes the beneficiaries. They perform tasks related to local maintenance and development. For instance, cleaning and fixing streets and ditches, bricklaying in the neighborhood schools, help in soup kitchens. The first task is the most frequent one. These are jobs performed in their neighborhood or outside it where they get to know their neighbors who have their same social problems. As mentioned by B. Roberts, the program is created according to the place and to the socioeconomic characteristics of the beneficiaries. *¨Plan Trabajar¨* was created with the sole purpose of using the created jobs to contribute in the building development of neighborhoods where unemployed people live. However, *¨Plan Trabajar's¨* background shows the limitations of this program when isolated from local companies' support in creating jobs.(Roberts 2002: 414). Resources were never enough to support medium and large scale community infrastructure projects in which participants could work. To the contrary, jobs were concentrated on short-term services such as street and sidewalk cleaning. The nature of these jobs as well as lack of resources, also indicates the limited possibilities of re-training workers.

I believe that the relationships involved in this kind of work, the type of jobs performed, and the places where the jobs are performed, allows beneficiaries to feel that this temporary job program, does not positively influence their work resume. Every interviewed beneficiary, but one, agreed that this temporary job program will not help them in obtaining future jobs, in consequence they believe that this is only temporary assistance that will not help them to improve their social condition. Many of them declared that this is a problem related to their age, lack of work, or lack of qualifications to get a job. They also feel that training programs neither work properly nor give them a

significant level of training. One of the interviewed persons commented: ¨to learn how to dig or lay pipes is not new… anybody can do that…¨.

The way in which beneficiaries feel and describe themselves regarding this resource is divided equally, between those who think of themselves as ¨employees¨ and those who think of themselves as ¨assisted¨. The first group tends to believe that thanks to the program they are busy working and most important, receiving money for that job. Among those expressing themselves as assisted, most of them declare that the program is just an assistance, a social benefit they receive because it is their ¨right¨ to receive it for being unemployed; they describe themselves as unemployed and that the job program does not change their status (Table 8.6). There are some aspects influencing how beneficiaries perceive the program; the most important ones are, gender, educational level, work background and time being unemployed. Other circumstances such as the type of settlement are also an influential variable.

Beneficiaries' perception is different according to gender. All men think of themselves as assisted, they make only pessimistic comments on the program and its influence on their future working possibilities. The educational level of households marks a slight difference. Those beneficiaries from homes with better educational levels, tend to think of themselves as assisted and not as employees regarding this job program. Work background also has a slight influence on beneficiaries' perception. Those with a background of regular salaried work, tend to think of themselves as assisted and not as employees. Finally, regarding their opinion of the plan and unemployment time, they felt the program was assistance and more specifically a right for those recently inserted in a more stable job market. For those who grew up in the culture of work, this program is

simply assistance. On the other hand for those who have been inactive, receiving other assistance job programs, or doing voluntary jobs, this program is felt as a real job. For the contextual aspects, the type of settlement marks a difference, since those who feel assisted, tend to group in squatter settlements and those who feel employees, tend to group in shantytowns. The influence exerted by type of settlement is that which can be expected. Due to its greater average of isolation and marginality, shantytowns tend to group people with very poor educational level and with a work background not related to regular salaries. Therefore, the influence of the type of settlement is indirect (Table 8.7).

Interviewed beneficiary group is heterogeneous, this, I believe, adds value to this analysis. I detail below a beneficiary typology based on two facts: working trajectories and how program is perceived (as assistance / as work). Three categories of the typology are relevant. I have grouped them in: entrenched structural beneficiaries, essential coyuntural beneficiaries and conditional beneficiaries. These categorizations aim at summarizing the great quantity of data obtained.

Typology. Working Trajectories and Program Perception

How the beneficiary perceives him or herself		Working Trajectories		Total
		Presencia de trabajo asalariado	Sin trabajo asalariado	
A person subsidized or unemployed		5 Essential (coyuntural)	4 Structurals	9
Am employed		3 Condicional	6 Entrenched Strutural	9
Total		8	10	18

Entrenched Structural Beneficiaries. These are beneficiaries with no evidence of working background related to regular salaried jobs, inclined to believe in the program as a job. At the same time the program is perceived as assistance to cope with poverty, and an activity from which they receive a monthly payment. They tend to group in shantytowns. Their identity seems to be marked more by poverty than by unemployment. In this sense I would say that they are unemployed because they are poor. The majority of them, receive other public or private food and social assistance programs. In this group the condition of being assisted is natural. They feel the program not only as an assistance due to their working reality, but as a landmark that allows them to leave behind their indigent status and most of all inactivity. Half of these beneficiaries belong to households, whose only income comes from the job programs; the rest of them, but one, are households receiving other income, but these are unstable and very badly paid. I have categorized these beneficiaries as entrenched, following Forni Typology. [109] For these beneficiaries the program means a job. Taking into account their real living conditions, their low educational level, and their subjectivity, they are the ones most needing to continue with the program as a job strategy. Even though they do not have any expectations about a different working future directly related to the program, they visualize the program as a landmark in their working background. They tend to value it positively. Poverty and lack of experience related to stable connections with the labor market , leaves them outside the socio-occupational skills required to have access to better jobs and this situation tends to repeat itself throughout their life.

[109] See FH: Forni, Research on Family Budget. Research Report – IIS-UCA 2002

> Mirta is 41, she lives in Villa Hidalgo with her husband, who carries out underemployment jobs as a bricklayer, and 4 children between 14 and 5 years of age. At the age of 11, she began working with her mother in the domestic service. At the age of 15, she got a housekeeping job near her neighborhood which was always very unstable. When her first kid was born, she left her work for a couple of years, until her husband's job became very unstable. She went back to work doing part-time jobs, but she only got very unstable ones. For 3 years she has been without job; she considered herself unemployed, but she hardly ever searches for a job. Through her husband she met a partisan from her neighborhood, who, two years ago, helped her to enter ¨*Plan Trabajar*¨. Now she cooks at a daycare center in her neighborhood thanks to Promin. She is happy with her job. She is always afraid of not getting a renewal of her plan contract. She considers herself an employee, and comments: ¨I feel useful, after such a long time I have found something to do and I can take money home… ¨*Plan Vida*¨ gives me some food…, but with this I have money to buy what I want¨.

Within this group there are two women who have their first jobs thanks to the job program. They are young women between the age of 22 and 25. One of them commented ¨if I didn't have this, what would I bee doing now; there are no jobs… at least with this I go out and do something…, this is better than doing nothing, I prefer this… this is a job…¨

Essential beneficiaries represent. This cathegory is the opposite type to structural entrenched ones. These people have had some kind of salaried job background, and consider themselves as assisted. Within this group we have 3 out of 5 men receiving the benefit. They are usually squatters on the land. Most of them come from Santa Elena settlement. The possibility that the program might end paralyzes this group, fills them with uncertainty, makes them afraid and fills them with despair, but at the same time and differing from structural beneficiaries, this situation pushes them to act, to struggle, to search for jobs anywhere, and to continue with already implemented job strategies. And

they also consider this an acquired right; as one of the beneficiaries commented: *¨it is the least that Authorities can do for unemployed people*¨. They are still confident in their own skills and on their own effort and they do not refer to macro structural conditions, which strongly appear in the previous group. It is very clear that this group feel this assistance as a way out of the crisis. They feel they have the right to receive this assistance granted by the State to carry them over the present moment, but at the same time they have some expectations of finding jobs such as the ones they used to have before. They seem not to identify themselves as beneficiaries or poor, but as persons having problems in getting stable jobs. Most beneficiaries of this group receive income from household family members or from other resources. Two thirds of these beneficiaries belong to homes that duplicate the income obtained through job programs. The program is not a main factor in their life strategy, neither is it the sole income to survive; almost all of them perform part-time jobs simultaneously.

> Enrique (44 years old), settled at Santa Elena town with his wife and three kids. He has an ample background working in a construction company . The company began to lose jobs and he began to lose work. To survive, he ended up doing part-time construction work. Through his wife who used to be a *¨Manzanera¨*, and knew a partisan, he applied for *¨Plan Trabajar¨* . He wishes to go back to do his job as a construction worker. He commented: ¨ when this crisis is over, I hope to go back to work .. maybe in another construction company since the one where I used to work no longer exists". Regarding the job program, he commented, "they call it assistance, but really I'm unemployed"; "The program is an obstacle to find a job. We feel this pressure because if we find work doing part time chores it is not worth accepting it". He commented that during 1999 he had found a 3 month job, so the State cut his benefit for some months. Considering the unstable nature of that job, he preferred to quit and accept "*Plan Trabajar*".

Conditional beneficiaries, have similar characteristics to the two previous ones. They are under risk of getting into any one of the other categories. Conditional

beneficiaries were contacted at the four settlements. They have formerly been part of the labor market and they also mention social security benefits. At the time of the interview, the program was essential for them as well as for the survival of their families. Their subjectivity is characterized by their "unemployed" condition. They mention their need for assistance programs due to their loss of work. This is the smallest group and it shares issues with the other two groups. They perceives the program as work and as assistance.

Neighborhood Mediators. Focalized Social Assistance Key Leaders.

In this last part of the chapter, I will briefly analyze these neighborhood mediator leaders. As detailed throughout this paper, these local mediators are key figures in obtaining and distributing social policy resources to "settlements under assistance programs". Ever since social policies have become focalized, State assistance is present at local levels, mostly thanks to mentioned mediators. I will concentrate mainly on the "manzanera". The analysis is based on the interviews carried out in households which had one family member working as a "manzanera" or mediator[110], as well as on comments and data compiled through interviews and field work. The main objective of this analysis is not exactly about the "manzanera" as such, but through this analysis it becomes clearer to understand the type of relationships the interviewed persons should maintain and which prove vital to obtain and keep up material resources.

[26] In three of the interviewed homes one family member works as a "manzanera". These homes are in 3 of 4 settlements chosen. Likewise in one of these settlements one housewife works as a substitute "manzanera". Finally until a year ago another housewife worked as a "manzanera" . Therefore, there is at least one family member with experience as "manzanera" in the five interviewed households. Besides in another two interviewed homes there is a family member identified as mediator. In one of the cases he is a Peronist partisan, and in another case he is a neighbor having important contacts outside the settlement and is identified as mediator in the settlement. Usually they are chosen informally by their neighbors.

These "manzaneras" have a double status[111]. On the one hand they are "representatives" of target population, no matter under what circumstances she was appointed. They live in the same neighborhood and share the same structural problems as the persons they represent. On the other hand they are "genuine interlocutors" before the State and the "visible face" before the neighbors.

Being a "manzanera" has given these women legitimacy and recognition, both inside and outside, placing them in a favorable position both in their homes and in the neighborhood. Seen from a household point of view, becoming a "manzanera" has produced important changes in their conditions as a family, which up to a point, contributed to modifying the relationships in their households. Sometimes other family members have become involved in the tasks. They help to fill in the necessary forms or distribute the goods. Different arrangements have to be made in the households, such as caring for the children while they attend the various training courses or meetings with their peers.

On the other hand, the task of "manzanera" required developing and putting into practice a number of discourse and distinctive action skills.31 Among the first the most important is the one we have called the skill to *say*. Among the second the skill to move about and establish links with "*outside the neighborhood*" . Both skills have become strategically important in neighborhoods which have been experiencing processes of social isolation and strong dependence upon resources doled out by the State.

Generally speaking, mediating activity has given "manzaneras" public recognition and the mediating space has given them a place to build up their identities. Apart from

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[111] They are generally chosen informally by the neighbors of the corresponding "manzanera"

receiving a symbolical reward, in terms of prestige and recognition, for the work they carry out, they are also in a position which allows them to receive material advantages. They are not rewarded monetarily but they are in a relatively advantageous position to obtain certain resources, specially those linked to *Plan Vida*. One of the "manzaneras" interviewed commented that her 4 children, between 10 and 15 years of age, receive a daily ration of milk thanks to this plan, in spite of the fact that their age does not entitle them to it. The network of links which they build up as "manzaneras" places them in a more advantageous position to obtain other material resources, or assistance on a personal level (sneakers for their children, doctor appointments, food bags, priority in receiving some subsidy, etc.). One of the interviewed women commented that she had recently been given metal sheets for the roof of her house. However, it is not possible to explain the complexity of these relationship processes in terms of how these enabling agents work. For many of these mediators, the work they carry out forms part of their "life style", "a vision of the world and their place in it", "an ideological political project" which they have been building in different fronts throughout their life histories.

To "be a manzanera" implies being part of the mediation world which impacts strongly and in various ways on the every day activities of the four settlements surveyed. They have turned their houses into what A. Silva[112] calls "nodes" or the place at the boundaries of urban construction which serves as basic information for territorial inhabitants to draw up plans. In other words, if these four settlements can be thought of as a territory, enabling processes of self-recognition, a place lived in, touched and recognized by its inhabitants, the manzanera's houses (with their identifying posters and

[112] See Armando Silva (1992) Imaginarios Urbanos, Buenos Aires. Eudeba

the typical milk crates) and other public institutions would be the nodes rebuilding the road which the dwellers of a neighborhood receiving assistance walk down every day in their struggle to survive.

Conclusions

Vulnerability and instability influence and pervade the reproduction strategies of the households in poverty stricken settlements. Instability on the one hand arises from the adverse economic context marked by unemployment and by the precarious nature of the few jobs they can obtain; and on the other hand in the form of the institutions organizing social cohesion. The State is one of these institutions. Through the type of social policies drawn up to assist the poorest segments of society, the State has built up its presence and special influence among them. Because of the great change in social policies which occurred in the nineties in the shape of selective focalized interventions in the context of a severe economic crisis, it is relevant to ask what this social assistance means to these poverty stricken households, what are its implications in their living conditions and how it impacts on their total survival strategies, specially how it affects the type and quality of the social capital of the households and neighborhood as a whole. That was the aim of this chapter. I shall now highlight some of the most relevant aspects.

Which of the households in these impoverished areas gain access to the benefits and what do these benefits mean in terms of resource for survival? Because of the focalized and selective nature of these social policies, most of the households in these marginal areas have access to one of the many assistance programs. A growing number of households base their survival strategies on resources received from these programs.

These households do not generate any income, and their deficient human capital and work experience does not allow them to survive in any other way. The presence of these marginal areas proves the imperious need for social policies focalized on these increasingly excluded households. It must also be pointed out that the few households not receiving any type of help differ from those who do receive it in their demographic characteristics and not their economic or work aspects. Herein lies one of the limitations set by the selective nature of these social policies. This aspect gives the benefit an unstable characteristic and that is how it is perceived by the beneficiaries. The scarcity of stable income makes these people rely increasingly on any one of these social assistance programs to survive. These social policies are increasingly thought of as a saving device. But they are also perceived as evidence of the disappearance of their horizon of possibilities and autonomy to climb the social scale (Andrenacci et al. 2002).

The question is then how these policies, applied as they are in the impoverished neighborhoods, affect the social capital of the beneficiaries. The growing selectivity in choosing the assisted population, implies, on the part of the households, implementing various mechanisms to gain access to and keep receiving the benefit. Many of these resources are just not enough. Exercising this right seems to be a hard task due to the random manner in which it is applied and the difficulty in gaining access to a publicly available institutional benefit. Solidarity among beneficiaries begins to show cracks as competition to receive these scarce and uncertain benefits increases. Political clientelism, relationships based on interests, and lack of trust slowly undermine the social web involved in obtaining and keeping up the benefit.

Thus it seems that the focalized and selective nature of social policy assistance contributes in augmenting the social segmentation of beneficiaries. Dwellers of impoverished settlements have had to increase their flow of relationships towards the inside of the neighborhood. As has already been said, access to the distributed resources relies on this flow. Work programs based on receiving assistance in exchange for work carried out locally, are aware of this logic, as it does not allow beneficiaries to increase their social capital by having social relationships outside the neighborhood. Beneficiaries are trapped within their neighborhood, relating only to people experiencing their same disadvantageous situation.

They are prevented from increasing their social network to access new resources. The local nature of work programs as well as the scarce training received is the reason beneficiaries do not perceive this program as beneficial for their future work possibilities.

However, in spite of what has just been said, many beneficiaries of these job plans believe that they will give them work experience and they consider themselves part of the labor market as employees and not as people receiving a subsidy.

In short, I believe that these programs specifically focused on fighting poverty, increase the isolation of these poverty stricken settlements. Focalized social policies trap them further in their prevailing local conditions, from which they must escape so as not to become excluded as a result of residential segmentation.

TABLES

Table 8.1 Settlement by Social program Received

Plan Received by al least one household member		%
Plan Vida	63	75.0
Plan Comadres	4	4.8
Temporarly Working plan	19	22.6
Plan Asoma	10	11.9
Other local Plan	38	45.2

Source: Self processing of data from the 100 households interviewed for this Dessertation. Buenos Aires Settlements. 2001 [113]

Table 8.2 Settlement Households by weather they receive Social programs and their Poverty Situation

Households accroding to weather they Receive Social Programs			Percentage
Receiving Programs	Have no income. Live exclusively on Social Assitance	19	20,2
	Have income. Below the Indulgence Line	19	20,2
	Have income. Above the Indulgence Line	42	44,7
Do not Receive any Social Assistance		14	14,9
Total		94	100

[113] All these tables have the same source

Table 8.3 Sociodemographic Characteristics of Settlement Households receiving Social Programs and Poverty Situation (IL)

		Viven solo de la ayuda social	Reciben ayuda. Debajo LI	Reciben ayuda. Arriba LI	No reciben ayuda
Composición del hogar	Unipersonal	10,5 % (2)	5,3 % (1)	0 % (0)	0 % (0)
	Fliar.nuclear Compuesto	47,4 % (9)	47,4 % (9)	50,0 % (21)	42,9 % (6)
	Fliar. Incompleto	15,8 % (3)	0 % (0)	9,5 % (4)	21,4 % (3)
	Extendido y Compuesto	26,3 % (5)	47,4 % (9)	40,5 % (17)	35,7 % (5)
Tamaño del hogar (promedio de miembros)		5,7	7,0	5,7	5,3
Promedio de menores de 14 años		3,21	3,7	2,6	2,3
Promedio de perceptores de ingreso		0	1,4	1,6	1,4
Promedio de ingresos		0	207	517,6	359
Clima educativo	Hasta 6 años	47,4 % (9)	42,1 % (8)	38,1 % (16)	35,7 % (5)
	6 a 7,1 años pr.	36,8 % (7)	26,3 % (5)	31,0 % (13)	28,6 % (4)
	Más de 7,1 a. pr.	15,8 % (3)	31,6 % (6)	31,0 % (13)	35,7 % (5)
Tipo de asentamiento	Toma	36,8 % (7)	57,7 % (11)	50,0 % (21)	57,1 % (8)
	Villa	63,2 % (12)	42,1 % (8)	50,0 % (42)	42,9 % (6)

Table 8.4 Settlements Beneficiaries Evaluation of how el “Plan Vida” works

		%
Very Well	2	3.9
Well	32	62.7
Regular	15	29.4
Bad	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Table 8.5 Settlement Households receiving Temporally Working Programs by additional incomes received by household members

Households receiving a Temporary Work Program	Porcentaje
Assisted Without other sources of income	33,3 (6)
Assisted with other iindigent incomes (*)	38,9 (7)
Assisted With other non indigent incomes	27,8 (5)
Total	100 (18)

(*)I considered an indigent income one that is less than the amount received by the Work Program.

Table 8.6 Temporally Working Plan Beneficiaries Characteristics compared to those of the overall Active Population

		Benef.Planes de empleo %	PEA %
Relationship with the head of household	Head	57,9 (11)	44,6 (91)
	Spouse	42,1 (8)	23,5 (48)
	Total	100 (19)	68,1 (149)
Sex	Male	26,3 (5)	57,8 (118)
	Female	73,7 (14)	42,2 (86)
	Total	100 (19)	100 (204)
Education (household average)	Less than 6 y average	42,1 (8)	40,6 (82)
	Between 6 and 7,1 years	21,1 (4)	29,2 (59)
	More than 7,2 years	36,8 (7)	30,2 (61)
	Total	100 (19)	100 (202)
Average age		35,3	32,9
Family Incomes		306,5$	384,9
Labour History	With formal or informal salaried job	47,4 (9)	
	Without formal or informal salaried job	52,6 (10)	
	Total	100 (19)	
Umeployed duration	Less than one year	33,3 (6)	30 (19)
	More than one year	67,3 (13)	70 (40)
	Total	100 (19)	100 59
How they perceive themselves regarding the Program	Subsidiado/ Unemployed	47,6 (10)	
	Worker	53,4 (11)	
	Total	100 (21)	

Table 8.7 Temporary Work Beneficiaries. How they Perceive themselves regarding the Program by Sex, Household Human Capital, Laboral Trajectory and Type of Settlement

		He/She perceives him/herself has receiving a Subsidy %	He/She perceives him/herself as an employed %
Sex	Male	100	0
	Female	35,7	64,3
Household Human Capital	Less than 6 years of education on average	42,9	57,1
	6 to 7,1 years	50,0	50,0
	More than 7,2 years	57,1	42,9
Laboral Trajectory	Con presencia de empleo asalariado formal o semiformal	62,5	37,5
	Sin presencia de trabajo asalariado	40,0	60,0
Type of Settlement	Slum	40,0	60,0
	Seized Land	54,5	45,5

CHAPTER 9:

SOCIAL CAPITAL EROSION. HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIP AMONG DOMESTIC UNITS. INFORMAL TERRITORIAL NETWORKS

The concept "social capital" is widely used today and many disciplines base their research work on it. Generally the authors of this research apply it according to their area of expertise. Political scientists and economists tend to measure attitudes, rules and "generalized social trust" on a national level. One of the problems arising from this widely accepted use of the "social capital" concept is that it treats all forms of "social capital" under one same heading, thus ignoring the role of the individual and its context, as well as not explaining which groups possess productive "social capital".

On the other hand, the work of sociologists and social scientists tends to draw on the structural understanding of the concept. These authors measure social capital in and through groups and organizations as well as among individuals, stressing the effect of social capital on enhancing the flow of resources to groups or individuals. These authors do not discard the analysis carried out by political scientists and economists as such, but rather reformulate the units of analysis and apply them to much smaller and more homogenous groups. Thus this type of research, upon which this thesis is based, enables exploration of the differences existing among certain groups. I believe that context matters. Social capital is not only made up of group participation and the relationships they form, but the position of the groups within society is important as well. Not all groups possess the same resources, influence, or have access to other groups.

Generally speaking, there are three different theories on social capital, all linked to the works of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam. Mostly in accord with Bourdieu and to a certain point with Coleman, this thesis defends the theory that the "effective value" and "liquidity" of social capital will vary according to the group being studied, giving great importance to the specific context within which the capital is used. Social capital mainly works on an individual level, depending on an individual's access to others in a vaguely defined group based on personal relationships, and on the resources the group possesses to enable its members to fulfill their aims.

Through an analysis of the type of relationships established by members of poor households, this chapter approaches the subject of social capital of the population living in these households. It gives a detailed description of how this social capital is made up: the exchange networks they are involved in, their underlying principles, the resources circulating in them and the effectiveness of the relationship and type of exchange. The analysis comprises two dimensions: 1. strength of ties (weak or strong); 2. The networks heterogeneity degree (low or high). These dimensions are considered as two separate principles at the base of social capital.

The second part of the chapter focuses on an analysis of community social capital in the four settlements chosen for this thesis and how it affects the households' survival strategies.

It starts with a discussion and literary review on the meaning of community social capital, and an approach on how to measure this capital in the chosen settlements. The community social capital of the four chosen settlements was measured using two

variables: 1. "State" of the local norms, and 2. Action undertaken by the neighborhoods to solve their problems. I analyze the differences between neighborhoods.

First Part: Exchange Networks

In the theoretical framework of I don´t carry out an exhaustive study of the literature on the subject of social capital.[114] I aim is to select those aspects which enable us to relate the concept to survival strategies. Thus I have chosen two aspects which, I believe, are pertinent to this research, following Kaztman's 1999 methodological approach. One refers to the strength of ties (weak or strong); and the second to the diversity of the networks (low or high). These dimensions are considered as two separate principles at the base of social capital.

The first aspect, strength of social ties, appropriately summarizes two approaches: those that place emphasis on the process of rules constitution, obligations and expectations of reciprocity; and those approaches stressing on the resources circulating in the networks and particularly the quality of information and contacts. In the first case, strong interaction ties keep social capital going, but in the second case it is the weak ties that do this work. In the second aspect, diversity of networks, the approach contemplates the interests and benefits of the involved players', and the context within which the exchange networks are built.

[114] See Portes, Alejandro (1999) for a discusión on the different perspectives

The Strength of these Ties

In contrast to other forms of capital, human, physical, financial, etc., the nature of social capital is based primarily on the creation of stable and continuous relationships organized round ties determined by reciprocal obligations, rules and penalties, and by principles of authority. Coleman[115], considers that individuals build up and become involved in different types of networks. This enables them to multiply the resources for their survival, both in their private sphere and in the market area.

Social capital entails the creation of a type of informal "social contract", based on mutual trust, and guaranteed by a more or less explicit process of moral rules and regulations which include positive and negative penalties. The underlying concept of social capital is that the stronger the interaction ties stronger will be the social capital. Thus one of the main forms of social capital is based on strong ties. Therefore it is not by chance that traditionally the paradigm of social capital networks has been the ties between family, relations and friends. However, when considering these special tie-strengthening mechanisms, they do not correspond entirely with other elements of the social capital concept, which refers to the contents flowing through networks. There is a certain conceptual vacuum, which makes it difficult to know exactly to which type of social capital it refers. Stinchombe (1990) adequately highlights this point when he says that it is not enough to consider only the interaction structures, but that it is important to

[115] See Coleman J., 1993, Cap. 12, Social Capital.

consider as well at the same time the resources circulating in the network, the players, their interests, and the type of action taking place.[116]

Two of the main contents of the structure of social capital are information and contacts. It can be argued that the structure of ties which makes up social capital operates as a real or potential mechanism for the spread of information to enable individuals to make their decisions or for the sake action in general.

If information and contacts can be considered as variable quality goods, or stratified ones, and thus subject to exclusion-inclusion mechanisms, then the information "in itself" and access to better contacts may become a powerful tool to participate in social networks, independently of whether they participate in common rules systems and reciprocal relationships. If this is so, then not all forms of social capital are based on building strong reciprocal ties.

The main difference in the structure of social capital is, however, that logically and empirically, a positive association between both forms of social capital cannot always be expected: whilst reciprocal relationships are enhanced with the strengthening of ties, the effects of information and contacts diminish.

Ever since Granovetter's (1973) formulation referred to the mechanisms operating as social capital in the labor market, a large amount of research has accumulated, leaving no room for doubt. This formulation is based on the concept "the strength of weak ties", which says that it is more probable for individuals to find work by opening up their contacts with other individuals with whom they have weak ties, for example, an

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[116] Strinchombe A. "Weak Structural Data (Review of Mizruchi and Schartz) Contemporary Sociology, nro. 19, 1990. citado en Powell W.W. y Smith-Doerr S. "Networks and Economic Life" en Smelser N. Y Swedberg R.., *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, Princeton University Press, 1994

acquaintance partaking in a different network, ex study fellows, community of professionals, than with those with whom they have strong ties, such as close friends, family. This is so because the closer the ties, it is probable that these will not offer further access to information and contacts than those the individual already has - redundant information – in comparison to the open network of acquaintances who serve as a bridge to other new contacts. Network Diversity

The degree of diversity is considered an attribute of a network. This is so for two reasons: a. the structure of the network according to more or less equality among members; b. the positioning of the members in relation to resources, giving a sense and direction to diversity in the network.

Network diversity is important because it is positively interconnected with the diversity of resources circulating in it. This is significant because it means that network resources are not the same for individuals of different social positions, one example being the differences generated by social stratification. In this case, as contacts and opportunities are stratified according to educational and socioeconomic level, when the social level is higher the benefit of having ties with "others" is not a positive trend. This is so because to increase diversity for the lower sectors implies an "upward" trend of interactions, thus improving contact quality, whilst the higher the social level, diversity means a "downward" trend of interactions.

Consequently, it is more probable for the higher sectors to do without the benefit arising from the diversity of contacts, precisely because they already possess the assets, whether a network exists or not (resources generating from their position in the social

structure). Or they partake of “more worthwhile” networks from which they obtain “good” resources. It can be said that the higher sectors are benefited differently from the lower sectors when taking part in networks. Whilst for the lower sectors networks are a means of access to higher quality goods than those they would normally obtain, such as information and contacts; for others however, positioned on a higher rung of influence and power, whose task is that of “brokers”, their benefit for participating is not the goods they obtain but the functions they carry out, which gives them prestige or social renown, accumulation of power or the legitimate nature of a position of leadership.

That is why, according to Kaztman, “it is not easy to understand the logic behind participation without bearing in mind that with the increase of diversity of members taking part there is an increase of the amount of individual status which does not form part of network interaction. This assertion is not a result of empirical proof but a logical consequence of the definition of diversity: to other constant conditions, the higher the degree of difference existing among members of a network it is most probable that an important part of its group of status members will not belong to the network’s internal interactions, but will belong, on the other hand, to outside circles. (Kaztman 1999:183).

In short, a key dimension to understanding social capital is the diversity of the social structure of the networks, because it permits us to understand the different benefits individuals derive from being part of a network. Thus, if the focus is only placed on the reciprocity structures, trust and creation of rules, all of which are requirements common to the players, this is not enough to distinguish the different interests nor the type of goods at stake.

The two principles to be considered in this thesis when analyzing the surveyed population's social capital (strength of ties and network diversity), are studied as two independent principles, which are the basis of social capital. In a concept like this, social capital may be seen as a result of a logically possible combination of both dimensions. This can be seen in the following simple prototype:

Tie strength	**Network diversity**	
	Low	High
Weak	1	3
Strong	2	4

Taking into consideration the two mentioned dimensions, an analysis will be carried out on the exchange established by the domestic units under study to determine to which of the four cells they belong and what this implies. One way to approach the analysis of tie strength is to describe how households gain access to regular and non-regular assistance, both in the family and outside the family circle. Regular assistance, received amongst members of the domestic units, shall be analyzed first. The resources and services circulating on the inside (aid in money or other to family members outside the household, child care by family or neighbors, etc.). Then non-regular access to informal networks, goods, services, and information circulating in social networks (information on jobs, social plans, unoccupied land, etc.) how often this type of network is accessed, and the effectiveness of the obtained information.

The exchange networks established amongst the interviewed domestic units offer them important advantages for both survival and reproduction. As will be seen in the analysis, this exchange network is not based on commercial logic, and generally acquires a strong territorial dimension. It thus becomes one of the main sustenance principles backing the domestic units' survival strategies.

The exchange mechanism established by the domestic units can be: 1. regular, in which case it is a periodical exchange, or 2. irregular, carried out according to circumstance. Both exchanges are described. The first aspect is a strong tie approach and the second a weak tie approach. Hereunder, follows an analysis of both.

Regular assistance: given or received

One of the dimensions of informal networks is the regular exchange carried out by domestic units with other domestic units. They are described as regular because they are carried out periodically; this includes daily or monthly exchanges. For the 100 households in the 4 settlements chosen for this survey, the EPU reflects the extent of this type of ties: 78.4% of households are linked to another household in a regular exchange relationship (Table 9.1). It is important to point out that this same relationship was 45% according to the 1997 EPU. This higher figure in exchange relationships among the population under study shows how important these are in the most impoverished sectors.

There are only a few households involved in reciprocal assistance networks, that is to say they receive and give assistance. Of the households participating in welfare networks, 43,5% only receive help and 42.4% only offer help, as shown in Table 9.1.

Another characteristic of regular exchange relationships is that they are carried out between close family members: parents and children living in different households. Approximately half of the interviewed households had at least one family member not living with them. Of these households, half of them manifest having some type of periodical exchange with their children (Table 9.2). Seventy percent of households have at least one member whose parents live in a separate household; of these households, slightly over half of them are involved in positive or negative exchange with these parents (Table 9.3). Periodical exchange relationships are less frequent among households with less close family ties (a fourth of the households) and almost non-existing among households with no family ties (less than 5% of the households). We believe this is an important factor in the surveyed population, which indicates that strong family ties are important. A third of the households with which our surveyed households establish exchange relationships are located in the same neighborhood. These, together with the households situated in the same district, make up half of the households involved in these networks. They are therefore considered territorial support networks. On the other hand a fourth of the households have 'receive or give' relationships with households in another province or another country. In that case, money is the exchange medium (Table 9.4).

The goods or services offered amongst the households of these support networks consist mainly of money, food, clothing and childcare. Food is the commodity circulating most. In a fourth of the households, both in the ones receiving as in the ones giving, this exchange is periodically carried out only in the form of food.

The exchanges carried out with food, childcare or care of the elderly is performed daily or various times a week. Exchange in the form of money is usually on a monthly basis. The importance of the main goods circulating in these networks, food, clothing and money, indicates that it is subsistence related support. This means they are basically family networks, or made up by strong ties, which allow them to obtain the resources necessary to meet their basic needs. They are subsistence support networks.

Lastly we focus on those households not involved in periodical exchange relationships. As we have asserted above, they make up almost a fifth of the households surveyed. With the available information we can almost ascertain that the type of settlement offers no difference: slum or squatter settlement. One of the implied assumptions with which we started out on this survey was that the more impoverished a neighborhood, bigger is the probability of it being involved in support networks. However, those households not involved in periodical support networks, do not tend to concentrate in any one kind of settlement . One aspect which does mark a difference is whether support is received or not by the household from a social welfare program. As indicated in Table 9.5, except for one, all households not receiving any type of social welfare belong to support networks, where they receive some type of support from another household. Therefore these are households receiving subsistence help from family owing to the fact that they do not receive any kind of social welfare support.

What are the principles behind these support networks? Common sense says they are basically the principles of reciprocity and trust. Regarding the first, however, there are few households involved in reciprocity networks. Most of them are households who only regularly help or receive help from other households. Regarding trust, the basic

principle behind strong ties, it is strongly influenced by the actual possibility of offering goods or services to the networks. In other words, the type of goods and the frequency of exchange directly influence the level of trust behind the network.

Irregular access to informal networks

Irregular access to services, particularly to information circulating in the informal networks of the interviewed population, closely show us the characteristics and importance of weak ties in the decision making powers of the inhabitants of impoverished neighborhoods. These networks somehow support or influence the important decisions taken by the members of domestic units. The choice of neighborhood to set up their homes, choose a school for their children, jobs, etc., is greatly based on information or support received through informal networks. It is important to point out that these choices are strongly conditioned by how the impoverished sectors gain access to goods and services. Thus, within this context of poverty, social networks appear as "institutions of poverty" (Dohan 2001) backing the actions of the individuals and how they satisfy their needs.

Some EPU figures from 2001 show the importance of informal social networks. Almost 9 out of 10 interviewed households, learnt of the possibility of living in the neighborhood through family or neighbors. Other means of information, such as the housing market (newspapers, real estate agents, etc.) were insignificant as a source of information. Almost three quarters said that they knew family or friends living on the settlement before moving there. Thus it can be inferred that most of the households went to live in a neighborhood where they already had an effective or potential informal

support network. When building their homes, just over a fourth of the households had been able to count on concrete help from friends or family.

Social ties also play an important role in gaining access to jobs. During the last decades various studies have shown how important the different types of personal ties are[117], and how social networks work in helping to get and carry out diverse occupations.

As has already been said in Chapter 6, most of the employed persons interviewed, got their jobs thanks to the information obtained through relatives or friends. Very few of them got their jobs through the open market, such as going to the sites asking for labor, through advertisements in the newspaper, etc. The same was true for the unemployed whom we interviewed. Answering the question on how they had looked for work that week, three quarters of them said that they had asked relatives or friends. However, the information or job opportunities offered through close relationships, offer few "opportunities" to leave poverty behind, because they are offered by people in their same vulnerable and impoverished position. In our sample population, the most representative work, as was shown in Chapter 6, is domestic service (12% of employed persons interviewed) "cartoneo" (cardboard and paper collecting for recycling) (10%), self employed or salaried construction workers (15%). These persons said that social networks were important in helping them get their jobs. Those people carrying out informal odd jobs (13% of the employed persons), those carrying out unpaid family help, those working in family venture, mostly got their jobs with the help of social networks. In strong unemployment, instability and work uncertainty contexts, the fact that looking for work and obtaining it has been achieved basically through close relationships in social

[117] Granovetter op.cit. had a great influence on this issue.

terms, is an aspect which increases the vulnerable nature of the most socially and residentially impoverished and isolated population. The following stories are a good example of this situation.

> Juan (43 years old, from the Santa Elena settlement) "most of us are unemployed here ... before we used to be able to get work through our contacts, but now ...." Juan told us that he had had a job in a company digging tunnels for the Buenos Aires underground. He had been there 2 years when at the end of 2000 work was stopped. He had got this job through a neighbor who was a blacksmith in this company. That neighbor is also unemployed now. Juan then found work as night watchman in a service station, this he also obtained through a cousin who worked there. But now they are both out of work.
> Yolanda (34 years old, Barufaldi) "I started to put in less hours working in the domestic service, before when that happened there was always somebody who needed domestic service, but now we are all in the same boat. And if anybody does know about somebody needing domestic service, they keep it to themselves, they don't tell you about it."

As the mechanism to search for and obtain jobs is strongly based on information circulating among people in the same sphere of life, this helps us to understand why poverty is spreading. In unemployment situations, this fact helps us understand one of the mechanisms which increases exclusion of these sectors. Horizontal social networks are an important resource, almost indispensable, to gain access to the labor market. We can thus affirm that these networks act not only as a poverty exclusion and reproduction factor but they erode the base of social capital by making it ineffective.

Informal ties with neighbors

Diverse studies have pointed out the importance of informal ties amongst neighbors in impoverished neighborhoods. As we have already pointed out, in regular goods and services exchange networks, ties with neighbors practically do not exist. Our

study showed that support and help from neighbors is a less important factor than expected. Contrarily to what we had expected, many people whom we interviewed, especially adults, claimed they carried out little exchange with their neighbors. This situation has evidenced that during the last decades poverty has come under a process of individuation. We frequently heard comments such as these:

> *My ties with my neighbors are normal ... we only say hello and goodbye, and in that way nobody talks about you and you don't talk about them"*
> *"Better not ask them for anything, ... in that way they don't bug you either*".

Households do not count on help from other non -family households when planning their survival strategies. This situation is clearly shown in all the settlements by the lack of neighbor initiative to pool their efforts to obtain resources. For example, community purchases, or planning a community vegetable patch, etc.

Another aspect remarked by many of the interviewed persons is mistrust among neighbors. One can frequently hear comments such as these:

> "I have no acquaintances in the neighborhood who can help me ..... My younger kids are looked after by my older ones. When my eldest children were small, I had a neighbor who used to look after them sometimes .... But now one cannot trust anybody ..."
> "One cannot trust anybody anymore ....., not even your neighbors".

Mistrust is manifested by the tendency of interviewees to divide the neighborhood into sectors, according to levels of danger or insecurity. Many of these people told us that the most dangerous neighbors, those that it is better to have no contact with and keep away from, lived in certain parts of the settlement. The comments heard were:

> "Further back in the settlement there are often fights, more drug addicts and thieves ... those young men live there, girls cannot go out to shop, and there is even one man who rapes women"

> "Further back in the settlement there are thieves. They stole our hens but we didn't turn them into the police because it is of no avail. The police do nothing and there is no way of solving this."

Ties and networks between people of the same province seem to be the exception to what has been said about ties among neighbors. These networks are made up of households with family and non-family ties. There seems to be very little difference between family and non-family ties. The ties which are created among households belonging to one same province take on similar characteristics, whether the network members are family or not. Among the interviewed households we found 4 that were involved in ties and networks made up by people from the same province. These are usually reciprocal help networks where diverse goods and services informally circulate.

> Timotea and Esther come from Misiones. They belong to two different households situated in different parts of the settlement. They met in the neighborhood. Timotea commented that she sometimes asks Esther for food when she has run out. Esther helps Timotea's children with their school homework.

> Juan and Alcides, are both from Santiago del Estero and live on the same settlement. Juan told us that Alcides got work as a painter and shared it with him.

Participation in institutions

Ties among neighbors in one same neighborhood are created and usually occur after population interaction in the different neighborhood institutions. As was presented in Chapter 6, participation in local institutions is scarce. Thus it can be affirmed that the source of poor populations' social capital can be found in networks of ties rather than in those involving institutions. Participation occurs in institutions where settlement population spend their "spare time". This varies greatly according to the institutions

located in each one of the settlements. The four settlements possess a space where the boys can meet to play football. This space can be a football club such as the one located in the Santa Elena settlement, with people managing it, or an informal football pitch located in Villa Hidalgo, where matches and tournaments are organized informally.

Other institutional meeting places in the four neighborhoods where the residents interact, are: primary schools, development-supporting institutions, soup kitchens and the church, generally of Evangelical denomination. These meeting places offer horizontal and vertical interaction, which permits a certain degree of diversity in social ties. This diversity is not marked by their socioeconomic position because the decision makers or heads are residents of the same settlement. Rather this diversity means what some members can receive in exchange as compared to others who do not occupy a position of importance. This mainly means prestige and recognition. One of these people expressed this very clearly:

> Victor from Santa Elena. "In the past I took active part in the development-supporting institution. My former mother in law was on the Board. The Board sold the metal sheets to build homes, and this was not right because the City Council gave them to us for free. I disagreed with this and was fired. I loved participating, I liked it because I was famous".

Thanks to this type of participation, besides offering interaction with other settlement neighbors, they have access to goods and services. Soup kitchens give them food, in some churches they get different goods which are distributed to the people going to church, etc. Besides, in some cases, thanks to participation in these institutions, they get to leave the settlement and gain access to goods and services which would be impossible to obtain only through home resources. For example, Elvira, an elderly woman from Santa Elena keeps up ties with people in the Church because "they

sometimes invite me to go on holiday with other elderly people and give me a bag of food. I have got to know places I had never seen before".

However, during periods of severe crisis, access to certain resources distributed by the institutions becomes more stringent and they take on the form of specific subsistence resources. A plate of food is a resource which increases in this context parallel with an increase in the use of community kitchens. Other resources, less linked to subsistence become limited or disappear. María, who carries out work in an Evangelical church, told us that until a couple of year back the Church organized outings beyond the settlement, but now "even the pastors have no work…, they can't even give us the goods they gave us before…."

Erosion of tie diversity

So far, this analysis allows us to assert that the population under study tends towards homogeneous social links, in other words, between people in the same level of social stratification. The social networks in which they are involved are essentially horizontal. They involve strong, homogeneous ties, poor in diversity, thus their links help them only to survive and keep up the levels of consumption through exchange mechanisms.

As already analyzed, owing to unemployment, instability and labor uncertainty, the social ties arising in their labor world are also growingly horizontal and homogeneous. Many of the people living in these settlements don't even leave them to earn their living. The same situation occurs with the social welfare benefits. As seen in chapter 7, it is within the network of neighborhood ties that access to this type of

assistance is planned. Therefore, diversity of ties among people of a different social status slowly becomes eroded.

Some stories told by people we interviewed demonstrate the mechanisms which are at play in eroding the diversity of ties, in other words, ties with people with a higher socioeconomic level than those living in the settlements. These mechanisms are mostly related to lack of resources, which makes it very difficult to "leave the settlement".

> Mirta told us that her son who is 16 years old used to take part in the activities offered at the San Miguel Athletic Club. "He used to play football there, but I could not carry on paying the monthly club fee, although it wasn't expensive, and I couldn't afford the traveling expenses to the club either".

Many of the people interviewed stated that they no longer left the settlement, not even on weekends for outings or to visit their relatives. "There just isn't any money, we cannot go anywhere …" "Before I used to visit my sister who lives in Moreno, but I can't do that anymore, how would I get there?"

In conclusion, in regards to the two variables chosen: strong ties and social diversity, we believe that the surveyed population tends towards the type of social capital that positions them in the second cell of the proposed prototypes. Strong ties and homogenous social ties take first place. What are the characteristics of the combination of both aspects? In poverty stricken sectors with increasing residential isolation the characteristic is a narrow information and contact horizon. As strong ties are concentrated in family relationships, which is the case of the population under study, this type of configuration reminds us of the "familistas amorales" from the south of Italy as described in the classical study carried out by Banfield (1958) where strong family interaction

patterns which lack the basic solidarity mechanisms beyond those of the narrow moral characteristic of family closeness[118,] have been identified.

However, as social ties in the group under study are not limited to extreme family ties, configuration may be described as a type of survival and reciprocal help strategy, based on a network of social protection and eventual help when facing high risk and contingent situations.

Summarizing, the social capital of this population is focused on strong ties, even though this may contribute to social segmentation. The social capital thus generated does not foster the strengthening of cooperation and collaboration actions. This shall be seen in the second part of this chapter.

Second Part: Community Social Capital

The concept of community social capital refers to the ability of a community to generate a set of generally approved rules. These turn into institutions and social organizations (formal and informal) to enable effective functioning of the mechanisms of general reciprocity and relationship guidelines focused on the control of behavior patterns of the underprivileged and on promoting group welfare (Katzman 1999: 312). Therefore the social capital of a community or territorial unit is expressed in the forms of associability and in associative density.

Many writers have contributed towards the use of the category of community social capital. P. Bourdieu (1993), with his classical concept of *habitus* and his later

[118] See Banfield E. "*The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*", N.York, Frece Press, 1958

studies about the relationship between cultural and social capital, give us a theoretical tool to connect certain structural conditions to a system of practices that show how the individual has internalized cultural codes transmitted by family and other socializing agents (Boudieu 1993). Furthermore, the work of R. Putnam (1993) on local governments in Italy, provide important elements to analyze social capital, linking it with characteristics of civic participation, the presence of community organizations and the existence of organized reciprocal networks. This line of thought is similar to the series of proposals carried out recently on the prospects of local development programs.

With the object of understanding the community social capital of the chosen population, the perceptions and expectations of the residents with respect to different aspects of local daily life, was collected through the semi-structured interview and life stories. Two aspects seemed important to us: the "state" of the local rules and regulations of a neighborhood as perceived by the neighbors themselves, and the community response and action when trying to solve neighborhood problems.

State of local rules and regulations of a neighborhood

The degree of insecurity in the area is an important indicator of the "state" of local rules and regulations of neighbor interaction. Certain subjective and objective aspects of the degree of insecurity may be pointed out. In Three aspects of insecurity are presented. These aspects are part of a list of 12 variables (analyzed further on in this chapter). The persons interviewed had to indicate three aspects from that list that they thought were the most important problems in their settlement. All the residents in poor

urban areas said that their neighborhoods were unsafe. Lack of safety is perceived as a strong threat. Sixty eight percent of the households stated among the three main problems that their neighborhood was unsafe at night, 61% said that there are frequent robberies in the neighborhood, and 47% mentioned the presence of gangs. The table allows us to also assert that the type of settlement has an influence on how they perceive insecurity. Of these three issues, the percentages are raised for interviewees residing in slums. It can therefore be presumed that the poorer and more socially isolated a neighborhood, the higher is the perception of insecurity of its residents.

Likewise, the semi-structured interview revealed other indirect insecurity indicators in the neighborhood. Over half of the responses, 64.2% mentioned the frequency of robberies in the neighborhood. Furthermore, they said, they were carried out by persons living in their neighborhoods. So as stated in Chapter 6, many of the interviewed persons said that they no longer felt happy about leaving their houses alone for fear of being broken into by their neighbors. Besides, a third stated that at least one of the members of the household had been held up in the course of the year. Regarding the perception on frequency of robberies, the percentage grows to three fourths for population in slums. The perception on insecurity is higher in slums than in squatter settlements.

Open answers show a certain degree of tolerance towards crime, especially in areas where they occur with higher frequency, such as slums. It has thus become a further reality of their daily lives.

The following statements by different interviewees, express the neighbors' perception of crime and how they face the problem:

> "In this place those who are not thieves are drug addicts ... youngsters are all involved in that"
> "The main problem is insecurity .. they are killing themselves. The police do not patrol this area"
> "Youngsters gang together and are a threat, they throw stones and you cannot say anything to them, because it is better to keep out of their way"
> "The police are afraid of them. There are many drug addicts"
> "The neighborhood is not safe, ... we have to defend ourselves, alone"
> "We call the police when these things happen, but they do not come into the neighborhood".

So, as can be seen in the above statements, little is expected from the institutions in charge of keeping order, which is reflected in the low rates of police reporting. Rather than reporting the crimes to the police, neighbors prefer to reinforce their own protection mechanisms. As we have mentioned before, the first of these being never to leave their homes alone, or asking a neighbor to keep an eye on them. These are not collective neighborhood safety measures but rather of a circle of very close neighbors, but these measures are increasingly being reduced to the specific area of the household.

In another part of the interview they were asked whether they would contemplate leaving the neighborhood if they had the chance. Just over half said they would. In this aspect, the type of settlement also makes a slight difference. The percentage increases for slum residents. Three fourths of the persons interviewed in slums said they would leave if they had the means. If we remember that these neighborhoods have been chosen for their severe social disadvantages, then the high percentage saying they would leave the neighborhood if they had the chance, is a good indicator of the level of integration of the residents with their community. It condenses the feelings and expectations of the residents in relation to the behavior of neighbors and the functioning of local institutions.

The information arising from the interviews is consistent with the prevalence of types of unconventional social behavior patterns in contexts of more or less marginality, and their frequency, which is used as an indicator of disorder. Differences in the social level of the residents produced by type of settlement, confirm the differences in community social capital, expressed in the strength of neighbor organization.

Community action to afford neighborhood problems

In order to face their problems, communities gather together round formal or non-formal organizations or institutions which act as their voice and conflict solving agents. These organic initiatives of the community, the manner in which people form ties within it and how organizations relate to each other, constitute a close approximation of what community social capital is. In fact it is the second dimension we have chosen to describe the social fabric of the settlements.

The main problems perceived by the residents of the neighborhoods are described first. Then a description of the actions undertaken by the residents, and what hopes they place on their chances of obtaining cooperation and support by the people or institutions in their environment, in order to strengthen their actions. Finally there is an evaluation of the perception held by the interviewed residents on the effectiveness of the action.

Joint action by the domestic units carried out to solve communal neighborhood problems, is one of the dimensions of household survival strategies, as it implies the use of resources to improve their life status. These actions involve horizontal ties between

neighbors, and vertical ties with public or private agents whom they see as the problem solvers.

The domestic units of the four chosen settlements face numerous neighborhood problems, which directly affect their daily lives. The problems related to the lack of infrastructure are perceived as particularly serious. Bad state of the roads, floods, scarce public lighting, and lack of running water (mentioned by 67%, 57%, 44% and 39% of the households respectively) are the most urgent problems. Seven out of every 10 homes considered environmental pollution a serious problem. Apart from these infrastructure problems, insecurity is perceived as a serious threat to their lives. Sixty eight percent of the households mentioned insecurity as a problem, and 61% commented on the frequency of robberies (Table 9.6). The presence of gangs, drug addicts, absence of police patrols are all subjects which came up many times during the open questions.

In view of the above problems, the interviewed persons saw no solutions coming from the provincial government or municipal authorities. Nine out of ten interviewed households think that these authorities do nothing for their neighborhoods. In this sense the type of settlement makes no difference. However half of them stated that there have been improvements in the neighborhood over the past year, referring to paved roads or improvement of the old roads or other infrastructure jobs. They do admit though, that this work was carried out mainly by the State. Once again percentages depended on type of settlement. Interviewed squatters stated that there have been more improvements in their neighborhoods than the interviewed slum dwellers. It is important to point out that in squatter settlements, neighbor initiative and assistance from the neighborhood development-supporting institution were the engines in obtaining this benefit, which was

more important than in the slums. This information shows us that there is a higher degree of organizing power in squatter settlements than in slums, and therefore, a "healthier" state of their social fabric.

Returning to the subject of the problems perceived as serious by the interviewed persons, most of them perceive that the State does not participate in the solution of their problems. They feel that the improvements carried out in their settlements are not the ones they consider important. The neighbors' own initiatives and community actions were the main problem solving tools. A third of the households stated that some member recently participated in meetings held among neighbors to claim a solution or solve the problem themselves. These meetings are usually called by some political representative in the neighborhood, the neighborhood's development-supporting institution, one of the churches or spontaneously by the neighbors. The meeting called by the neighbors being the most common, which infers that self-organization mechanisms among domestic units to solve neighborhood problems is an important survival strategy. Every time they have met, the most common joint action was to collect signatures, to draw-up a petition, or solve the problem among neighbors. It must be pointed out that in most cases they never actually got down to carrying out the joint action, but only talked it over. As to neighbor participation in problem solving, the type of settlement favors squatter residents. Four out of every ten households in squatter settlements had a person actively taking part in problem solving activities, whilst in slums this figure fell to half. Seventy-one point 4 percent of squatter residents felt that getting together with the neighbors was beneficial and 83.3% assert that they should do it more often. Among slum dwellers the figures are reduced to 60 and 50% respectively.

How effective were the meetings among neighbors? EPU information is not enough to answer this question. That information only gives us the interviewees' perceptions. As mentioned above, two thirds of these people consider meeting with neighbors beneficial. Among these, some state that thanks to the meetings a few concrete problems were solved (paving of a street, better lighting, etc). Others state that although they still haven't obtained any benefit, the fact that they did meet and talk was a positive step. One of these persons commented: "We made friends but did not achieve anything". The persons who found that they got no benefits out of meeting, expressed two lines of reasoning: some said that nothing was achieved out of the meeting, in some cases because there were only a few of them participating actively. Another group with negative opinions on the outcomes of the meetings felt that when things were achieved they lasted only a short time. One of the interviewees stated: "We were able to put up lighting in the square on our own initiative, but a short time later the drug addicts living in the settlements smashed them". Another person commented, "we succeeded in getting police patrol, but it only lasted a short time".

The following question offers a final reflection on this chapter: how effective is the power of the residents of these settlements to solve their own most urgent problems in the face of growing State absence, increasing social inequality, higher concentration of riches and power and broken social ties? In spite of our skepticism about the possibility of such a paradoxical challenge, it is true that active participation by the local communities in claiming rendering of accounts, extension and improvement of social services could increase their participation and enable them to obtain more benefits.

Conclusion

The analysis carried out in Chapter 9 questions the stress which classical survival-strategy studies place on reciprocal exchange networks as the basic social resource for the survival of impoverished persons (we specifically refer to the strong influence exercised by the study carried out by Lomintz 1975 on later studies focused on survival strategies). Economic uncertainty is not compensated by these goods and services exchange networks. Our analysis questions the assertion that the growth of the influence of exchange ties goes hand in hand with the growth of poverty and isolation, and therefore with the decrease of mercantile ties. This analysis permits us to make a number of affirmations:

Social networks are a resource used by this population. Yet, within these transfer ties, reciprocal exchange networks are not important. The percentage of households taking part in this type of network where exchange is stable or periodical is low. Reciprocal exchange exists between related households or between households located in the same city or province. It is not the type of exchange characterizing the ties among neighbors. Measured by type of settlement, the higher the poverty the lower the presence of exchange networks. This population primarily has strong social ties. Weak ties fall within horizontal and scarcely diverse relationships. Tie diversity is marked not by socioeconomic positions but by age differences, gender, and prestige within the settlement. Therefore it is a population which accumulates social capital in strong and homogenous ties, in other words among people of the same social position. Scarce tie diversity is directly related to the type of resource they obtain through their weak ties. These resources (in terms of information, contacts, etc.) do not have the potential to make

them leave their impoverished lives behind. We believe, on the other hand, that they are precisely the type of ties that help to reproduce poverty.

These affirmations are of course theories which subsequent research must extend and put into practice. However we believe that research must be designed from this point of view, ready to study social relationships, ties and networks in general exactly as they exist among the most impoverished sectors, without estimated budgets.

The second part of the chapter is focused on community social capital. We believe it is the key context in understanding the different household opportunities as well as the members of these households. We have taken into account two aspects of community social capital, community action to solve neighborhood problems and the "state" of the rules and regulations applying to neighborliness. From analysis of the first aspect, we can see that participation is weak and unstable, with the exception of those having the possibility of immediate access to goods necessary for daily living. The degree of settlement poverty marks the difference. In slums the organizing powers and effectiveness of actions is lower than in squatter settlements.

There is a strong relationship between the weak organizing powers of the population to adequately solve their problems, and the lack of participation and active involvement in the institutions by community members.

The question arising from this analysis, which may be further researched, is what are the mechanisms by which collective morale is enhanced and willingness to invest energy in the general welfare of the population induced?

Regarding the second, state of the rules and regulations of neighborliness, one aspect emerged from the analysis: many residents manifested a certain tolerance to crime.

We believe this aspect must be analyzed profoundly. It is an indicator of the "state" of the neighborhoods' social fabric. Maybe it is telling us that some of the persons living in these poverty stricken areas, are choosing to give up in view of their frustrations in achieving social integration through work (as was the case in Argentina until a few decades ago), and are taking another path to achieve integration and accumulation. This could mean the creation of a subculture of "losers" belonging to the mechanism of exclusion. A subculture where work is no longer thought of as the only legitimate way towards integration. Owing to the State's absence and inadequate response, other ways become legitimate, but they are illegal and borderline.

TABLES

Table 9.1 Households by transference relationships and kind of transference relationship

		%
At least one transference	76	78.4
No transference	21	21.6
TOTAL	97	100.0

Type of de transference	%
Only help	43,5
Only dependence	42,4
Help and dependence	14,1
Total	100,0

Source: Interviews to 100 households applied during 2001 in four settlements of Greater Buenos Aires

Table 9.2 Households by sons/daughters living outside the house

Tiene hijos afuera del hogar				Receives help or depends on one of the sons/daughters		
		%				%
Yes	52	52.0		Si	26	51.0
No	48	48.0		No	25	49.0
Total	100	100.0		Total	51	100.0

Source: Idem Table 9.1

Table 9.3 Households by having parents living outside the house

Parents living outside the house				Receives or depends on the parents		
		%				%
Yes	70	70.0		Yes	38	56.0
No	30	30.0		No	30	44.0
Total	100	100.0		Total	68	100.0

Source: Idem Table 9.1

Table 9.4 Households by where the household receiving or depending on help is located

	%	
Same neighbourhood	35,1	35,1
Same County	16,5	51,6
Nearby County	21,3	72,9
Same State	2,1	75,0
Another State	20,7	95,7
Another Country	4,3	100,0
Total	100,0	

Source: Idem table 9.1

Table 9.5 Households by help received and poverty situation, by transference relationships

Transference relationship	Households according to if they receive social aid and its impact			
	No income. Househlds depending on social aid	With Incomes, but below Poverty Line. They receive social aid	With incomes above Poverty Line. They receive social aid	Households not receiving social aid
Yes. At least one regular transference	73,7 (14)	83,3 (15)	76,2 (32)	92,3 (12)
No	26,3 (5)	16,7 (3)	23,8 (10)	7,7 (1)
Total	100,0 (19)	100,0 (18)	100,0 (42)	100,0 (13)

Source: Idem Table 9.1

Table 9.6 Main Neighborhood problems according to its inahbitants

	%
The neighborhood is insecure at night	68.0
The neighborhood has enviromental contamination	70.0
The neighborhood has dangerous gangs	47.0
In the neighborhood people are often stolen	61.0
The neighborhood has flood problems	57.0
The neighborhood lacks of enough public green spaces	40.0
The neighborhood does not have clear drinking water	39.0
The neighborhood has streets in very bad conditions	67.0
The neighborhood lacks public transportation	22.0
The neighborhood lacks public lighting	44.0
The neighborhood has streets avenues dangerous to cross thourgh	11.0
Other	12.0

Source: Idem Table 9.1

CHAPTER 10:

CONCLUSIONS

In this final part of the thesis I come back to the questions that guided the work. I am interested in remarking some of the most relevant results of the analysis. I aim to propose hypothesis, theoretical aspects, and research issues that can broader our understanding of urban poverty.

The analysis done within this thesis was framed by my interest in understanding households' survival in contexts of residentially segregated areas where poverty is highly concentrated. My interest acquires relevance being that in the last decades in Argentina, as in many Latin American countries, economic polarization was parallel to a process of social fragmentation that brought residential segregation, poverty concentration and the isolation of the poorest people. I departed from the standpoint that some theoretical approaches are unable to grasp the new urban problematic that is taking shape. I am specifically referring to the resources-of-poverty model framed within the survival-strategies approach. I aimed in this thesis to demonstrate some of the wrongness of this approach.

I stated the hypothesis that in contexts of persistent economic crisis, living in marginalized and segregated areas negatively affects the survival strategies undertaken by households to cope with poverty. I wanted to understand why and how this process takes place. To cope with economic contextual adversities households mobilize a multiplicity of resources. However their capacity to convert resources into assets has been declining

steadily. I argued that residential segregation is related with households' resources exhaustion. I selected three households' resources and analyzed the characteristics they acquire in contexts of strong poverty concentration: 1.Work, 2.Those obtained through social policy, and 3.Those obtained through social networks, that is social capital.

Regarding the first resource, my analysis indicates that lack of employment has fundamentally disrupted household economies and forms of organization. If labour is the urban's poor most important resource, then important implications for poor's survival and reproduction are expected when exclusiveness of labour markets intensifies. My analysis indicates that, in spite of high rates of unemployment, the labour market is still an alternative to obtain incomes and goods in order to make a living. Work is in fact a source of income. However the strong labour precariousness and instability of the last decades, and poverty concentration, has shaped this resource in a way that erodes households' survival strategies. My study indicates that households put in action a set of income generating activities. Among them the option of putting a household-based-productive activity to have more than one household member occupied, and the option of 'getting out' to perform informal work inside de neighborhood or nearby, are among the most relevant. These are very informal option that hidden the lack of other working alternatives. Those households that manage to combine these informal income-generating activities with at least one regular wage tend to be better-off.

Survival-strategies approaches have pointed out the ingenious capacity of poor people to generate alternative income sources to those provided by a stable job. My research confirms this assertion. The households interviewed have shown an incredible capacity to 'glean' within the little margin left by the labour market in order to create

option to make ends meet. However the survival-strategy-approach was wrong in understanding the significance work has to make a living. My research gives strong evidence that work is not one among the many resources poor people live on. It is by far the most relevant one. People need decently remunerated employment to live. Income from other sources can complement but cannot replace wages in an urban capitalist society. Emphasizing survival strategies to the point of losing sight of the limits of these strategies can lead to arguments with politically dangerous implications. In this sense one of my main hypothesis acquires relevance: social capital cannot substitute what is given by a stable job. Moreover, in contexts of lack of stable jobs, the workers' social capital erodes. I argue therefore that lack of employment options is one of the factors that nourishes the increasing social isolation in which the most marginalized people live, and works against social integration

The analysis of my second resource, social policies, shows that in fact social programs have acquired increasing relevance in households' survival. Lack of stable incomes derives in that the material goods needed to make a living come increasingly from social programs. These policies are accepted as table of salvation. My research indicates that the most valued programs are those of temporally work due to their indirect relation to the labour market. However all these programs, included the work-related ones- are also suffered as evidence of the disappearance of horizon of possibilities and of autonomy and social ascendant mobility. The increasing populating selectivity and targeting, to which these programs are directed, imply from the standpoint of the households, the implementation of a variety of mechanisms to get access and to maintain the benefit. This situation fragments the 'solidarity' among beneficiaries, who become

competitors of the same resource that appears as scarce and unstable. Client type relationships, relationships based on interest, and distrust, start shaping the social network implied for obtaining and maintaining social programs. Therefore the selective and targeting nature of social policy contributes to increase social segmentation of the beneficiaries.[119]

Regarding the third resource selected: social capital, I paid particular attention to social networks and social ties of settlements' dwellers. I did so within a structural understanding of social capital; that is conceiving it as stable networks that unable obtaining resources. Within this perspective I could observe that what characterizes their relationships are 'strong ties'; that it that their relationships are of a familiar and homogeneous type. These are ties among people of the same social position. Relationships with other 'neighbors' and those with dwellers from outside the settlements have little relevance. The educational and laboral histories of settlements dwellers make it evident that 'ties from outside the neighborhood' have been eroding over time, leaving place to the strengh of 'strong and homogenous ties'.

Current economic and social conditions are not conducive to strengthening the social organization of poor households that has provided the social basis for their livelihood. Falling incomes and rising concentrated poverty are also eroding the capacity of poor people to be part of social networks of support, leaving them unable to engage in and maintain social exchange. By cutting people off from vital sources of support, social isolation, a critical but often neglected outcome of poverty, makes them even more

[119] It is necessary to highlight again that the data used for this thesis are mainly from 2001. This was previous to the implementation of the Plan 'Jefes y Jefas de Hogar" that started in 2002, and that had a great impact on the unemployed population. This social program addresses some of the problems that the focalized social policies were facing by 2001.

vulnerable to adverse shocks and crises. Thus, a process of cumulative disadvantages may set on, which could further impair the ability of the poor to recover and climb out of their predicament.

Another of my dependant variable was households' circuits of need satisfaction. I wanted to analyze how these circuits are affected by life in segregated areas. The analysis of these circuits, from the perspective of the relationships that households engage in for obtaining resources for their well-being –food, clothing, education and recreation- reinforces what I have argued regarding the homogeneity of the social ties the population under studies get into. In fact the analysis of the circuits for need satisfaction, and the one over social networks allow arriving to the same conclusions. A descriptive analysis over these circuits allowed me to affirm that dwellers of precarious settlements hardly ever 'get out' from their settlements in order to satisfy their needs. The great majority of them buy their food in the informal and precarious groceries that work inside the settlements, operated by settlements dwellers. Children assist to schools located inside the settlements, or in their proximity. Only poor students tend to attend these schools. Therefore they keep on interacting at school only among themselves. Recreational activities are also mainly done within the limits of the settlements. Most of settlements dwellers do not get 'out' of their places on their free time. In addition it must be highlighted what has already been said about jobs: most marginalized population 'get out for work' at some point inside or nearby the neighborhood. Most of them do not get out of the settlement at all for their income producing activities. Therefore the social circuits, to which settlements dwellers belong to, are coincident among them. They rarely have the

feeling of belonging to other social sectors. This impoverishes their identity experience with global society.

These circuits are useful, in short, to make it evident the type of relationships that inhabitants of poor settlements engage in to satisfy their needs. Relationships among 'equals', among inhabitants of the same settlements, are those privileged. They are relationships, therefore, that account for the social isolation in which they are immerse.

In line with the above analysis, social networks in which the marginalized population is immersed, sustain some of the relevant decisions taken by household members. The choice of the neighborhood where to live, the school for their children, their income generating activity, etc. are based in great part, on information or in support offered by informal networks. Social networks become in this way 'institutions of poverty' that support courses of action and the way this population satisfies their needs. This fact underlines the relevance social ties have. It is an important resource to cope with poverty. However this kind of ties do not offer opportunities that may help to overcome poverty. They are ties that tend to reinforce social isolation of the poorest.

Personal relationships and social networks shape the social capital that households accumulate. Due to the cumulative and quality of their social capital the domestic units manage to satisfy needs that trough other ways- especially the market- would be almost impossible. However, primary relationships even if they might be good for mitigating vulnerability situations, their capacity to resolve structural conditions of inequality is very questionable. It is therefore of vital importance to analyze the dynamic and constitution of settlements' dwellers social capital to understand one of the mechanisms of poverty reproduction.

The dependent variables I chose to analyze the negative influence of dwelling in segregated areas were two. One, which I denominated 'risk behavior', and the second, was incomes. I performed a multivariate analysis controlling the effects of the type of neighborhood with education. My hypothesis was that dwelling in segregated areas is negatively associated with risk behavior and with levels of incomes. The analysis done allows arguing that in fact the degree of neighborhoods' marginality matters. My analysis indicates that the degree of neighborhoods' marginality and isolation is not only related with social composition –as expected- but has an influence that goes beyond both, households' set of resources, and background characteristics of household members.

The results of the analysis indicate that categories of children and young people with the same family stock of asset configuration (expressed in household human capital) present significant differences regarding risk behavior, depending on the neighborhoods' social composition. At the same time, workers with the same level of education perceive different incomes, depending on the degree of segregation of the area where they live. These results are preliminary findings that need further research. It should be necessary to make a more complex analysis introducing other control variables. However I believe that my findings allow asserting that in fact neighborhoods matter. In other words, the degree of neighborhoods' marginality and social isolation introduces relevant differences in households' members' behaviors and in labour achievements. The more socially segregated an area is, the more probability that its' dwellers have risk behaviors and lower incomes. I believe that this kind of findings should incentive research focused on

analyzing the consequences of residential segregation. It is a perspective necessary to accurately grasp the modern dynamic and persistence of urban poverty.[120]

Neighborhoods' social composition matters, and influences over their residents' courses of action. What explains this relationship? The analysis done in this thesis does not allow addressing specifically this question. I can only adventure some hypothesis. I believe that it should be necessary to frame research approaches aimed at grasping the mechanisms that transmit the neighborhood impact.

My hypothesis, based on what comes out from the thesis, is that there are both instrumental and socialization mechanisms at work.[121] Instrumental mechanisms are the different channels through which neighborhood conditions can constrain individual action. This category includes the following: distance to workplaces and the costs in time and money associated with transport, local employment opportunities, the scope for accumulating social capital that is useful for finding work, the difficulty of mobilizing the family workforce because of insecure surroundings, and the reaction of potential employers to the idea of recruiting residents of these neighborhoods

Socialization mechanisms include things like the existence of role models in the neighborhood, the efficiency of community standards, and the presence of marginal

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[120] I want to remark what I affirmed in the introduction of this thesis regarding the relevance of researching on residential segmentation. At present I am devoting my time to this kind of research. I am doing so partly because I think this is a dimension which has been neglected in the social agenda, and partly also because I believe that new things can be said about urban poverty when addressing the issue from this point of view, especially when focusing on the mechanisms that mediate between the social composition of the neighborhoods and peoples' behavior.

[121] There are a number of mechanisms, some of which have already been extensively examined in the specialist literature, that mediate between aspects of a neighborhood and the behavior of its residents. Although the mechanisms I will discuss below do not coincide with those identified by Small and Newman (2001), in presenting them we shall use the distinction drawn by those authors between instrumental mechanisms and socialization mechanisms.

subcultures. These are three issues closely interrelated. Understanding how they work may be of great relevance to grasp the persistence of poverty. The analysis done thought this thesis, and particularly on Chapter 9 brings elements that show how socialization mechanisms work. Where labour market attachments are concerned, the most important consequence of their operation is the degree to which people are exposed to signals, images and habits that justify and reinforce discouragement, cast doubt over the prospects of escaping from poverty through work, or call into question mental content consistent with the formation of a culture of work. A first factor here is the absence in the immediate social environment of role models who can convey the work-related expectations, habits and types of behaviour that predominate in the social and economic mainstream of the city. Two other, closely interrelated factors militate against the formation of a culture of work. One is the inefficiency of the standards governing relations among residents, a key aspect of community social capital. The pressures placed on households by the needs of day-to-day survival, and the dearth and instability of the bare resources needed to sustain reciprocity networks or community-based institutions, conspire against the generation and maintenance of general patterns of community life. The other factor, which tends to arise as a corollary, is the presence of marginal subcultures. Neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty experience a latent but perpetual struggle between the two options. There are those who try to resist social disaffiliation and those, already discouraged, who are willing to break with normal standards and explore non-legitimate ways of improving their living conditions. By lending support to those who take this route, marginal subcultures make work less attractive as a means of achieving welfare goals. I take the increasing sense of insecurity

inside the neighborhood, a generalized discouragement, and a somehow tolerance to illegal activities, as indicators of socializations mechanisms.[122]

The analysis and the results of this thesis show, in short, the relevance of studying urban poverty from the perspective of residential segregation. It is necessary to highlight and focus on the effects that living social surroundings have on the possibilities households have to improve their well-being. It is necessary to conceive neighborhoods as ecological contexts that mediate peoples' access to the most relevant physical, social and human assets located in the market, the State and the community.

The relevance of the social context is important for studies that focus on peoples' background characteristics to explain their social integration deficit. When studying access to the labour market, for instance, I believe that it is relevant to consider that the labor market ties are affected both by issues and processes of highly vulnerable contexts,

[122] Relevant questions would be, how easily could these processes be reversed? How much hope do we have now that Argentina, as well as other Latin American countries is having steady economic growth for the last couple of years? I tend to have a pessimistic view. I argue that the residents of poor segregated neighborhoods will only be able to capitalize on the opportunities created by any recovery if economic growth is much more vigorous than in the past. Indeed, there is no reason to think that sufficiently strong demand for labour cannot neutralize the mechanisms analyzed, giving back hope to those who have lost it and, among those who never had much of it, making the attainment of decent living conditions by their own efforts seem a reasonable prospect. In Buenos Aires economic growth is heavily dependent for its dynamism on production activities of increasing technological density. In these circumstances, it is hard to see on what basis we can build expectations of major improvements in unemployment rates, in the indices of occupational instability and insecurity, and in the pay differences between skilled and unskilled workers, at least in the short and medium term. Accordingly, there is no reason to expect that mechanisms like those described will be neutralized either. If attention is turned to the occupational opportunities for the coming generations, the fundamental problem is how to raise the qualification levels of children from poor homes and narrow the education gaps between the urban classes. A large number of studies have given indications of the effects on children's school performance of mechanisms similar to those discussed here in very needy neighborhoods. The type of changes needed to neutralize these effects and give such children and adolescents hope for the future demand improvements in the coverage and quality of the educational system strong enough to enhance its ability to absorb and retain these young people, whose primary socialization takes place in such unsatisfactory surroundings. Finally it is necessary to draw steady urban planning in order to check and reverse residential segregation, keeping in mind that the economic and political costs of these measures rise exponentially as marginal subcultures crystallize. Here as in other areas of social policy, prevention is the best cure.

and by those related to peoples' human capital and occupational paths. The effects of the context of residence will show themselves more clearly in the generations that are socialized in these areas, for whom the neighborhood influence clearly precedes their efforts to enter the labour market.

To conclude I come back to the relationship between survival strategies and the exhaustion of poor peoples' resources. The emphasis to draw upon resources – unquestionably vital for surviving- that the survival-strategy-approaches have been emphasizing for decades, tends to elude the central problem of poor people, that is that the core for overcoming inequality and poverty has to do with income distribution, and therefore, with conventional capital. It is necessary to reinforce this conclusion asserting the necessity that poor people have access to the most indispensable resource: a dignifying job. This type of resource is the most important one to guarantee no only access to the goods and services necessary to make a living, but it is also the resource best suited to guarantee minimum levels of citizenship, and therefore social integration.

It is necessary therefore to incentive measures of economic growth and those generating work. It is indispensable however to reactivate the rol of the State in the social sphere, without which no economic growth program may be able to resolve the increasing vulnerability segments of the population are facing, and which consequences over the social well-being are starting to be visible. It is necessary to underline the necessity of policies that promote the use of public spaces, measures to prevent the segmentation of basic services, and actions in the field of urban planning. These are some of the ways to promote multi-class socialization and offset the powerful tendencies towards a retreat into private worlds and isolation of the different classes.

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