![JDC]

Gender and leadership in the Jewish Communities of Latin America and the Caribbean

octubre 2018

Gender and leadership in the Jewish Communities of Latin America and the Caribbean

Eleonor Faur *

*Sociologist, Gender and Human Rights Specialist.
Doctor of Social Sciences.
Professor at Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Argentina.
Author of numerous articles and books. Among them:
Mitomanías de los sexos. Las ideas del siglo XX sobre el amor, el deseo y
el poder que necesitamos desechar para vivir en el siglo XXI.
El cuidado infantil en el siglo XXI. Mujeres malabaristas en una sociedad desigual.

T he JDC has addressed women's participation in the leadership of the Jewish communities of Latin America through various activities and working groups, as well as at regional meetings promoted by our organization.

Our work gained new momentum in 2017, with the first "Latin American Meeting of Women and Community Involvement: New Challenges" co-organized with the Latin American Maccabi Confederation (CLAM). Participants from seven countries in the region attended the meeting, which offered a unique opportunity in Latin America for reflection and empowerment.

Those efforts continue today with the development of the Women and Community Leadership Program, and this document lays out the framework for the program.

We are pleased to be able to share our perspective and contribute to providing more clarity on the issue of gender and leadership. Through the data and analysis included here, we aim to promote actions for change and increase the presence of women on the boards of Jewish organizations and in the communities of the region. It is an ongoing challenge that women and men must address together in order to strengthen and enrich community life.

We hope that this document takes a decisive step in that direction.

Sergio Widder

Regional Director
American Jewish Joint
Distribution Committee
Latin America and the Caribbean

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Governments, transnational and national corporations, the mass media, banks, academic and scientific institutions, and regional and international organizations, including those in the United Nations system, do not make full use of women's talents as top-level managers.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, relationships between men and women have changed profoundly. Women successfully demanded expanded rights while questioning the structures of society and the subjectivities of women and men. Within the Jewish community, the role of women has been (and continues to be) central in several areas of the community. Historically, Jewish women "created identities; forged relationships; worked inside and outside the home; and helped build labor, political, and communal groups" (McGee Deutsch, 2017: 17). Nonetheless, and despite the energy that different generations of women have invested in these organizations, their participation in decision-making still does not reflect the vigor of their community presence. Recognizing this gap has inspired the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) to deepen its interventions in gender issues within Jewish community organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean. In particular, it looks to strengthen female leadership on the decision-making bodies of community organizations.

This document is at the core of these actions to promote the reflection and analysis that allows the basic program structures to be established for developing a gender agenda in the Jewish

community organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean. Why is this necessary? There are several reasons. On the one hand, it is a question of justice and representativeness. Sixty years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established that all rights should be protected without any exclusion or discrimination based on sex or any other cause, the evidence indicates that women continue to be underrepresented in most public and private institutions and within civil society organizations. Incorporating women promotes a more equitable makeup within these organizations, one that is more reflective of society. On the other hand, it is a question of enhancing the work these organizations do. The positive effects of incorporating women into positions of leadership in public, private and civil society organizations are well known (Hernández Bark et al., 2015). Recognizing the gap that exists between men and women in decision-making roles not only serves to address issues of justice, representativeness and effectiveness, but is also an issue that will confront the generations to come. Several questions are important here. Why does this inequality persist? What is at its foundation? What are the beliefs and mechanisms that established and support it? What strategies can be put in place so that it can be overcome?

MAKEUP

This document was guided by the questions above. Within a conceptual framework that understands the processes and dynamics related to female leadership as part of gender social relations, this document provides historical analyses and perspectives on female leadership in Jewish organizations. The beliefs that shaped gender differences are also examined in order to understand the current state of affairs and challenges, and propose a program structure that bolsters female leadership in the community. The document draws on several sources. On the one hand, it retrieves and analyzes academic literature, interviews with Latin American Jewish community leaders, as well as documents and agreements developed by the United Nations and by Latin American intergovernmental organizations. On the other, it offers an overview of the gender composition of Jewish community organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, based on an ad hoc investigation that yielded primary data from more than 200 community organizations.

The document is structured as follows: after the introduction, the first section presents a series of concepts related to gender issues and provides a historical investigation of the Jewish community from a gender perspective. This is followed by an analysis of trends in female participation at other types of public and private institutions in the region, with a subsequent discussion of the instruments used to achieve greater equality in the international community. The fourth section of the document presents the data for building a "gender map" of the Jewish community organizations in Latin America, along with data regarding the proportion of women in leadership roles, women's level of influence at institutions, and the types of institutions that see varying degrees of women's participation. The following section presents different analytical perspectives in order to understand the segregation and low participation of women in decision-making positions. The document concludes with guidelines on working to increase the number of women in such posts and on advancing towards gender equality in the Jewish community organizations of the region.

The JDC team and the consultant in charge of the project agreed on the design and contents of the document. In this project, the ideas and efforts of Sergio Widder, Fabiana Itzcovich, Fabiana Grosman, Maia Magnetto and Micaela Bursztein were fundamental. The document deeply benefitted from a critical reading by Mónica Cullucar, whose contributions improved the contents and focus of the text. Finally, much appreciation goes to the important and continuous work of Martín Oliva, who collaborated in the research, systematization and analysis of the results presented in this document.

Eleonor Faur

SOME HISTORICAL AND CONCEPTUAL REMARKS

In order to grasp the sharp distinction between the public and private spheres in the Western world so relevant to any analysis of gender, the historical context must be taken into consideration. Beginning at the end of the 19th century, when the Jewish population began to arrive to Latin America, gender-specific labor was the norm in both their countries of origin and their countries of destination. The laws that regulated social interactions and relations were also organized around gender, wherein the public sphere was defined as a male environment and the private sphere as the woman's domain. This structure was based on conceptions and ideas that formed part of universally-accepted common sense. Men were assumed to be more suited to the public world and women, more apt for the tasks of everyday life, in the private sphere. Based on these assumptions, an infinite series of gender metaphors shaped our ways of thinking and acting, and forged ingrained gender stereotypes (Faur and Grimson, 2016).

Generally speaking, gender relations can be considered a substantive part of the social fabric and acquire particularities, unique expressions, and variations specific to each context (Scott, 2000). These are profoundly naturalized dynamics, whose effectiveness lies in their acceptance as common sense by the majority of the population i.e. both men and women (Bourdieu, 2010).

Which relationships are under discussion? The Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell (2006) points out the four major dimensions in gender related: a) power, articulated through the historical authority and predominance of men in establishing rules within a given area; b) the division of labor, wherein labor and income are divided and distributed according to gender (both in the public and the private sphere); c) cathexis, which interweaves emotional attachment and sexual desire; and d) symbolism, the way in which we symbolize gender identities and differences.[1]

As in other environments, the gender fabric of the Jewish community in Latin America was developed through the intertwining of meanings (ways of thinking), practices (ways of acting and living) and rules (both implicit and explicit). From this perspective, the division of territories and responsibilities in the Jewish community of Latin America restricted the lives of both women and men, establishing hierarchies in which the most important posts were reserved for men. Importantly, men were recognized as having more rights and higher levels of autonomy than their female contemporaries.

> Efforts are needed to understand the situation and current challenges, drafting a conceptual and programmatic framework that allows women's leadership in the community to be strengthened.

From the point of view of Jewish culture, religious practices dictated their own mechanisms of gender hierarchy. As the feminist and orthodox Jew Ethel Barylka points out, the voices that interpreted the scriptures were masculine and, until a few decades ago, women were excluded from the systematic study of the Torah and could not be rabbis. In fact, the observant Jewish vision limits women to participating in tasks related to support and assistance; there are still synagogues where the most important spaces are reserved for men (Barylka, 2018); and for many religious ceremonies, women are segregated. In the words of Sara Winkowski, vice-president of the World Jewish Congress (and former president of the International Council of Jewish Women):

---

[1] In a previous paper, it has been noted that these relationships "are put into action not only in the individual sphere—which includes subjectivity, the construction of identities and the culturally-marked way of inhabiting bodies—but also in the social sphere, thereby influencing the gender-specific division of labor, the distribution of material and symbolic resources, emotional bonds and the definition of hierarchies between men and women," (Faur, 2014: 26).

The makeup of Latin America's Jewish community institutions reflects society and culture at the dawn of the 20th century. The participation of women in community organizations was relegated to "female" activities i.e. welfare, care, and the organization of celebrations.

In the synagogue, women must sit behind frosted glass or, as I have even seen, behind a curtain. A woman cannot go up to read the Torah, she cannot be a scribe, she is not counted for a minyan. There may be 9 men and 90 women but the minyan is not complete; however, the mere presence of an additional 13-year-old boy completes it.[2]

On the other hand, Latin America also imposed other restrictions on women. Well into the twentieth century, women could not vote or be elected, their participation in the labor market was substantially less than that of men, their welfare depended on the incomes of their fathers or husbands, and only widows could dispose of goods and properties. Furthermore, their opportunities for access to and continuity in education (in particular, university education) were practically nil.

In this context, the first Jewish community institutions in Latin America reflected the way in which society and culture was organized at the dawn of the 20th century. With few exceptions, men's names were on the founding documents and also property deeds, according to the investigations of the sociologist Mónica Cullucar.[3] The regulations of the Jewish Colonization Association in Argentina prevented women from acquiring land, with the exception of widows (McGee Deutsch, 2017).

The above did not mean that women were excluded from community life, but rather that their participation, from the beginning, was of a different nature than that of men and centered on certain settings and specific organizations.

Since the end of the 19th century, women founded dozens of charitable societies and played a very significant role in propagating community life. They were in charge of organizing the festivities and celebrations that were central to strengthening the idea of community. Young women participated in the institutions by forming women's subcommittees as well as committees for organizing "parties, cultural soirées and volunteering events" (McGee Deutsch, 2017). As Mónica Cullucar wrote:

The women who traditionally participated in Jewish life beginning with the arrival of Jewish immigrants to Argentine essentially occupied spaces associated with childcare, the elderly, women's group activities, the development of organizations, and the planning of celebrations such as Rosh Hashanah and Passover Seders.

The specialization of responsibilities, in turn, adopted certain hierarchical features, as the most prestigious institutes and those that gathered the greatest amount of economic and/or symbolic resources were also those that offered the fewest opportunities for female leadership:

Women were absent from the leadership of key Jewish institutions—the boards of the synagogues; the aid societies for funeral services; mutual aid, credit societies and banks—even as they were gaining a foothold in Argentine politics (McGee Deutsch, 2017: 104-105).

Historically, women's participation in community organizations showed patterns of segregation linked to those attributes considered "feminine": care and assistance, the

---

[2] See the Spanish language interview with Sara Winkowski at: https://www.mujeryjudaismo.com/sara

[3] See the interview with Mónica Cullucar at: https://www.mujeryjudaismo.com/monica-paulina.html

organization of celebrations, and so on. This, however, also facilitated the incorporation of women into activities that exceeded their usual roles, such as, for example, reading circles where issues that crossed domestic and gender lines were discussed:

> Women from these circles attended cultural events and demonstrations together. Participating in these activities allowed them to express themselves, and thus contributed to the development of more equal relationships with their husbands. Furthermore, the circles stimulated leadership skills and the desire to learn (McGee Deutsch, 2017: 306).

In any case, the participation of women in cultural, charitable and, in particular, Zionist associations and organizations helped them cross the divide from the private to the public sphere. In this transition, they acquired new skills and competencies, including writing and public speaking abilities, political activism and the organization and management of institutions. These activities also granted women prestige and recognition, regardless of the status of their husbands (McGee Deutsch, 2017).

The fact is that, as the 20th century progressed, many of the obstacles for Latin American women were demolished. The incorporation of women into the education system—there are currently more women than men enrolled at schools in most of the region—contributed to broadening their social expectations and life plans. The female workforce progressively increased, with women aspiring to greater autonomy and leadership, and participating more actively in community life. Meanwhile, new rights for women were recognized and the norms that had regulated family life and the public sphere changed.

With this, it became clear that the established belief of an insurmountable divide between public and private space—and the asso-

ciation of these spaces with respective masculine and feminine characteristics—responded to historical and cultural factors but could not be attributed to biological differences between the sexes. In the words of Dora Barrancos: "It was possible to overcome the barrier, or at the very least weaken it, particularly since public and private are relatively recent concepts which were coined to interpret phenomena from the 19th century onwards" (Barrancos, 2007: 327).

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA TODAY: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

It is evident that **gender norms** not only influenced the individual lives and subjectivities of men and women, they also permeated the design of social institutions. Though cultural patterns and social practices have been transformed, certain beliefs and habits that limit women's equal participation persist, and they are concepts that take time to overcome. We are in a moment of transition. While gender relations are changing and we can celebrate achievements in terms of rights and representation, more changes are still needed in certain areas: gender hierarchies persist in a wide range of institutions, from international organizations to schools and universities, businesses and social organizations (UNESCO, 2017).

According to a 2016 ECLAC report analyzing women's participation in government agencies, the percentage of women on ministerial cabinets in Latin America in 2014 was 23.9%, and only 12.9% in the Caribbean. In the business sector, there is also a greater concentration of men in leadership and managerial positions, with men occupying 64% of these positions and women, only 36% on average (DEGIOT, 2017). The trend is reversed when analyzing female participation in social and personal service positions, where 65% of positions are occupied by

> Organizations that have achieved the greatest change with respect to the issue are those that established affirmative action measures. If we compare the representation of women in the legislatures of Latin America and the Caribbean in 1977, when they held 3% of positions, with the current 28.3% (ECLAC, 2016), it is evident that the laws establishing quotas for women's participation contributed to the region taking steps towards greater equality.

women and 35% by men. These are highly female-dominated sectors, which can be explained by a particular social and cultural organization that is shaped by gender differences: service and care of others is considered a "feminine" characteristic.

Likewise, positions within public and private organizations are deeply gendered: when women are appointed to management posts, these are almost always administrative or related to day-to-day oversight, and are less likely to involve strategic decisions or financial management. Meanwhile, women usually fill lower-ranking positions (secretaries, receptionists) with few opportunities for promotion (England, 2005).

In recent decades, organizations that have achieved the greatest change with respect to the issue are those that established affirmative action measures. If we compare the representation of women in the legislatures of Latin America and the Caribbean in 1977, when they held 3% of positions, with the current 28.3%[4] (ECLAC, 2016), it is evident that the laws establishing quotas for women's participation represented a step towards greater equality in the region.

The inclusion of women in legislatures not only meant a fairer makeup that is closer to that of society, it also contributed to broadening the legislative agenda on social issues. This included, for example, the approval and enactment of laws on gender violence, sexual and reproductive health, human trafficking, labor equality, equity measures in organizations, unions and/or companies, parenthood, gender equality and non-discrimination, among others. A study carried out in Argentina showed that it was the women legislators who spearheaded these projects and ensured that the social demands for greater equality resonated in the houses of legislature (Caminotti, 2015). The entry of women into political positions in turn contributed to the development of figures that, in some cases, came to occupy positions of executive power in some countries.

Despite these advances, in the Jewish community organizations, according to Sara Winkowski (among others), female leadership significantly lags:

Today, we have had women presidents of several countries, women ministers, women prime ministers, etc. Yet in Jewish communities, the change is much slower. The myth that only the men are capable of fundamental decision-making persists. It is a myth that will take time to change, but we trust that, with the intelligence and tenacity of women, it can be achieved.

This limitation not only contrasts with the educational achievements of women but also with the evidence that indicates women perform very well in positions of power (Hernandez Bark et al., 2015).

INSTRUMENTS FOR GREATER EQUALITY: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Against this backdrop, transforming the formal and informal patterns and rules is key to changing the historical exclusion of women from decision-making positions. In the international arena, a corpus of declarations, conventions and agreements has contributed to progress in this direction.

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in 1948, to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the member states of the United Nations have shown the will to promote equality between men and women in all areas of society. Over time, the search for equality and the efforts to overcome all types of discrimination have led to increasingly precise and fine-tuned formulations regarding the actions that are needed to achieve this objective. This has occurred both from the conceptual point of view and in terms of a programmatic approach.

What do the international agreements say? How do they reflect the aim of achieving gender equality? To what extent do the proposed actions go beyond the jurisdictions of nations and challenge the very practices of civil society institutions (such as the ones addressed in this document)?

From the human rights perspective, international treaties establish a minimum standard for a dignified life

---

[4] The regional average hides strong differences between the different nations. For example, while that percentage reaches 29.9% in Latin America, for the Caribbean region it decreases to 16.9% (ECLAC, 2016).

and make explicit the need to protect specific rights, without distinction of any kind, such as sex, marital status, etc. Thus, not only do education, health and general welfare form part of these instruments, so do autonomy, economic and political participation in agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, sanctioned between 1948 and 1966.[5] Years later, based on the recognition of specific gender-based discrimination, the United Nations sanctioned the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. The document was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, and ratified by all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.[6]

The CEDAW was the first international, binding document to identify the areas where discrimination occurs (by action or omission) on the basis of sex and promote mechanisms for overcoming it.[7] Among other measures, the CEDAW **urges nations to take affirmative action measures** for effective equality between men and women. What does affirmative action mean? According to CEDAW, it means "

> ... all appropriate measures [...] to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms..."

This principle was central to the adoption of female quota laws in legislatures to guarantee the political participation of women in decision-making bodies. In 2018, 17 Latin American countries have these types of laws in place: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela. In the Caribbean, Guyana and Haiti have a quota. Nine of these countries adopted additional measures to guarantee parity (50-50%) in the makeup of electoral lists (Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela) (UN Women, 2018). Unlike quotas, parity is not a transitional measure, but an objective as an ongoing principle of political activity (Ferreira, 2015).

The Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in the city of Beijing between September 4-15, 1995, put the exercise of power, decision-making and women's participation in the economy at the center of the women's rights agenda. The Beijing Platform for Action (as it is often called) identified the traditional workings of political parties and government structures, which do not always have specific mechanisms to promote female leadership, as one of the obstacles to women's participation in the "public" sphere. It is clear that these workings are not limited to the entities indicated at Beijing, but are also present in civil society organizations, business and governments.

In 2015, to build on the legacy of the Millennium Development Goals, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a collection of 17 global goals that member states are committed to achieving by 2030. This agenda rests on the Sustainable Development Goals.[8]

Gender equality is a key part of this agreement since it is both an objective all its own and a decisive component for achieving results in the collection of the SDGs by 2030. Each of the 17 goals, in turn, has a list of targets to achieve and indicators have been defined in

---

[5] These three documents make up what is known as the International Bill of Human Rights, which provided the basis for all subsequent conventions on Human Rights.

[6] Available at: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en

[7] The CEDAW understands discrimination against women as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."(Article 1 of the CEDAW).

[8] See: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

> **The division of territories and responsibilities in the Jewish community of Latin America places borders and limits on the lives of women and men, establishing hierarchies in which the most important posts were reserved for men, who were recognized as having more rights and higher levels of autonomy than their female contemporaries.**

order to monitor and track compliance with these agreements. Among these objectives, **the SDGs call for ensuring "women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life."**

In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries have also vowed to strengthen women's leadership and participation. In this regard, it is important to note the role of the Regional Conferences on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).[9] Since the first of these conferences, held in Havana, Cuba, in 1977, until the most recent conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 2016, a true regional gender agenda has taken shape. This has influenced government in the region, with states committing to policy changes.

During the last three regional conferences, advances were made on how the historical differentiation between public and private has prevented women from exercising their rights, fundamentally by limiting their full and effective participation in public and on the job market due to their domestic responsibilities.

In summary, at international and regional conferences, the countries of Latin America have expressed their willingness to work towards equal opportunity for men and women and promote women's participation in decision-making bodies. From the perspective of the agreements reached at these events, promoting women's empowerment is an ethical imperative on the path towards equal

participation based on two principles of human rights: equality and non-discrimination. This aspiration is not limited to state efforts but involves society as a whole and its institutions. Coordination between stakeholders and the design and implementation of strategies and specific actions are essential to making gender equality a reality, not merely a declaration of principles.

What is the state of affairs of gender equality at Jewish community organizations in the region? How do gender relations affect community organizations? The next section analyzes gender distribution on the boards of directors and leadership roles of a total of 202 community organizations.

GENDER MAP OF THE LATIN AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

Who currently holds positions of leadership in Latin American Jewish community organizations? Beyond each organization's internal dynamics, which require case studies for their analysis, building a gender map of Jewish organizations yields significant quantitative information. While women do hold decision-making positions, as revealed herein, these vary according to the type of organization and according to the administrative and management tasks associated with the post. In qualitative terms, the map allows us to hypothesize on the current situation and analyze the level of success at undoing historical patterns of women's limited participation and leadership in the community.

---

[9] Conferences like these bring together government officials from across the region along with representatives from feminist organizations and international agencies. Their objective is to for member states to reach agreements on action plans that guarantee women's rights. No other region has a similar instance.

Out of a total of 202 community organizations,[10] women hold a little over one-fifth of board positions, as can be observed on Chart 1 (22.3%). Yet women only hold executive committee roles (president, vice-president, executive director or dean - Chart 2) at 13% of these organizations.

This indicates that even on the boards of directors, men continue to hold the majority of posts with the greatest responsibility and influence in decision-making.[11]

Chart 3 provides a more detailed analysis on the influence women have in decision-making, revealing that women are also underrepresented in posts in which money and financial resources are handled (treasurer, assistant treasurer, auditor). The growing influence of women can be seen in certain decision-making posts on boards but mostly within a specific area (department chair, etc.) or in posts with less influence in decision-making (spokesperson, councilors, advisors). Chart 3 shows the degree of men's and women's participation based on their level of influence (where 1 is the maximum and 4 corresponds to spokespeople, etc.) in Latin American Jewish community organizations.

This regrouping reveals that women's participation in posts with the highest levels of responsibility is just 12.1% and rises to only 16.5% in posts that involve money-handling responsibilities. Women hold nearly one-third of posts as department heads and chairs (29.3%) that involve the day-to-day oversight of programs and projects, and 22.1% of posts with the least influence in decision-making.

As a result, it can be concluded that if the representation of women is low on boards of directors of community organizations, it is even lower in posts that involve greater responsibility and influence in decision-making.

As we have seen, historically women have participated more in institutions involved in welfare and social development. This trend is also evident in the current participation patterns. At institutions dedicated to welfare, education and religious/community activities, women hold one-fourth of the posts on boards of directors, while in sports and social organizations, or political entities, their participation is notably lower.

Chart 4 shows that the organizations with the most women on executive committees are those dedicated to

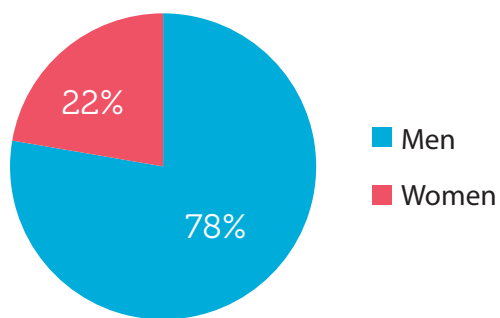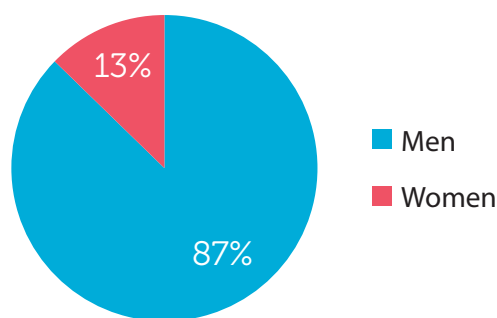Chart 1. Percentage of Men and Women on Boards of Directors

Chart 2. Percentage of Men and Women on Executive Committees

Chart 3. Percentage of Men and Women on Boards of Directors based on Level of Influence
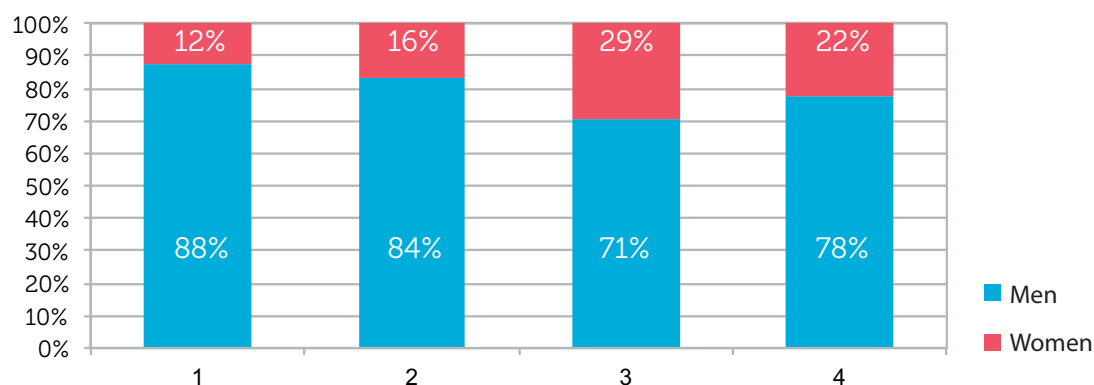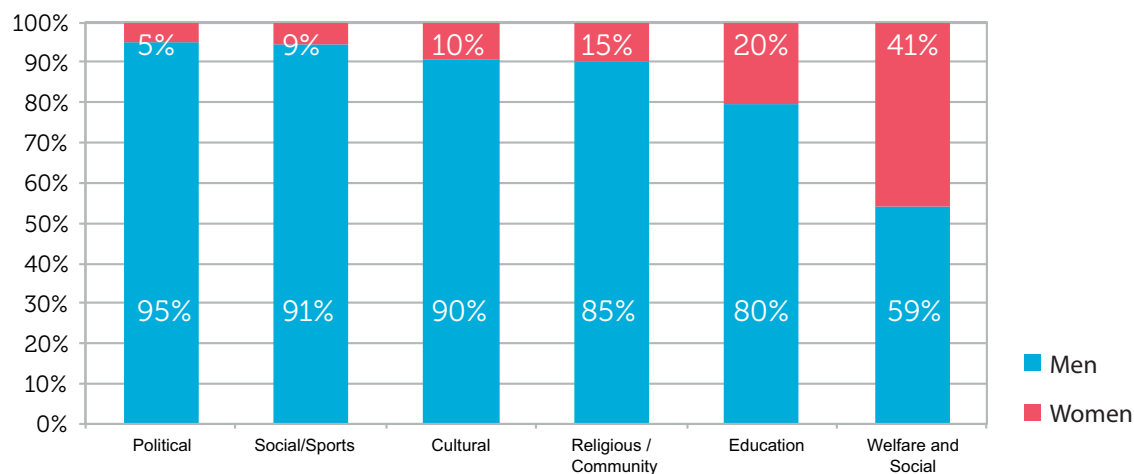

Chart 4. Percentage of Men and Women on Executive Committees, According to Institution Type

*Fuente: Elaboración propia, con base a datos relevados por JDC, 2018.*

social welfare (41.7%), while women's presence on these committees is very low in political (4.8%), cultural (9.5%) and religious (9.6%) organizations, and social-sports clubs (15%).

According to this analysis, there is a pattern of women's participation in certain areas but their presence in executive roles continues to be low. In general terms, women continue to participate a bit more in social areas (education and social welfare). However, even when women's presence on boards of directors and in executive posts in both sectors is relatively high, men's presence is still higher. The Jewish community's schools are private institutions that manage not only a good deal of financial resources, but significant symbolic ones as well. This probably explains the high percen-

tage of men in the top posts at these institutions. In the case of social welfare entities (Chart 5), if the focus is on those that work with vulnerable populations (children, families and senior citizens living in poverty), women's presence in executive posts increases considerably. However, most homes for the elderly are headed and managed by a man. As with schools and universities, nursing homes are institutions that manage a good deal of resources and where market dynamics come into play.

The breakdown reveals that in a range of Jewish institutions, including political, cultural and religious/community organizations, men remain predominant. In general terms, these are institutions with a degree of political power (i.e. entities that interact with govern-

Chart 5. Percentage of Men and Women on Executive Committees, According to Institution Subtype
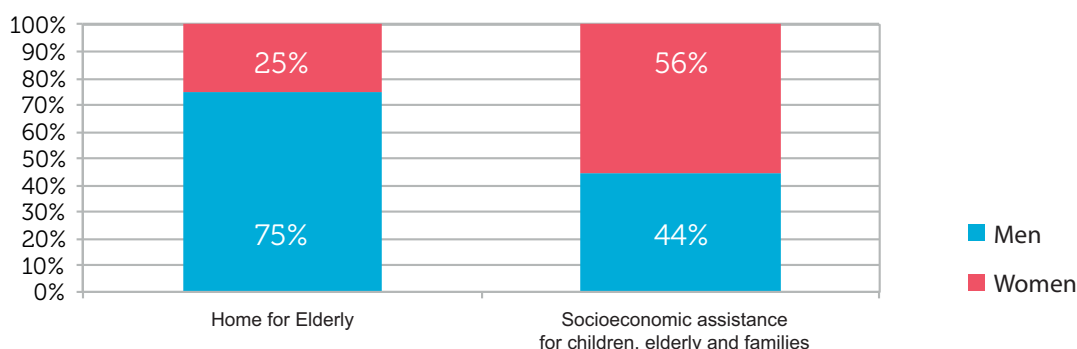
ment on the community's behalf) and/or significant symbolic power. As Sandra McGee Deutsch noted for the first half of the 20th century, men continue to lead the most prestigious organizations.

Jewish community organizations are behind the times in terms of women's leadership, despite the educational achievements and labor force participation of women. They are not the only ones. As noted, a lack of women in leadership roles is the norm at a great number of public and private institutions. Maintaining the status quo, however, supposes maintaining an implicit message that as long as invisible but palpable discrimination mechanisms continue, the new generations will be dissuaded from working towards equal participation. How can this data be interpreted?

GLASS CEILING, INDIVIDUAL LIMITATIONS OR "GENDERED" ORGANIZATIONS?

How can we comprehend the dynamics and mechanisms that limit equal participation in decision-making areas? In general terms, researchers point to different factors that influence gender equality in this regard. While some refer to the structural conditions of organizations that are "gendered," others mention invisible segregation mechanisms that are replicated in multiple ways, and still others refer to male and/or female behaviors that reproduce the status quo of inequality.

Une of the most commonly used concepts to explain

the exclusion of women in powerful positions is the "glass ceiling" (Kanter, 1977). This refers to how hard it is for women to move up in the organizations where they work. It reveals that even when there are no explicit barriers to promotion, women hit a limit that is as hard as cement but invisible like glass.

According to Mabel Burin (2009), there are different obstacles that contribute to building this glass ceiling. These include:

■ Household responsibilities and childcare: because these tasks mainly fall to women in the sexual division of labor, it is difficult for them to meet the demands that high-ranking posts at jobs and social organizations require.

■ Level of demands: as they make their way higher up the ladder, women are required to present more credentials than men (job experience, degrees, etc.)

■ Social stereotypes: women are attributed with feelings of fear or a lack of interest in promotions to prominent positions.

■ The perception women have of themselves: on an androcentric labor market, the absence of women with whom to identify can cause insecurity and fears.

There are aspects related to organizational dynamics, others associated with the tensions women face when getting out in the public realm without a corresponding redistribution of the responsibility in the private realm (Wainerman, 2003; Faur, 2014). Finally, there are also

The representation of women is low on boards of directors of community organizations and/or even lower in posts that involve greater responsibility and influence in decision-making. The organizations with more women in the top management posts are those dedicated to social welfare (41.7%), while women's representation in such roles is very low in political (4.8%), cultural (9.5%) and religious (9.6%) organizations, and social-sports clubs (15%).

subjective determinants for both women and men. Some of these issues merit further study.

On the one hand, social, labor, and government organizations establish guidelines and dynamics that—nearly always inadvertently—reproduce gender inequality by establishing different roles for men and women, building different gender-based expectations, and facilitating or preventing the participation of male or female stakeholders. From this perspective, the problem is the rationale at work in the institutions (Connell, 2006).

As "public" organizations and decision-making realms have been designed for men, they correspond to an androcentric format. The assumption is that the men involved in these institutions have no household responsibilities or daily family-related tasks. They are flexible enough to attend evening meetings and have an "uninterrupted" career, not one with pauses for the cycles of family life that often characterize women's careers (Cerrutti and Amerijeiras, 2016).

Despite studies indicating that women are more predisposed to types of innovative leadership (Hernández Bark et. al., 2015), the demands of full-time/full-life participation are incompatible with family needs or with the responsibilities socially assigned to women. Despite the fact that household tasks in Latin America are often outsourced—through the hiring of domestic workers—women continue to be responsible for running of household. In addition, in

terms of charity-related tasks, women are also considered more apt. Oftentimes these beliefs operate in an invisible way, even among those who hold them as true (Faur and Zamberlin, 2008; Braun et. al., 2016). In this way, prejudice, stereotypes and also day-to-day practices related to gender roles represent one of the key dimensions to understanding the inequalities that continue to exist.

On the other hand, there are other reasons for the lack of **women** in executive positions associated with the expectations, aspirations and behaviors of women (and also of men). This focus leads us to understand the problem of women's participation in leadership roles as a question of personal incentives (and obstacles). The fact that few women hold important posts—combined with a gender socialization that does not foster in women the qualities a leader requires—reduces women's desire for powerful positions. Community professionals and leaders like Mónica Cullucar (Argentina), Anabella Jaroslavsky (Venezuela), and Raquel Celnik (Colombia) all discuss the inhibitions and insecurity women face, as well as the acceptance of "imposed scripts" that need to be analyzed and reconfigured.[12]

Some of these investigations revealed that women are unlikely to pursue certain roles they associate with men (Williams and Best, 1990). In addition, Latin America suffers from deeply rooted biases that when women hold leadership roles, they "masculinize" (Faur and Grimson, 2016).

Finally, there are restrictions related to men's behavior in

---

[12] See the Spanish language interviews with these leaders at www.mujeryjudaísmo.com

the face of women's progress. Men's resistance to women's involvement has been the norm since the origin of the region's Jewish community institutions.

> Men support women's groups to a certain degree, but in general are opposed to women achieving autonomy and power; in addition, they tend to subordinate women's objectives to their own. Gender biases marginalize many capable women in Jewish institutional life, thus depriving the institution of valuable talents (...) Until the middle of the 1950s, women had yet to overcome this discrimination (McGee Deutsch, 2017: 361).

Barbro Dahlbom-Hall sheds light on this issue when she notes that one of the greatest obstacles women face in terms of holding leadership positions is related to men's fear of strong women. In the words of the Swedish expert,

> "Men who are not afraid of women usually pose no problem to them, but there are too many who unconsciously feel threatened by them" (2004).

In addition, there are authors who indicate the persistence of a certain logic of "male homosocial bonds" (Kimmel, 1997) to refer to the way in which men tend to form work groups with their male peers, albeit unconsciously. The repetition of this habit gradually leads to a rationale of alliances that contributes to maintaining male privilege, given that women participate to a lesser extent. Male resistances can also be challenged. As Anabella Jaroslavsky notes,

> ...men have to make room for us but that will only be achieved if we act consistently and our voice begins to be heard in all spheres. We cannot simply sit back and wait for them to cede this place (...) It's up to women to take a leadership role and exercise this leadership. **I feel like we cannot rely on the scripts and values that have been imposed on us without analyzing** them to see how we can adapt them to our respective realities.

In any case, these spaces are "not closed off." Mónica Cullucar describes it in these words:

> Places aren't given away, you need to take them. Experiences are open and depend on willingness. You have to **dare** to do it, you've got to want it, you've got to be ready to **seize an opportunity...**

> When women began attending the university, that was a first. When women started driving cars, that was a first as well. Now it's common to see women in higher education, driving a car, or doing almost any other activity that used to be almost exclusively done by men...

As efforts are made to alter the status quo, it is clear that individual factors (related to the subjectivities of men and women) and structural factors (related to institutional rationales) need to be taken as a whole.

TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN JEWISH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In a context of constant transformation, one in which international bodies reach agreements on increasing women's participation in decision making, the new generations defy existing gender mandates and stereotypes. Women are increasingly ready to take over areas they were historically prevented from entering, and Jewish community organizations have challenges of their own to face in this regard.

How can Jewish community institutions respond to this new political and cultural milieu? This section focuses on some mechanisms and strategies that can contribute to increasing the number of women in leadership roles, thus preparing institutions for this change, taking advantage of women's potential in the community, and developing best practices in community organizations.

The prejudice, stereotypes and also day-to-day practices related to gender roles represent one of the key dimensions to understanding the inequalities that continue to exist.

El establecimiento de medidas de acción afirmativa, como cuotas para la participación femenina fijas o proporcionales, resultan dispositivos de gran efectividad para superar la brecha de participación y ampliar la agenda de las organizaciones. De manera complementaria, se debe trabajar en el fortalecimiento de las capacidades de liderazgo de las mujeres y de la reflexión por parte de los hombres.

In terms of actions to incorporate women on decision-making bodies, it is evident that affirmative action measures have been greatly effective at closing the participation gap and expanding the agenda of organizations. These measures can include fixed quotas for women's participation (with an aim to achieving parity, or 50%) or proportional participation (depending on the gender makeup of the organization in question). At the same time, it is necessary to work to strengthen the leadership capacities of women and the reflection capacities of men. Below we suggest some complementary strategies.

1. DEVELOP INNOVATIVE INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES:

a. Establish quotas for women's participation.

b. Invite women guests to contribute to meetings of the board of directors; their participation serves as a learning opportunity.

c. Review organizational structures, including the analysis of posts by gender and capacity for promotion, meeting hours, time off for family care, and other invisible mechanisms that can affect women's promotions (and naturalize men's presence at higher level posts).

2. ASSURE CONTINUOUS TRAINING BASED ON A SELECTION OF FORMATS:

a. Continuous training opportunities for leaders that guarantee women's participation.

b. Training on women's leadership that allow for reflection on subjective and organizational barriers, mechanisms for reproducing or overcoming gender inequalities at organizations, etc.

c. The formation of women's groups within the organizations that accompany leadership management.

d. Workshops for women and men to address issues related to models of masculinity/femininity and their effects on organizational development.

Each of these proposals requires sustained commitments and must be appropriated by the bodies that put them into practice. Finally, it is necessary to encourage men and women to reflect on these dynamics and agree on potential ways of overcoming them. To achieve this, participative methodologies should be introduced at workshops that promote gender awareness and serve as a source of information for systematic research into men's and women's representations of leadership positions and gender dynamics. These methodologies are critical not only to empower women but also to promote greater reflection among men. In short, they are essential for all stakeholders to take ownership of these affirmative measures and recognize their value.

Finally, and in order to enhance the analysis, qualitative research is needed in order to specifically establish the mechanisms that prevent women's participation from equaling that of men. •

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barbro Dahlbom-Hall (2004). "Interview with Ms. Barbro Dahlbom-Hall" in The UN Women's Newsletter, Vol. 8, No. 4: October, November, December 2004.

Barrancos, Dora (2007). Mujeres en la sociedad argentina, Buenos Aires, Sudamericana.

Barylka, Ether (2018). Judaísmo en femenino, Madrid, Nagrela Editores. ISBN-10: 8494016091 ISBN-13: 978-8494016097.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2010). La dominación masculina, Barcelona, Editorial Anagrama.

Braun, S.; Stegmann, S.; Hernandez Bark, A. S.; Junker, N. M. y van Dick, R. (2017). "Think manager-think male, think follower-think female: Gender bias in implicit followership theories", in Journal of Applied Social Psychology 2017, 47:377-388. Available at: https:// onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jasp.12445

Burin, Mabel (2009). "Techo de cristal", in Gamba, Susana (ed.), Diccionario de estudios de género y feminismos, Buenos Aires, Editorial Biblos.

Caminotti, Mariana (2015). Más allá de los números: Las mujeres transforman el Poder Legislativo en América Latina y el Caribe, United Nations Development Programme. ISBN 978-9962-688-34-1

CEPAL (2016). Autonomía de las mujeres e igualdad en la Agenda de Desarrollo Sostenible. Consulted in April 2018 at: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/40633/4/S1601248_es.pdf

CEPAL (2017). 40 años de Agenda Regional de Género. Consulted in April 2018 at: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/40333/7/S1700760_es.pdf

Cerrutti, Marcela y Ameijeiras, Analía (2016). "La intermitencia en la participación laboral de las mujeres veinte años después: el caso del Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires", en VI Congreso Latinoamericano de Población, Foz de Iguazú.

Connell, Raewyn (2006). "Glass Ceilings or Gendered Institutions? Mapping the Gender Regimes of Public Sector Worksites", in "Essays on Equity, Gender, and Diversity", Public Administration Review, November-December 2006.

Argentine Office for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunity at the Workplace (DEGIOT) (2017). Las mujeres en el mundo del trabajo. Consulted in April 2018 at: https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/informe_ctio_documentodetrabajo.pdf

Faur, Eleonor and Grimson, Alejandro (2016). Mitomanías de los sexos. Las ideas del siglo XX sobre el amor, el deseo y el poder que necesitamos desechar para vivir en el siglo XXI, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI.

Faur, Eleonor (2014). El cuidado infantil en el siglo XXI. Mujeres malabaristas en una sociedad desigual, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI.

Faur, Eleonor y Zamberlin, Nina (2008). "Gramáticas de género en el mundo laboral. Perspectivas de trabajadoras y trabajadores en cuatro ramas del sector productivo del área metropolitana de Buenos Aires", in M. Novick, S. Rojo y V. Castillo (eds.), El trabajo femenino en la post-convertibilidad. Argentina 2003-2007, Santiago de Chile, CEPAL-GTZ, Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social.

Ferreira Rubio, Delia Matilde (2015). "Financiamiento de los partidos políticos desde una perspectiva de género", in Revista Derecho Electoral No. 20, San José, second semester [online]
http://www.tse.go.cr/revista/art/20/ferreira_rubio.pdf

Gamba, Susana (2009). "Estudios de Género/Perspectiva de Género", in S. Gamba (coord.), Diccionario de estudios de género y feminismos, Buenos Aires, Editorial Biblos.

Hernandez Bark, Alina; Escartín Solanelles, Jorge; Schuh, Sebastian; Dick, Rolf. (2015). "Who Leads More and Why? A Mediation Model from Gender to Leadership Role Occupancy", in Journal of Business Ethics, 10.1007/s10551-015-2642-0.

Kanter, Rosabeth (1977). Men and women of the corporation, New York, Basic Books.

Kimmel, Michael S. (1997). "Homofobia, temor, vergüenza y silencio en la identidad masculina", en Teresa Valdés y José Olavarría (eds.), Masculinidad/es. Poder y crisis, Ediciones de las Mujeres No. 24, Santiago de Chile, Isis Internacional y FLACSO Chile.

McGee Deutsch, Sandra (2017). Cruzar fronteras, reclamar una nación. Historia de las mujeres judías argentinas 1880-1955, 1st edition, Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

UN WOMEN (2014). Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Consulted in April 2018 at:
http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/off/a--20.en

ONU Mujeres (2018). Guía Estratégica, La participación política de las mujeres en Guatemala: una mirada hacia la paridad democrática. Available at:
http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20americas/documentos/publicaciones/2018/4/participacion%20politica%20de%20las%20mujeres%20en%20guatemala.pdf?la=es&vs=4924

Scott, J. (1996). "El género: Una categoría útil para el análisis histórico", in Marta Lamas (ed.), El género: la construcción cultural de la diferencia sexual, México, PUEG, pp. 265-302.

UNESCO (2017). "Gender inequality persists in leadership positions", in Gender Review. Meeting our Commitments to gender equality in education, Paris, UNESCO. Consulted in April 2018 at: https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/References_GenderReview2018.pdf

Wainerman, C.H. (ed.) (2003). Familia, trabajo y género, Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Williams, Christine (1992). "The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the Female Professions", in Kimmel, M. (ed.) (2000), The Gendered Society Reader, New York, Oxford University Press.

Williams, J. E. and Best, D. L. (1990a). Measuring Sex Stereotypes: A Multination Study, (rev. ed.), Beverly Hills, CA, Sage Publications.

Williams, J. E. and Best, D. L. (1990b). Sex and Psyche: Gender and Self-Concepts Viewed Cross-Culturally, Newbury Park, CA, Sage Publications.

APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

THE DATABASE

The database was the result of a preliminary analysis of 368 Jewish organizations in the region, the majority from Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela, on the participation of men and women on the boards of directors. In March and April, 2018, the JDC conducted a survey that yielded information on the ratio of men to women on the boards at 202 organizations.

With the goal of obtaining more detailed information i.e. on the different posts held by men and women on the boards at these organizations, a new survey was conducted in July and August. For this study, information was obtained from the institutional websites of the organizations. However, the information required for this analysis was not always available, reducing the total to 107 organizations. However, in both of the surveys, the proportion of organizations by country remained relatively stable.

With the exception of Chart 1, the rest of the percentages and graphs referred to in this document are taken from the 107 organizations surveyed in July-August 2018. In this regard, it is important to clarify that the results presented here did not come from a census of organizations or a statistical selection of cases; therefore, the numbers should be considered only indicative of trends at such organizations.

VARIABLES USED IN THE ANALYSIS

In this article, we proposed to analyze the variation in the proportion of men and women on boards of directors based on a series of variables we considered relevant, one of which is "level of influence in the position." Given that the organizations surveyed have different authority structures, we decided to regroup them based on common elements we considered key in order to complete a comparison with a manageable number of options. The regrouping yielded the following categories:

"Level 1". Level 1 includes executive committee roles such as president, vice-president, dean, vice-dean, principal, vice-principal, director, vice-director. In all cases, these were the posts with the highest level of authority at the institutions. In some cases, these were unpaid positions and in others (principal, directors, etc.), paid positions.

"Level 2". These positions involve money handling, specifically the posts of treasurer, chief deputy treasurer, deputy treasurer, assistant treasurer, auditor and alternate auditor.

"Level 3". Includes positions with responsibility over a certain area or specific department within organizations such as general chair and all other department heads or chairs i.e. youth chair or culture director).

"Level 4". Includes all positions with minor influence on decision-making such as spokesperson, alternate spokesperson, advisor and counselor.

Another important variable has been the "type of institution" which refers to the type of activity the organizations do. To define the categories, criteria were agreed on with JDC representatives, who established the following principles:

- political: organizations that represent the Jewish people in dealings with government and the State of Israel.
- cultural: organizations dedicated to cultural activities, including museums and sites of memory.
- religious and community: the category includes both temples and community spaces.
- social/sports: activities whose main activity is to promote sports activities in the community.
- education: organizations mainly dedicated to teaching work.
- social welfare: organizations mainly dedicated to actions that promote welfare and improved living conditions among vulnerable social groups. These group as in turn classified either as "homes for the elderly" or "entities that work with vulnerable populations (children, adolescents and families)".

JDC LATIN AMERICAN OFFICE

Sergio Widder
Regional Director

Mónica Epelbaum
CFO - Chief Financial Officer

Fabiana Itzcovich
Program Coordinator

Fabiana Grosman
Leatid Director

Maia Magnetto
Women's and Leadership Program

Micaela Bursztein
Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Georgina Catvin
Design and Communications

Ariela Bodner
Executive Assistant

Eduardo Veriansky
Accountant

Lionel Duszkin
Administrative/Accounting Assistant

ABOUT US

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) is the world's largest Jewish humanitarian assistance organization. Active today in some 70 countries, JDC works to rescue Jews in danger, provide immediate relief to those in need, and create lasting connections to Jewish life. In Israel, JDC helps overcome the social challenges of its most vulnerable citizens. Its global programs extend beyond the Jewish community.

The JDC works with local communities and organizations to create and develop initiatives that effectively address their specific needs while building and consolidating their own capacities.

To learn more, visit www.jdc.org.

American Jewish
Joint Distribution
Committee