



BILATERAL COOPERATION THROUGH THE INTER-AMERICAN NETWORK FOR LABOR ADMINISTRATION (RIAL)

RESULTS OF THE FIFTEENTH CALL FOR PROPOSALS

March 31st, 2022

INTRODUCTION

Bilateral cooperation, which has also taken the form of south-south and triangular cooperation, has been one of the most powerful tools of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) in supporting the institutional strengthening of Ministries of Labor. This tool functions through open Calls where Ministries of Labor present previously negotiated proposals to the Technical Secretariat (Dpt. of Human Development, Education and Employment/SEDI/OAS) consisting of specialized technical assistance. Until the 12th call (2019), the activities were carried out face-to-face by means of on-site visits or expert visits according to the place where they were held. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic required rethinking the channels of cooperation and opened a new exchange channel: virtual cooperations.

To date, there have been 120 bilateral cooperation activities of the RIAL carried out with excellent impacts; 7 of them took place virtually.

The 15th RIAL Call for Bilateral Cooperation was open between January 20 and March 10, 2022, and 53 proposals were received, involving more than 15 Ministries of Labor. Out of these, 46 proposals met all the requirements and entered the selection process.

This document presents the selected proposals, details the selection criteria and the highlights of this Call, reviews the proposals received and the topics they cover, and presents next steps to undertake the virtual cooperation activities.

SELECTED PROPOSALS

In the 15th Call, 5 cooperation proposals were selected, in accordance with what was decided by IACML authorities.

Table No. 1 - Selected Proposals

<i>Requesting Ministry</i>	<i>Providing Ministry</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Peru	Paraguay	Strengthening digital skills for employability
Ecuador	Colombia	National System of Professional Qualifications
Uruguay	Argentina	Gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace
Bolivia	Panama	Economic empowerment of women through cooperatives
Guatemala	Argentina	Training of labor inspectors in the identification of labor exploitation



The proposals were evaluated and selected using the following criteria:

- Pertinence and timeliness of the cooperation – the justification/rationale for the activity shows why cooperation is required at the time. The needs and challenges of the beneficiary institution, as well as the expected results are explicit.
- Clarity of objectives
- Expected final product is clear and achievable through a virtual activity**
- Explicit commitment of the involved parties
- Degree of relevance of the topic for the IACML
- Priority was given to proposals arising from activities of the RIAL and the IACML.

In the first round of evaluation, each of the proposals was graded based on these criteria and from a strictly technical standpoint. This grading put special emphasis on the potential impact of the cooperation; that is, on proposals where a concrete result could be anticipated that would result in improved capacities and improvements in the operations of Ministries of Labor. Special consideration was also given to whether the final product could be achieved through a virtual cooperation. Subsequently, the most solid proposals were taken into consideration; it was verified that there was broad representation of countries, and special consideration was given to relatively less-developed countries.

**It should be noted that in this Call, a new field related to a final product was included in the Request Form, in which the Ministries were asked to: “Indicate the specific final product that your Ministry hopes to achieve as a result of this cooperation. The final product may include a project, policy proposal, work plan, report, among others”. This is due to lessons learned from previous cooperations; it has been shown that being clear about the expected product contributes to achieving concrete impacts through the cooperation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS CALL

- More proposals were received than the average of previous calls, 53 proposals vs. 46 on average, and involving a large number of countries. Also, the vast majority of proposals met all the requirements (87%) and entered the evaluation and selection process.
- The proposals presented covered a large number of the issues addressed by the labor administrations, as can be seen in Table No. 3. The number of requests received under Employment (22) issues stands out, reflecting the widespread concern in the region for professional training, skilling and re-skilling, the development of digital skills and greater articulation between the world of education and the world of work, in line with the priorities expressed in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Buenos Aires, adopted in the XXI Inter-American Conference of Ministries of Labor of the OAS in 2021. Within the Employment issues, proposals related to gender equality also stand out (5). Lastly, it is worth mentioning that, for the first time in these calls, several proposals were received regarding the eradication of forced labor and/or labor exploitation (3).
- In the proposals submitted, more than 90% of the provider institutions were identified through the RIAL Portfolio of Programs, which is online and open to the public at www.rialnet.org.



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- The Technical Secretariat held a bilingual webinar to address questions about the 15th Call, to assist countries in presenting their proposals and help them find the best partner for their cooperation requests (Matchmaking process). Although similar seminars have been held in previous calls, this time a very high participation with more than 160 officials from 25 countries stands out. For reference, the 14th Call seminar in 2021 was attended by 80 officials from 14 countries.
- Among the Ministries of Labor that submitted proposals in this Call are some that in previous years have received virtual technical assistance, which reflects that their institutions have found this modality pertinent and useful.
- Finally, among the selected proposals, it is important to highlight that the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security of Paraguay participates for the first time as a provider institution, after having received cooperation through the RIAL on 9 occasions, and that the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Uruguay is a requesting institution for the first time, after having provided technical advice on 4 occasions. Congratulations to both Ministries.

PORTFOLIO OF PROGRAMS

The RIAL Portfolio of Programs was the tool through which most Ministries identified their partners; as it was highlighted previously, 90% of the providing institutions were identified through this platform. This shows the value of this database, as well as the importance of keeping it updated. It is important to highlight that the Portfolio currently counts with almost 200 programs from a great majority of the Ministries of Labor in the region and covering all of the areas of labor administration. All Ministries are welcome to upload new programs and update exiting ones. Inquiries regarding this matter can be addressed to trabajo@oas.org.

PROPOSALS RECEIVED

Table No.2 shows that 46 complete proposals were received involving 15 Ministries of Labor: 4 requesting, 3 providing, and 8 simultaneously requesting and providing.



Table No. 2 - Proposals received by country

Propuestas recibidas por país <i>Proposals received by country</i>			
	<i>Min.Trabajo Labor Min.</i>	<i>Solicitante Requestor</i>	<i>Proveedor Provider*</i>
1	Argentina	2	22
2	Bolivia	5	
3	Canada		3
4	Colombia	2	4
5	Chile		2
6	Costa Rica		1
7	Ecuador	5	3
8	El Salvador	2	
9	Guatemala	3	2
10	Honduras	6	
11	Panama	4	1
12	Paraguay	1	6
13	Peru	8	1
14	Dominican Republic	7	
15	Uruguay	1	1
TOTAL		46	46
Incomplete proposals (did not enter the selection process)		7	7
TOTAL		53	53

Of the 53 proposals received, 46 complied with the established requirements: 1) Request form, 2) Letter from the requesting institution and 3) Letter from the providing institution, and as such were entered into the selection process. The topics of the proposals received and selected can be found in Table 3.



Table No. 3 - Proposals received and selected by topic

Tema / Subtema Topic / Subtopic	Propuestas recibidas / Proposals received	Propuestas seleccionadas / Proposals selected
Trabajo / Labor	15	1
Inspección del Trabajo / <i>Labor Inspection</i>	2	
Trabajo Forzoso u Obligatorio / <i>Forced Labor</i>	3	1
Salud y Seguridad Ocupacional / <i>Occupational Safety and Health</i>	3	
Trabajo infantil / <i>Child Labor</i>	6	
Condiciones de Trabajo / <i>Working conditions</i>	1	
Empleo / Employment	22	4
Empleo Juvenil / <i>Youth Employment</i>	2	
Equidad de género / <i>Gender equity</i>	5	2
Formación profesional y certificación de competencias / <i>Professional Training and Skills Certification</i>	9	2
Políticas y programas de empleo / <i>Employment policies and programs</i>	2	
Inclusión Laboral de Grupos en Situación de Vulnerabilidad / <i>Labor Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations</i>	2	
Servicios de Empleo / <i>Employment Services</i>	2	
Relaciones Laborales / Labor Relations	5	
Organizaciones Sociales / <i>Social organizations</i>	3	
Registro Sindical / <i>Labor Union Registration</i>	2	
Gestión interna / Operations and management	4	
Organización y funcionamiento / <i>Operations and management</i>	2	
Cooperación Internacional / <i>International Cooperation</i>	1	
Planeación estratégica / <i>Strategic Planning</i>	1	
TOTAL	46	5

NEXT STEPS AND EXECUTION OF THE VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

The activities of this 15th Call must take place virtually between the months of May to December 2022 and those that cannot be completed in this period will be cancelled.

The Technical Secretariat (DHDEE/SEDI/OAS) will send formal letters to the selected Ministries and their counterparts to initiate the planning of each activity, jointly define the dates of the sessions, the contents to be addressed, and the steps to prepare the final product.



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The contents of each activity must respond to the objectives and the final product proposed by the requesting institution and the strengths of the providing institution; therefore, it should be drafted by the technical staff of both institutions that will participate in the activity, in coordination with the RIAL focal point of each Ministry and the Technical Secretariat.

The activities will be carried out using the "ZOOM" platform of the OAS Department of Human Development, Education and Employment. The Technical Secretariat will provide technical and logistical support for the activities.

Ministries are encouraged to explore the possibility of carrying out the cooperation activities that were not selected. The RIAL/OAS Secretariat will explore the possibility of carrying out other activities, such as virtual meetings and hemispheric dialogues, to address the cooperation needs raised in this Call for Proposals that were not selected.

All information about this Call for proposals is available on the RIAL website: www.rialnet.org, which is frequently updated.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions:

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