



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

RESULTS OF THE 17th CALL FOR PROPOSALS

April 1, 2024

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 (Dept. 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 cooperation, which has demonstrated that effective and impactful collaboration between Ministries can also be achieved virtually. Since 2023, the possibility of carrying out in-person cooperations was opened on an exceptional basis and only for those cases in which the need for it could be justified.

To date, there have been 133 bilateral cooperation activities of the RIAL carried out with excellent results; 19 of them took place virtually.

The 17th RIAL Call for Bilateral Cooperation was open between January 15 and March 7, 2024, and 56 proposals were received, involving 20 Ministries of Labor. Out of these, 55 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.

SELECTED PROPOSALS

In the 17th Call, 5 cooperation proposals were selected.

Table No. 1 - Selected Proposals

<i>Requesting Ministry</i>	<i>Providing Ministry</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Bahamas	Argentina	Drone Integration in Labor Inspections
Bolivia	Mexico	Inspection protocols
Costa Rica	Chile	Psychosocial Risks at Work
El Salvador	Colombia	Labor Inclusion Model
Peru	Panama	Vocational Guidance and Employment Program



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. Subsequently, the most solid proposals were taken into consideration; it was verified that there was a broad representation of countries, and special consideration was given to relatively less-developed countries.

** It should be noted that in this Call the possibility of carrying out a bilateral cooperation in-situ was once again opened, exceptionally and only for those cases in which the need for an in-person activity was justified, i.e. it was demonstrated that the objectives could not be achieved virtually. To this end, the Request Form included the following instruction in the objectives section: "if you consider the objectives can only be achieved through an in-person cooperation, please justify." Regardless of the answer to this question, the Secretariat evaluated the objectives and the final product of all the proposals received considering the possibility of fulfilling them in virtual cooperations. All the selected cooperations in the 17th Call, with the exception of the Bahamas-Argentina cooperation, can achieve the expected product through virtual cooperations, following the methodology already established by the RIAL/OAS.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS CALL

- More Ministries than the average of previous calls participated, with 20 countries involved vs. 18 on average. This increase highlights the value and relevance that the RIAL/OAS bilateral cooperation has at the regional level. Also, there was an increase in compliance with requirements compared to previous editions; the vast majority of the proposals (98%) met all the requirements and entered the evaluation and selection process.
- The proposals presented covered a broad number of issues addressed by the labor administrations, as can be seen in Table No. 3. On this occasion, the number of requests received under the "Labor" topic (29) stands out, reflecting the wide concern in the region for strengthening labor inspection and implementing good practices on issues related to working conditions and occupational health and safety, 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. Additionally, regarding “Employment” (20) issues, the interest in employment services, information systems, and labor inclusion was evident. Also worthy to highlight is the increase in the proposals received related to gender equity (7) compared to previous years, which reaffirms the importance and work of the RIAL/GENDER in the region. These requests will be addressed through said network.

- In the proposals submitted, over 91% of the provider institutions were identified through the RIAL Portfolio of Programs, which is online and open to the public at www.rialnet.org.
- The Technical Secretariat held a bilingual webinar to address questions about the 17th Call, to assist countries in presenting their proposals and help them find the best partner for their cooperation requests (Matchmaking process). This time, we highlight the participation of more than 80 government officers from 20 countries and CEATAL.
- Among the Ministries of Labor that submitted proposals in this Call, there are some that have received virtual technical assistance in previous years, which reflects that their institutions have found this modality pertinent and useful.
- Finally, among the selected proposals, it is worth noting that the Ministry of Labor and the Public Service of The Bahamas will receive a bilateral cooperation again, after 13 years, from the Secretariat of Labor, Employment and Social Security of Argentina. Furthermore, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare of El Salvador will have a virtual cooperation for the first time, collaborating with the Ministry of Labor of Colombia. Congratulations to these Ministries, as well as to all the other ones being selected.

PORTFOLIO OF PROGRAMS

The RIAL Portfolio of Programs was the tool through which most Ministries identified their partners; as it was highlighted previously, 91% 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 nearly 200 programs from a great majority of the Ministries of Labor in the region and covering all 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 56 proposals were received involving 20 Ministries of Labor: 6 requesting, 7 providing, and 7 simultaneously requesting and providing.

Table No. 2 - Proposals received by country

Propuestas recibidas por país <i>Proposals received by country</i>			
	<i>Min.Trabajo</i> <i>Labor Min.</i>	<i>Solicitante</i> <i>Requestor</i>	<i>Proveedor</i> <i>Provider*</i>
1	Argentina		13
2	Bahamas	2	
3	Belize	1	
4	Bolivia	5	
5	Brasil		1
6	Canada		1
7	Chile		9
8	Colombia	7	11
9	Costa Rica	1	1
10	Dominican Republic	3	
11	Ecuador	8	3
12	El Salvador	8	
13	Guatemala	6	2
14	Honduras	1	1
15	Mexico	3	4
16	Panama		3
17	Paraguay		2
18	Peru	10	4
19	St. Kitts and Nevis	1	
20	United States		1
	TOTAL	56	56



Of the 56 proposals received, 55 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	29	3
Condiciones de trabajo / <i>Working conditions</i>	2	
Cumplimiento y difusión de la legislación laboral / <i>Enforcement and awareness of labor legislation</i>	2	
Informalidad laboral y el trabajo no registrado / <i>Informality and non-registered work</i>	3	
Inspección del Trabajo / <i>Labor Inspection</i>	12	2
Salud y Seguridad Ocupacional / <i>Occupational Safety and Health</i>	7	1
Trabajo infantil / <i>Child Labor</i>	3	
Empleo / Employment	21	2
Equidad de género / <i>Gender equity</i>	7	
Formación profesional y certificación de competencias / <i>Professional Training and Skills Certification</i>	2	1
Inclusión Laboral de Grupos en Situación de Vulnerabilidad / <i>Labor Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations</i>	3	1
Migración Laboral / <i>Labor Migration</i>	2	
Servicios de Empleo / <i>Employment Services</i>	4	
Sistemas de información y observatorios de mercado laboral / <i>Labor market information systems and observatories</i>	3	
Relaciones Laborales / Labor Relations	6	0
Negociación colectiva y libertad sindical / <i>Collective bargaining and freedom of association</i>	2	
Organizaciones sociales / <i>Social organizations</i>	1	
Solución de conflictos individuales y colectivos / <i>Individual and collective conflict resolution</i>	3	
TOTAL	56	5



NEXT STEPS AND EXECUTION OF THE VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

The activities of this 17th Call must take place virtually between the months of May to December 2024 and those that cannot be completed in this period will be cancelled. The cooperation Bahamas-Argentina, given its objectives and expected outcome, will consist of an on-site visit.

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.

The agenda and contents of each cooperation activity must respond to the objectives and the final product proposed by the requesting institution and the strengths of the providing institution; therefore, they should be drafted by the technical staff of both institutions, 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: http://rialnet.org/?q=en/Bilateral_Cooperation, which is frequently updated.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions:

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