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CREATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE
NETWORK OF GENDER FOCAL POINTS - RIAL/GENDER

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Background

Between 2020 and 2021, the Organization of American States (OAS) promoted hemispheric dialogues between the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor of the Americas through the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) and with the support of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM). These dialogues are added to the multiple actions that the OAS has carried out to strengthen the institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of Labor and, through this, contribute to gender equality in the world of work. This is a regional commitment, as labor authorities have stated at the OAS Inter-American Conference of Labor Ministers (IACML).

During three hemispheric dialogues (November 2020, May and November 2021), the importance of having a cooperation network between the gender units or areas of the Ministries was evident and, specifically during the 3rd dialogue, the participants explicitly expressed their interest in formally forming this network. Based on this, the IACML Technical Secretariat presented the idea to the Conference authorities at its Planning Meeting in February 2022, which was well received. Therefore, the Work Plan 2022-2024 of the IACML contains as one of its concrete actions: “Establish a network of gender focal points within the Ministries of Labor, as a specialized network of the RIAL”.

The decision to incorporate the constitution of the network of gender focal points in the Work Plan 2022-2024 responds, among others, to the following commitments assumed by the Ministries of Labor in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Buenos Aires, adopted at the XXI IACML in 2021:

“We commit to continue promoting and deepening gender mainstreaming in labor and employment programs and policies, and ministerial structures” (Art. 12 of the Declaration of Buenos Aires)

“Continue deepening the institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of Labor as a means to achieve gender equality. This involves institutional strengthening of gender units” (Art. 7, i) of the Plan of Action of Buenos Aires

During the 4th Hemispheric Dialogue, held on March 15, 2022, RIAL/GENDER was formally launched. The gender units discussed the objectives and main lines of action for the network under the premise of collectively building its foundations. The constituent document of the Network, included in Annex 4 of this report, is the result of this exercise.

Description

The Network of Gender Focal Points in Ministries of Labor is a specialized community of practice of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL); as such, it is named RIAL/GENDER. Its purpose is to contribute to achieving full gender equality in the labor market.

The general objective of RIAL/GENDER is to strengthen the gender units or areas within the Ministries of Labor of the Americas, and their specific objectives are as follows:

- Share best practices, experiences, lessons learned and evaluations on gender mainstreaming from Ministries of Labor.
- Share relevant information and resources to keep the Units updated on different topics of interest, this includes specialized publications, training offers, and advances in public policies and/or legislation, among others.
- Discuss and analyze priority issues and relevant trends for gender equality in the world of work.
- Have a permanent channel of support, consultation, and communication between peers.
- Share legislation and regulation, and work to strengthen national and regional legal frameworks on gender equality at work.

To achieve its objectives, the RIAL/GENDER has all the tools that are specific to the RIAL and that can be focused on gender issues, in addition to other tools exclusive to the gender focal points: 1) Portfolio of Programs, 2) Hemispheric Workshops, 3) Bilateral Cooperation, 4) Virtual Dialogues, 5) Dedicated Channel of Communication, 6) Membership Database, 7) Documentation Center, and 8) Informative Newsletter.

Annex 4 of this report contains the constituent document of the RIAL/GENERO, which details each of the Network's tools, as well as its composition and operation.

Progress and achievements

Within the framework of RIAL/GENDER the following progress has been made:

- **Identification and incorporation of programs into the online Portfolio of Programs, available on the RIAL website (www.rialnet.org).** The Portfolio includes a database and search engine for programs, and has a designated section for "Gender Equity" initiatives. Each focal point has a personalized username and password to publish in the Portfolio their programs that must have shown results, have lessons learned and, ideally, have been positively evaluated. In addition, these are programs that the Ministries wish to share with each other.
- **Definition of policy recommendations, analysis and exchange of experiences on priority issues through virtual dialogues among gender focal points.** In each of these dialogues, successes, challenges, lessons learned and policy recommendations have been identified on priority issues for gender equality and for strengthening gender units. The Virtual Dialogues

held, both those that originated the RIAL/GENDER in 2020 and 2021, as well as those that followed its creation, are the following:

- 1st Hemispheric Dialogue to advance the institutionalization of Gender in the Ministries of Labor, held on November 20, 2020
- 2nd Hemispheric Dialogue between Gender Units of Ministries of Labor: “Telework and caregiving co-responsibility for a gender-responsive recovery.”, held on May 26, 2021
- 3rd Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor: Towards a Manual or “ABC” for Gender Units, held on November 30, 2021
- 4th Hemispheric Gender Dialogue between Ministries of Labor, held on March 15, 2022
- 5th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Toward a gender-responsive labor inspection”, held on September 20, 2022
- 6th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Toward a paid domestic work with rights”, held on March 15, 2023
- 7th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Mainstreaming gender in training and employment strategies: Closing occupational gaps”, held on July 26, 2023

The participation of an average of 27 Ministries of Labor in each of these virtual Dialogues is noteworthy, which highlights their usefulness and relevance. In addition to ministry officials, representatives of workers and employers have participated, as well as representatives of international organizations, including the ILO, ECLAC, the IDB and EUROsocial.

The results and conclusions of all the dialogues, with the exception of the 7th Dialogue, whose document is currently under review, are included as Annexes to this report. Each of these documents contains valuable elements for advancing gender equality in the world of work.

- **List of gender focal points in Ministries of Labor updated and online.** The RIAL website hosts the list of RIAL/GENDER members, including name and contact information. This list is updated on an ongoing basis.
- **Direct inter-ministerial technical advice with concrete results, through bilateral cooperation.** Between 2022 and 2023, the following cooperation and results are highlighted within the RIAL/GENDER:
 - **Cooperation between the Ministries of Labor of Uruguay and Argentina on the prevention of gender-based violence.** As a result of this cooperation, the Ministry of Labor of Uruguay prepared and launched in March 2023 the "Manual to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence at work", incorporating lessons learned and recommendations from the Argentine experience. Specialists from Argentina's

Ministry of Labor provided training to Uruguay, as well as detailed feedback on the contents of the Manual.

- **Cooperation between the Ministries of Labor of Bolivia and Panama on strengthening women's cooperatives.** During 2022, the Ministry of Labor of Panama shared its initiatives to support the development of cooperatives, in particular the "Changing Lives Axis", with the Ministry of Labor of Bolivia. At the end of the exchange, Bolivia developed a "Technical Assistance Program for potential productive women's cooperative groups".
- **Cooperation between the Ministries of Labor of Colombia and Uruguay on paid domestic work.** This cooperation is underway, and it is expected that, at the end of it, the Colombian Ministry of Labor will have a multidimensional strategy to progressively achieve the formalization of domestic work, incorporating the lessons learned from Uruguay's experience.
- **Design, systematization and launch of the Repository of Actions on Paid Domestic Work.** This Repository was developed in conjunction with the governments of the Americas and launched in July 2023 and hosted on the RIAL website. It showcases the actions that the Ministries of Labor of the region have implemented to dignify, formalize, and achieve the full exercise of rights in paid domestic work. The Repository contains information on legislation, policies, and strategies implemented, classified into five major areas of intervention: 1) Training and professionalization, 2) Dissemination and awareness raising, 3) Inspection, 4) Social security coverage, and 5) Alliances with social actors. This Repository is a direct outcome of the 6th virtual gender dialogue and the RIAL/GENDER.
- **Preparation of the "Manual for Gender Units in the Ministries of Labor - ABC for their creation and operation", as a result of the first virtual dialogues.** The Manual seeks to strengthen existing units and support the creation of new ones; as such, it includes: justification for the existence and creation of gender units, modalities of gender institutionalization, conditions for the operation of the units, functions, lines of action and strategic objectives. It also contains a model action plan for a Gender Unit.
- **Access to massive online courses (MOOCs).** As part of RIAL/GENDER and thanks to the partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Network's membership had access to two self-directed short courses (MOOCs) on: "Introduction to Gender-Based Analysis Plus (ABG+)" and "Introduction and basic concepts on gender, diversity and human rights".
- **Design, production and launch of the virtual Course on Gender Violence at Work on the Educational Portal of the Americas,** launched in October 2021 in Spanish and in March 2022 in English. It has a duration of 10 weeks with synchronous and asynchronous activities and the permanent accompaniment of a tutor. Its contents were developed in competition with experts from the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and are divided into 4 modules: 1) Conceptual framework of gender violence at work; 2) the role of the Ministries of Labor in the identification, prevention, attention, and punishment of gender violence; 3) good practices to prevent and address violence against women at work; and 4) conclusions and evaluation. 75 officials from 27 Ministries of Labor in the Americas have been trained.

ANNEXES

1. Main outcomes and next steps of the 1st Hemispheric Dialogue to advance the institutionalization of Gender in the Ministries of Labor, held on November 20th, 2020
2. Main Conclusions and Results of the 2nd Hemispheric Dialogue between Gender Units of Ministries of Labor: “Telework and caregiving co-responsibility for a gender-responsive recovery.”, held on May 26, 2021
3. Main Conclusions and Outcomes of the 3rd Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor: Towards a Manual or “ABC” for Gender Units, held on November 30, 2021
4. Constitutive document of The Network of Gender Focal Points within the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration – RIAL/GENDER - Product of the 4th Hemispheric Gender Dialogue between Ministries of Labor, held on March 15, 2022
5. Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the 5th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Toward a gender-responsive labor inspection”, held on September 20th, 2022
6. Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the 6th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Toward a paid domestic work with rights”, held on March 15, 2023

ANNEX 1

Main outcomes and next steps of the 1st Hemispheric Dialogue to advance the institutionalization of Gender in the Ministries of Labor, held on November 20th 2020



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1st Hemispheric Dialogue to advance the institutionalization of Gender in the Ministries of Labor

MAIN OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

November 20th, 2020 – Virtual Dialogue

Main outcomes:

- Excellent and very relevant level of engagement, with delegations of 30 governments of the Americas, represented by Directors and officers responsible for gender units or areas in Ministries of Labor. Some delegations were joined by the Permanent Missions of their countries to the OAS.
- Review and verification, by all delegations, of the difficult situation of women in the labor market, whose levels of unemployment, inactivity and informality have increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The delegates coincided in their concern regarding the deepening of gender gaps throughout the region.
- Verification of positive progress in both the institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of labor and the role of the gender units/areas in the response to the crisis generated by COVID-19, according to the interventions made during the dialogue and results of the live surveys (see relevant document). Recognition that the advancements achieved must be consolidated and protected, and that the fusion of gender units with areas in charge of different segments of the population (among them, vulnerable populations), could weaken the gender units. Delegations noted the importance of gender units having a clear mission and clear functions.
- Presentation of main conclusions and recommendations of the “Study on the Institutionalization of a Gender Approach in the Ministries of Labor of the Americas: An update”, and enrichment of those recommendations, as per the points below.
- Affirmation of the interest and willingness to strengthen cooperation among gender units / areas, as a means to strengthen their initiatives and organization.

- Identification of topics of great interest to continue cooperation and training:
 - Domestic Work and ratification of ILO Convention 189.
 - Care systems / shared responsibility. Difference was made between sharing care tasks and a shared responsibility in the broader sense (State, family, civil society).
 - Wage gap. One of the ways to address this topic is through seals and distinctions for companies committed to gender equity.
 - Formalization strategies; recognition and increase of social security coverage for unpaid work.
 - Violence and harassment in the workplace. Need to ratify ILO Convention 190 was mentioned.
 - Gender dimension of telework and work from home.
 - Increased vulnerabilities and discrimination in the labor market due to COVID-19 faced by certain women, including Afro-descendant women, indigenous women, and women with disabilities, as well as women in rural areas.

- Call to continue supporting the institutional strengthening of gender units / areas. The idea to produce a Gender Unit Manual or A-B-C was mentioned, which could specify the general objectives and functions of gender units / areas.

- Generally, the Ministries of Labor of the Caribbean have gender focal points that receive instructions from the National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women to achieve gender mainstreaming. Some Ministries in the Caribbean are interested in evaluating the creation of a gender unit, for which they would require technical support.

- Presentation and exchange on various programs and initiatives that target women in general, or some groups in particular (domestic work, for instance), as well as on recent developments regarding gender mainstreaming in the Ministries.

- Expression of willingness to share some initiatives and strategies. Canada offered to share its experience on public policy and gender; Mexico and Colombia mentioned willingness to share practices on seals and accreditation of good labor practices.

Next steps:

- Preparation and publication of the final version of the Study on “Institutionalization of a Gender Approach in the Ministries of Labor of the Americas: An Update”, will include the inputs and recommendations that emerged during the Dialogue. The Study will be renamed to include “Balance of a Decade”.

- Uploading of the gender units/areas initiatives and programs in the RIAL Portfolio of Programs (www.rialnet.org) under the theme “Gender Equity”. The Secretariat will send instructions on how to upload programs to each delegation shortly.

- The Secretariat proposed the creation of a Ministries of Labor gender focal point Network, as a specialized sub-network of the RIAL, which was generally supported by delegations. The Secretariat will share this idea with the authorities of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), explore funding sources, and initiate some actions in the near future.
- Planning of a second hemispheric dialogue to be held in February or March, 2021, focused in a particular theme to be decided with the gender units/areas. This would be an activity of the gender focal point Network.
- The Secretariat and CIM will continue to work in the virtual course on Gender-based Violence at Work, hosted by the Educational Portal of the Americas, and to be available during the first semester of 2021.

ANNEX 2

Main outcomes and next steps of the 2nd Hemispheric Dialogue between Gender Units of Ministries of Labor: “Telework and caregiving co-responsibility for a gender-responsive recovery.”, held on May 26, 2021



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2nd Hemispheric Dialogue between Gender Units of Ministries of Labor

"Telework and caregiving co-responsibility for a gender-responsive recovery."

May 26, 2021 – Virtual

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RESULTS

Introduction

The Hemispheric Dialogue "Telework and caregiving co-responsibility for a gender-responsive recovery" held on May 26, 2021, brought together representatives of 26 Ministries of Labor of the Americas, the Ministry of Labor of Spain, and, as observers, specialists from the International Labor Organization, the Inter-American Development Bank, and EUROsociAL. It was jointly organized by the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), with resources from the Government of Canada for the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL).

Similar to the first Hemispheric Dialogue, held in November 2020, this event responded to the following commitments of the OAS Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor: effective reduction in the disparities that exist between men and women in the world of work; eradicate discrimination, harassment, and violence based on gender; and "continue to work towards mainstreaming a gender perspective into employment and labor policies, as well as into our ministries' operations and structures" (Arts. 23 and 24, Declaration of Bridgetown, adopted by the XX IACML in 2017).

During the event both regulations and responses from governments were shared; there were also reflections on the issues discussed. Increased legislation and / or adoption of regulations on telework in the last year was identified as a common denominator. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic and the containment measures have revealed the urgency and validity of this working modality, as well as the need to regulate it. Accordingly, this is the right time to discuss and seek a common ground to ensure that telework does not become another venue for gender discrimination but, rather, fuels positive changes in gender relations within the framework of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, both in the workplace and at home. This was precisely the objective of this hemispheric dialogue.



Telework and caregiving co-responsibility: two issues to be dealt with simultaneously.

One of the great advantages of telework is the opportunity to reconcile and balance work and personal responsibilities; this is true, in principle, but it carries risks since that **"balance" starts from an unequal distribution of work at home**. This unequal burden originated in the care crisis that began to develop in the 1980s, with increasing numbers of women entering into the region's labor force. Unfortunately, the increasing participation of women in the labor market has not been matched either by structural changes -at the level of social, labor, economic and business policies-, nor domestically, in order to promote a balance between productive and reproductive tasks.

Therefore, the discussion and regulation on telework must necessarily contemplate the issue of caregiving co-responsibilities, including investments in infrastructure and caregiving services for minors and dependent persons. **These are issues that must be dealt with simultaneously and with the participation of multiple actors** given that they require actions from the state, within families and within companies. This is essential for achieving telework policies that instead of widening gender gaps contribute to equality.

Reflections and challenges identified.

- During the Dialogue, there was broad agreement that gender equality and the particular situation of women in telework should be analyzed and addressed under a **broader framework of equal opportunities** given that it is mediated by cultural, political and social vectors beyond the workplace.
- The importance of **Social Dialogue** - between government, workers, and employers – was highlighted. It should be part of the design and development of telework policy and the promotion of caregiving co-responsibility. Social Dialogue allows policies to have greater legitimacy, sustainability, and impact. As a promising practice and a product of collective bargaining, the incorporation of clauses related to work-life balance in collective labor agreements was mentioned.
- The need for more **analysis, diagnosis, and statistics** to help design and develop evidence-based telework policies was recognized. In order for enacted laws and formulated policies to be sustainable, the need for diagnoses about the ongoing reality in different countries in relation to telework was repeatedly raised.



- The **differentiated impact** of telework on women and men is a key issue that needs to be considered in diagnoses/analysis. Surveys should incorporate, in particular, how tasks are being distributed within the household and the time that both women and men spend on them. On the other hand, special care is needed in the interpretation of the studies carried out under the new conditions. For example, the methodology of time-use surveys must be adapted to consider the overlaps in time resulting from performing paid and unpaid work simultaneously at home.
- Alongside the gaps that exist between men and women at work, **gaps also exist amongst women** in different types of professions, with respect to the ability to engage in telework, and this also needs to be addressed. In this regard, the vertical segregation by gender of the labor market makes it possible to foresee that those in management and leadership positions, in which the presence of women is lower, are more likely to be able to telework compared to administrative staff where the presence of women is greater. On the other hand, by horizontal segregation, there are more working women than men who can telework in feminized activities such as education, service activities (administrative, financial), trade, or health.
- In the Dialogue there was also a crucial agreement on the need to continue generating a **cultural change** that avoids the perpetuation of gender roles and stereotypes in relation to caregiving responsibility. It was recognized that telework legislation and policies can have a positive or negative impact on this cultural change. Training on gender sensitivity for both workers and employers will also play a role in achieving this change.
- Concerns about **gender-based violence** occupied a prominent place given the increased violence experienced in situations of confinement during the pandemic, and the new types of violence derived from telework including online harassment or excessive demands for work.
- During the Dialogue some **risks and potential negative consequences** of telework for women were identified:
 - There is a risk that women become "invisible" in the workplace and, to the extent that they become more absent in the spaces of decision-making and power, and/or see their professional and career development affected.



- Reduced access to vocational training for women and possible widening of the wage gap.
- Risks linked to health and well-being, such as increased situations of harassment and violence, and mental health problems due to stress.
- In a generic way and in response to the points mentioned above, the possibility that telework might become a tool of indirect discrimination against women was mentioned.
- Unable to reconcile paid and unpaid work within the household, some women have abandoned their jobs - this has been seen during the pandemic - and have become inactive in the labor market. This is a latent risk that could generate significant setbacks in female labor participation.

In light of the above, there was broad consensus on the need to ensure that telework regulations and their implementation **do not lead to a setback in the distribution of family responsibilities, nor a setback in the situation of women at work**, and their participation in the labor market. It was stressed that concrete actions must be taken so that telework does not result in the generation of **unwanted effects such as becoming a new obstacle in both the access and permanence** of women in the labor market, given the difficulty in reconciling work and caregiving tasks.

Elements for a gender-responsive telework policy

The experiences of Argentina and Spain, which have developed legislation on telework with a gender perspective and co-responsibility, were presented during the event and this framed the exchange of experiences among the different delegations. From all the interventions, a series of recommendations emerged on the elements that a telework policy should have in order to promote equality, as well as some aspects that, although are strictly outside a telework policy, are essential to mitigate the risks mentioned above and to level the playing field between men and women in this working modality.

a) Elements that a gender-responsive telework policy must contain:

- **Equality and non-discrimination** - Equal rights between those who work remotely and those who do so in person in terms of working hours, compensation, professional development, and opportunities and access to training and development.



- **Voluntariness and reversibility** – The worker must be able to freely decide both if and when to enter and when to leave this working modality.
- **Flexibility** - Possibility of making working hours more flexible for those who care for people who require specific assistance.
- **Right to disconnect** - Explicitly contemplate this right given that in telework there is a tendency to work longer hours and without established schedules, prompting a greater risk of job exhaustion.
- **Distribution of caregiving tasks** - Explicit mention of the distribution of caregiving tasks and promoting co-responsible participation of men in them.
- **Addressing new forms of harassment** – Introduce the prevention and treatment of new forms of sexual and workplace harassment caused by this modality, such as online harassment.
- **Awareness** – Include an awareness component on issues of co-responsibility and cultural change for both supervisors and supervisees.
- **Differentiated impact** – Include impact assessment with a gender perspective.
- **Measures to ensure compliance** – The need to sensitize and train the labor inspectorate to properly oversee this working modality was mentioned.

b) **Conditions or pre-requisites for a telework policy to promote gender equality**

In addition to specific elements of telework legislation and regulation, some conditions or prerequisites that are necessary for this working modality to effectively impact gender equality and caregiving co-responsibility were also identified during the dialogue. These are:

- **Caregiving services** – The most important requirement for telework to work equally for men and women is availability, accessibility, and affordability of caregiving services for children and dependents.
- **Connectivity** - Ensure equal connectivity conditions and take steps to mitigate the initial connectivity gap that affects mostly women, particularly rural women.



- **Training in technology and digital skills** – Ensure training in new technologies and development of digital skills, where currently there is a marked lag among women.

c) **Other recommendations**

Some additional actions that are valuable for progress towards gender equality and caregiving co-responsibility were mentioned.

- **Training and awareness-raising actions** – It is important to train and sensitize all sectors of society on equality at work to promote cultural changes that allow progress in caregiving co-responsibility.
- **Guidelines for occupational health and psychosocial aspects in telework.** Studies show that there is an increased risk to women's physical and mental health due to the overload of work at home, the difficulty of establishing caregiving co-responsibility tasks and combining paid and unpaid work simultaneously. One of the measures proposed was the development of guidelines for occupational health and psychosocial aspects in telework.
- **Actions for the prevention, treatment, and punishment of gender-based violence.** This is a priority issue considering the increase in gender-based violence during the pandemic and confinement, as well as the existence of new types of violence derived from telework, such as online harassment.

Future actions

This Dialogue responds to commitments of the OAS Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor of with respect to gender equality at work and to achieve greater institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of Labor of the Americas. Here are some future actions regarding this issue:

- 1) **Continue the systematization and exchange on telework through the RIAL/OAS:** A space will be dedicated on the RIAL website to systematize legislation and regulations on telework, and exchange and cooperation among the Ministries of Labor in this area will continue to be promoted; for example, during the annual call for proposals for bilateral cooperation of the RIAL.



- 2) **Submit recommendations to the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML):**
The recommendations that emerged from this dialogue will be shared with the Ministers of Labor of the region with the goal of informing actions at the national and regional levels on gender-responsive telework policies.
- 3) **Creation of a Manual or ABC for Gender Units:** This was a specific recommendation of the First Hemispheric Dialogue in November 2020 in order to support the creation of new units and the consolidation of existing ones. The Manual will contain justification, model objectives, functions and general activities of the gender units, and a matrix of a typical work plan for a unit. The preliminary version of such Manual will be sent for consultation to the gender units during the month of July.
- 4) **Virtual course on gender-based violence at work:** Developed jointly with the Inter-American Commission of Women and the Educational Portal of the Americas will be available to officials of the Ministries of Labor in the second half of 2021, after having conducted a pilot course. The course is composed of three main modules: Conceptual framework of gender-based violence in the workplace; the role of the Ministries of Labor in identifying, preventing, and addressing gender-based violence; and good practices to prevent and eliminate violence against women in the workplace. It will last 8 weeks, with an average commitment of 5 hours per week.
- 5) **Third Hemispheric Dialogue between the Gender Units of the Ministries of Labor in November, 2021:** In this second Dialogue it was possible to confirm once again the interest of the gender units in continuing to exchange experiences, analyzing and proposing recommendations on the issues that are most pressing for their institutional work. The third Dialogue will be held in November, and its theme will be defined again in consultation with the gender units.

ANNEX 3

Main Conclusions and Outcomes of the 3rd Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor: Towards a Manual or “ABC” for Gender Units, held on November 30, 2021



Third Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor

Towards a Manual or “ABC” for Gender Units

November 30, 2021 – Virtual

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND OUTCOMES

Full event information is available at http://rialnet.org/?q=en/third_gender_dialogue

1. Introduction and background

The Hemispheric Dialogue “Towards a Manual or ABC for Gender Units,” held on November 30, 2021, brought together representatives from 24 Ministries of Labor of the Americas and was jointly organized by the OAS Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), with funding from the Government of Canada for the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL).

The Ministers of Labor of the Americas, in the framework of the OAS Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), have over the years made a growing commitment to gender mainstreaming and institutionalization within their operations, policies, and programs, recognizing them as a means to achieve gender equality in the labor market. The RIAL/OAS and the CIM have undertaken various efforts to support the ministries in this regard, including technical studies, participatory gender assessments, regional and subregional workshops, and bilateral cooperation activities.

As part of their efforts to strengthen the institutionalization of gender within Ministries of Labor against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the RIAL/OAS and the CIM organized two earlier Hemispheric Dialogues (November 2020 and May 2021). The objective of those events was to promote reflection and exchanges on the current situation, emerging issues, and challenges and opportunities for gender units or areas in light of the pandemic. In the first dialogue, the emphasis was on the operation of gender units during the pandemic, while the second focused on teleworking and joint responsibility for care in order to achieve a gender-responsive recovery.

During the discussions, the idea emerged of developing a tool to support the creation and consolidation of gender units in the Ministries. In response to that demand, the RIAL/OAS Technical Secretariat prepared a preliminary version of a Manual or “ABC” to support the institutionalization and mainstreaming of the gender perspective, which was made available to the member states for their comments. At the Third Hemispheric Dialogue, the main results and conclusions of which are

contained in this document, the Manual was reviewed and finalized. It provided also the opportunity to have an open conversation about the current status of gender units and options for expanding gender cooperation and collaboration in our region.

2. Main conclusions

The dialogue was conducted in two parts. The first involved a dialogue on the operation of gender units almost two years after the start of the pandemic: whether they have been strengthened or weakened, what are the main challenges they face today, and what initiatives they are currently pursuing. The second part focused on revising and offering comments on the Manual or ABC for Gender Units.

1) The situation of gender units today, almost two years after the start of the pandemic

During this first part of the dialogue, it became clear that in most cases, the gender units, areas, focal points, or mechanisms within ministries of labor have been able to strengthen themselves in spite of the pressures imposed by the pandemic. In a survey conducted through the platform, 62.5% of respondents said their unit or area had strengthened during this period, 20.8% said it had remained the same, and 16.7% said it had weakened.

Much of that strengthening was due to the implementation of new programs and projects by the units, intended mainly to address the difficult situation faced by the region's women as a result of the pandemic.

The following are some of the areas in which gender units are working two years into the pandemic, together with the main challenges they foresee:

- One of the main lines of action that the gender units said they were working on is to **continue gender mainstreaming in their ministries** so that all programs and projects are gender-responsive and thus contribute to the recovery of women's employment:
 - o The delegation of Brazil spoke of the creation of a working group, within the framework of the National Labor Council, to deal specifically with the issue of women and employment. This tripartite mechanism's actions will include updating statistics on women's participation in the labor market, compiling good national and international practices, and updating legislation.
 - o The delegation of Chile highlighted the growing importance of the Gender Unit in its Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, especially the incorporation of a mainstreamed gender perspective in its actions and programs over recent months. As an example, it referred to the *IFE Laboral* subsidy, as an incentive for workers to be formally employed, directly granting them a monthly benefit for the employment relationship they begin (new employment contract), for three months.

- The Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare of Mexico is currently making efforts to contribute to gender equity through its different programs. As an example, it referred to the “Youth Building the Future” (its youth employment program), in which 57% of the beneficiaries are women.
- As one of their strategies to promote the recovery of female employment, some delegations reported that they were making efforts to promote **the inclusion of women in sectors primarily dominated by men**. Some specific strategies are:
 - In Argentina, the *Choferas* program to promote the hiring of women in the transport sector. The delegate of the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security noted that similar efforts were being made in other industries, such as the maritime sector.
 - Canada reported that one of its strategies is the “Women in Construction Fund” to promote the entry of women into that sector. The delegate stressed that one of the main challenges identified is that female-dominated sectors are often perceived as less valuable, so they are working with leaders of male-led sectors to create friendlier environments for women’s inclusion.
 - The Government of Chile, through the Gender Area of the MTPS, maintains dialogues with industry leaders to expand women’s participation, including in largely male-dominated sectors.
- The participants agreed that one of the **great challenges continues to be the care crisis** and its incompatibility with work. They identified the actions they are taking to address this problem, which in many cases goes hand in hand with a teleworking policy.
 - In Brazil, the main responsibilities of the Working Group for Women and Employment within the National Labor Council include using tripartite mechanisms to identify ways to address the care crisis and the challenges of motherhood.
 - Chile’s Ministry of Labor has determined that the pandemic, during its highest peak between May and July 2020, led to an increase of more than 500% in the number of women leaving the labor market because they needed to devote themselves to household work. To address this, efforts are underway with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and the Ministry of the Economy to develop a national employment equity plan, which will include a care component.
 - In Guatemala, the implementation of the breastfeeding-friendly places program remains ongoing.
 - In Paraguay, the Equal Employment strategy, which aims to reduce gender gaps in the labor market, includes a care component. Mention was also made of the drafting of the Care Bill that will soon be submitted to Congress.

Third Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor

- The delegate from Peru said that one of her country's pending tasks was to update the guide to good practices for reconciling family and personal life, in order to take the new circumstances into consideration. In connection with the same topic, she spoke of the remote work regulations, which provide for the right to disconnect.
- Another prominent trend reported was the **promotion of training and capacity-building for women**, to reduce both skills gaps and gender gaps in the labor market:
 - Colombia shared it is developing a strategy to strengthen women's occupational profiles and improve their skills in order to enhance their employability.
 - The Government of Canada launched the Women Employment Readiness Program, which includes both training for women facing multiple intersectionalities to obtain the skills needed for work and an outreach component targeting employers to make workplaces more inclusive.
 - The Chilean delegation highlighted the creation of a National Labor Improvement System, intended to anticipate future trends in the world of work and prevent any further widening of the skills gap. As part of those efforts, an advisory commission on labor improvement was created, in which the Ministry of Women's Affairs also participates.
 - The delegate of Ecuador spoke of the STEM skills training for women implemented by the Ministry of Labor.
 - In Uruguay, through INEFOP, special attention has been paid to training women to improve their employability.
- Efforts are continuing to address the issue of **paid domestic work**, a sector that is largely dominated by women and toward which there is a historical debt:
 - The Government of Argentina created the "Registered Women" program to promote the formalization of domestic workers. As part of this effort, the State subsidizes a portion of their earnings for a period of six months.
 - The Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security of Paraguay reported that a working group on domestic work had been established to promote formalization and the enforcement of rights.
 - The Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Uruguay expanded its unemployment benefits, with a particular focus on sectors such as domestic work, which is among the hardest hit.

- Efforts to **eradicate gender-based harassment and violence in the workplace**, as well as the **care and labor inclusion of victims of gender-based violence** to support them in achieving economic independence is another major focus of gender units' work. It is important to note that, in response to this priority identified since the First Hemispheric Gender Dialogue in 2020, during 2021 the RIAL/OAS and the CIM developed the Virtual Course on Gender-Based Violence at Work, which is available on the Educational Portal of the Americas.¹ The following were among the specific efforts identified by the delegations regarding this topic:
 - The delegation of Argentina reported that it had developed the first protocol against gender-based violence arising from collective bargaining as one of the concrete outcomes following the ratification of ILO Convention 190. This protocol provides fundamental tools to raise awareness among negotiators for the inclusion of a gender approach in collective bargaining agreements.
 - In Colombia, one of the strategies for reducing gender gaps is the placement of women who have experienced harassment and violence, or who have sought assistance through state services.
 - The Ministry of Labor of Guatemala reported that a collaboration agreement had been signed with the Public Prosecution Service to connect women victims of violence with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security in order to support them in finding jobs, assisting them in achieving economic independence, and enabling them to leave environments where they are at risk.
 - In Ecuador, one of the main focuses of attention of the Directorate of Attention to Priority Groups is the eradication of violence. The creation of channels for reporting abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace, the launching of a comprehensive system for dealing with violence, and a series of gender-sensitive training courses for all areas that provide initial care to victims of gender-based violence, including the police and the fire service, were all highlighted.
 - In Mexico, a protocol that seeks to prevent and eradicate violence against women in all workplaces was recently adopted.
 - The delegation of Paraguay reported on the good results of the digitization of its centers for the attention and prevention of workplace violence, which has provided care for 63,000 victims, compared to a range of between 10,000 and 15,000 through the face-to-face version.
 - Peru is developing the Work Without Harassment program, which monitors workplace victims of harassment, including sexual harassment.

¹ The Spanish version of the Course was launched in October 2021 and the first cohort was made up of 50 officials from 16 Spanish-speaking Ministries of Labor. This is a tutored course that consists of 50 hours of training. The Course in English will be launched between March and April 2022 only for Ministries of Labor.

Third Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor

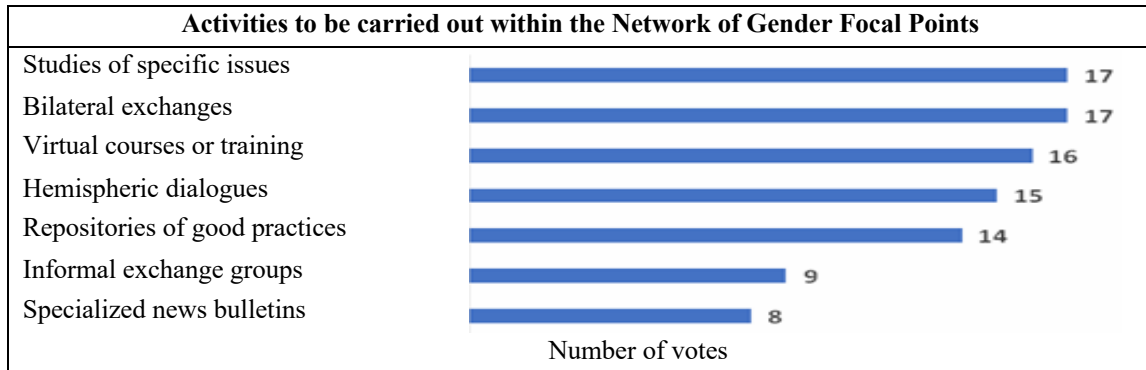
- The Uruguayan delegation reported that following the femicide of a female worker at the ministry, acts of activism began that led to the approval of 10 days' leave for women victims of violence, a situation that will be replicated in other ministries.
- The meeting also explored actions to **support women entrepreneurs**, and to contribute to gender equity within micro, small and medium-sized enterprises:
 - In Canada, programs that provide financing to women entrepreneurs have been strengthened.
 - Colombia is developing a free mechanism for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to measure their wage gaps.
 - Ecuador has implemented a program that provides productive credit to women entrepreneurs.
- Some delegations also spoke of the implementation of **Good Practice Seals** that contribute to gender equity in the labor market:
 - The delegation of Colombia reported the expansion of the EQUIPARES seal to organizations based in rural areas to reduce the effects of intersectionality on rural women.
 - The delegation of Mexico spoke of its good labor practices stamp, which includes a gender component.
 - Paraguay continues to implement the Gender Equity Seal in the public sector.
- Practically all the delegations said they were **working hand-in-hand either with their mechanisms for the advancement of women or with the gender units of other ministries**. The need to address all the issues described above in an intersectoral manner was underscored.
- The delegations agreed that one of the main challenges for their operation and functioning is the lack of budgetary allocations and the lack of specialized human resources.

2) Review of and comments on the Manual or ABC for Gender Units, creation of the Network of Gender Focal Points in the framework of RIAL

The second part of the Dialogue involved reviewing and providing feedback on the Manual or ABC for Gender Units. During this second half of the event, the idea of establishing a Network of Gender Focal Points within the framework of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) re-emerged and received support.

The main outcomes and recommendations from this part of the Dialogue are outlined below:

- **Strong support and contributions to the Manual for Gender Units:** The delegations noted their thanks and congratulations for the Manual, which they recognized as an important tool for creating and strengthening gender units.
- **Some concrete recommendations:**
 - Include an intersectionality component, acknowledging that many women are more vulnerable because of their race, sexual orientation, geographic location, among other.
 - Mention the articulation of gender units' efforts with national gender equity policies, as well as mainstreaming policies with subnational governments and in the territories.
 - Include information and indicators on legal frameworks and international instruments, to include information on existing structures in the gender units, and to strengthen social dialogue.
- **Develop a glossary of terms:** To complement the Manual, delegations recommended developing a glossary of terms.
- **Establishment of the Gender Network within RIAL:** With strong support from the delegations present, the event endorsed the creation of a network of gender focal points as a specialized network of RIAL. In a zoom survey, the participants were asked about the activities they believe should be carried out within the framework of the Network. The results of this exercise are shown below.



3. Next Steps

- The Technical Secretariat will disseminate this document of conclusions and results, and reiterates its commitment to serve as a link between Gender Units that require more information on any practice or policy advanced by another country.
- With the contributions received in writing prior to the Dialogue and the recommendations expressed during it, the OAS Secretariat will produce the final version of the Manual for Gender Units, which will be available in English and Spanish.
- In March or April 2022, the English version of the Virtual Course on Gender-Based Violence at Work will be launched, which in its first cohort in Spanish had the participation of officials from 16 countries. In addition, obtaining resources to launch more cohorts will be explored, given the great interest it generated in the Ministries of Labor of the region.
- The CIM and the OAS Secretariat will prepare a Glossary of terms to complement the Manual, based on an exercise already carried out by the CIM.
- The Secretariat will be working on a proposal to create the specialized network of focal points and will submit this recommendation to the authorities of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML).

ANNEX 4

Constitutive document of The Network of Gender Focal Points within the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration – RIAL/GENDER - Product of the 4th Hemispheric Gender Dialogue between Ministries of Labor, held on March 15, 2022



OAS | RIAL

THE NETWORK OF GENDER FOCAL POINTS

WITHIN THE INTER-AMERICAN NETWORK FOR LABOR ADMINISTRATION (RIAL)

RIAL/GENDER

CONTENT:

1. Background
2. Objectives
3. Tools
4. Areas of action
5. Composition and operation
6. Activities undertaken and next steps in 2022

1. BACKGROUND

Between 2020 and 2021, the Organization of American States (OAS) promoted hemispheric dialogues between the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor of the Americas through the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) and with the support of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM). These dialogues are added to the multiple actions that the OAS has carried out to strengthen the institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of Labor and, through this, contribute to gender equality in the world of work. This is a regional commitment, as labor authorities have stated at the OAS Inter-American Conference of Labor Ministers (IACML).

During three hemispheric dialogues (November 2020, May and November 2021), the importance of having a cooperation network between the gender units or areas of the Ministries was evident and, specifically during the 3rd dialogue, the participants explicitly expressed their interest in formally forming this network. Based on this, the IACML Technical Secretariat presented the idea to the Conference authorities at its Planning Meeting in February 2022, which was well received. Therefore, the Work Plan 2022-2024 of the IACML contains as one of its concrete actions: “Establish a network of gender focal points within the Ministries of Labor, as a specialized network of the RIAL”.

The decision to incorporate the constitution of the network of gender focal points in the Work Plan 2022-2024 responds, among others, to the following commitments assumed by the Ministries of Labor in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Buenos Aires, adopted at the XXI IACML in 2021:

“We commit to continue promoting and deepening gender mainstreaming in labor and employment programs and policies, and ministerial structures” (Art. 12 of the Declaration of Buenos Aires)

“Continue deepening the institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of Labor as a means to achieve gender equality. This involves institutional strengthening of gender units” (Art. 7, i) of the Plan of Action of Buenos Aires

During the 4th Hemispheric Dialogue, held on March 15, 2022, RIAL/GENDER was formally launched. The gender units discussed the objectives and main lines of action for the network under the premise of collectively building its foundations. After the dialogue, they revised a first draft of this document and sent comments in writing to the Technical Secretariat. This document collects all the comments provided by the focal points and incorporates good practices in the management and governance of networks. It is the foundational document of the Network, setting the framework for its operation.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Network of Gender Focal Points in the Ministries of Labor is a specialized community of practice of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL); as such, it will be denominated RIAL/GENDER.

Purpose: Contribute to achieving full gender equality in the world of work.

General objective: Strengthen the gender units or areas within the Ministries of Labor of the Americas.

Specific objectives:

- Share best practices, experiences, lessons learned and evaluations on gender mainstreaming from Ministries of Labor.
- Share relevant information and resources to keep the Units updated on different topics of interest, this includes specialized publications, training offers, and advances in public policies and/or legislation, among others.
- Discuss and analyze priority issues and relevant trends for gender equality in the world of work.
- Have a permanent channel of support, consultation and communication between peers.
- Share legislation and regulation, and work to strengthen national and regional legal frameworks on gender equality at work.

3. TOOLS

To achieve the stated objectives, the Network will have the following tools:

Portfolio of Programs: The Portfolio is an information bank that systematizes the programs on gender equity that the Ministries of Labor wish to share with each other. Programs must have shown results, have lessons learned and, ideally, have been positively evaluated.

The Portfolio, which includes a database and a search engine for programs, is now available within the RIAL website (www.rialnet.org) and has a section designated for programs on “Gender Equity”. The RIAL/GENDER will nurture and update this section of the Portfolio; to this end, each focal point has a personalized username and password. The Technical Secretariat is responsible for reviewing and translating the programs.

Hemispheric Workshops: Spaces to analyze and exchange experiences on specific issues related to the work of gender units or areas. They are generally held in person with a duration of 2 or 3 days. They allow for the involvement of more actors, including workers’ and employers’ organizations, and allied international organizations. The objective of the Workshops is to identify lessons learned and policy recommendations on the subject matter.

Bilateral cooperation: Bilateral cooperation activities allow the Ministries to provide and receive direct and personalized technical advice among themselves, they are planned and developed according to the particular interests, strengths, and needs of the Ministries involved. The activities are selected through open calls of the RIAL at the beginning of each year and can be virtual or face-to-face.

Virtual dialogues: Spaces for interaction between gender focal points with very specific purposes; for example, in one of the dialogues held prior to the creation of the Network, the units spoke about their situation in the face of the pandemic. They allow for an agile exchange limited to a specific purpose and have a maximum duration of 4 hours.

Dedicated channel of communication: It is imperative that the Network has a dedicated channel of interaction. During the 4th Dialogue, the participants expressed a preference for having a mailing list and a WhatsApp Group. The Secretariat recommends advancing along these two paths, using the mailing list for formal communications and invitations, while the WhatsApp Group would be used for more informal communications and rapid exchange of information.

It is recommended that the WhatsApp Group be made up of no more than three people per country. Participation in the WhatsApp Group will be completely voluntary.

Membership database: The Secretariat will maintain an updated database with names, titles, and contact information, which will be available to members of the Network in order to streamline and optimize their communication.

Documentation Center: The RIAL website will have a dedicated space to share publications, training offers and other relevant information. The members of Network will send the Secretariat the information they consider relevant to share through the Documentation Center. The Steering Committee and the Secretariat will define the parameters for the inclusion of resources in this Center.

Informative Newsletter: All the activities of the Network, relevant updates in the Portfolio, news from the Units, and initiatives published in the Documentation Center will be included in the biweekly RIAL/OAS Newsletter.

4. AREAS OF ACTION

The Network will act on different priority areas and themes for its membership. These areas of action will be adjusted over time, as needs and emerging issues arise, or as substantial progress has been made in matters that no longer require the same attention.

The Network will address issues from an intersectionality perspective, understanding that gender is a social variable that intersects with other variables, such as race, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic status, and place of residence, among others; and that there are various dynamics of discrimination and exclusion that can manifest themselves simultaneously and be mutually reinforcing.

The areas of action mentioned in the Dialogues and, therefore, the Network's focus in the short term (3 years) are the following:

- Domestic work
- Violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment
- Unpaid and paid care work
- Institutionalization of gender in the Ministries of Labor
- Recognition of enterprises committed to gender equity (seals or badges)
- Inspection with a gender approach
- Collection of statistics for gender analysis
- Telework
- Public policies to increase the employability of women

5. COMPOSITION AND OPERATION

Composition: The Network will be made up of the gender focal points of the Ministries of Labor of the OAS member states. These are: 1) directors and officials from the gender units, offices or areas within the Ministries, and 2) officials who have some relationship or responsibility for gender issues in those Ministries where there is no specific gender unit or area.

Technical Secretariat: The Secretariat is the OAS Department of Human Development, Education and Employment (DHDEE), which will coordinate the technical and logistical operation of the Network and will maintain its institutional memory. The DHDEE will work in collaboration with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), which will support the Network in the specific technical issues of its competence.

Steering Committee: A Committee composed of 4 Ministries of Labor is proposed to guide the work of the Network and define annual plans of action.

One of these 4 members must be permanently the Chair of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), in order to guarantee coherence between the Network and the priorities and orientations of the IACML.

It is proposed that the first Steering Committee be composed by the Chair of the IACML and the Ministries elected as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Working Group 1 (WG1) during the XXI IACML. It is worth mentioning that the Plan of Action of Buenos Aires, adopted at the XXI IACML in 2021, entrusted Working Group 1 with following up on the issue of “gender equality and mainstreaming of the gender perspective in labor and employment policies”.

Currently and for the period 2021-2024, the Ministries of Labor that hold these positions are: Argentina (Chair of the IACML), Chile (Chair of WG1), Costa Rica (Vice-Chair of WG1) and Trinidad and Tobago (Vice-Chair of WG1).

It is proposed that this first Committee performs functions for a period of 1 year, until June 2023, and subsequently be selected from among the members of the Network, with the exception of the Chair of the IACML.

Budget: During the first three years, the Network has a budget assigned by the RIAL, according to the IACML Work Plan 2022-2024, which will allow it to cover some activities.

Periodicity: According to the agreements reached during the dialogue, the members of the Network will hold meetings minimum every 6 months, in addition to the other activities determined by the Steering Committee (cooperation activities, hemispheric dialogues, studies, among others).

6. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND NEXT STEPS IN 2022

- **March 15:** RIAL/GENDER launched during the 4^o Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender of the RIAL. The gender units discussed the objectives and main lines of action for the network under the premise of collectively building its foundations.
- **April - May:** The Technical Secretariat produced the first draft of this foundational document. The gender units or areas reviewed the document and sent comments to the Technical Secretariat.
- **May - June:** The Technical Secretariat prepared the final version of this document and will convene the first meeting of the Steering Committee. The objective of this meeting will be to define the Work Plan for the first year of the Network, in accordance with the guidelines provided in this document, as well as discussions and recommendations of its members during the four Hemispheric dialogues held.
- **July to December:** Development of activities defined in the Work Plan.

***It should be noted that, although a Work Plan will be developed, the Network is already in operation thanks to the exchange that is taking place between gender units and areas within the RIAL/OAS. During the 15th Call for Bilateral Cooperation, two bilateral cooperations were selected on the matter: between Bolivia and Panama on the strengthening of women's cooperatives, and between Uruguay and Argentina on gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace.*

ANNEX 5

Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the 5th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Toward a gender-responsive labor inspection”, held on September 20th, 2022



MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All event information is available at: http://rialnet.org/GenderResponsive_Labor_Inspection

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Network of Gender Focal Points **RIAL/GENDER** is a specialized community of the OAS Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL), created in March 2022 at the initiative of the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor of the Americas.

The purpose of RIAL/GENDER is to contribute to achieving full gender equality in the world of work, through the strengthening of the gender units or areas of Ministries of Labor. To meet this objective, the Network, made up of the people in charge of said areas or units, has tools such as a portfolio of programs, bilateral cooperation, and hemispheric dialogues or events, among others. The activities of the Network are based on the commitments of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) and have the technical advice of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), both of the OAS.

The 2022-2023 Work Plan of RIAL/GENDER included the holding of the **5th Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: Towards a gender-responsive labor inspection**, as its first hemispheric initiative after its inception.

The 5th Dialogue was held on September 20, 2022, in virtual format, and brought together directors and officials from the gender units and inspection areas of 28 Ministries of Labor of the Americas, in addition to the Ministry of Labor of Spain as an observer country and specialists from the International Labor Organization (ILO), EuroSocial+ and the Organization of American States (OAS). The **objective of the Dialogue** was: To present significant experiences, provide practical tools

and make recommendations to integrate the gender approach to labor inspection, as an important step to achieve full gender mainstreaming in the Ministries of Labor.

The basis for holding this Dialogue can be found in mandates from Ministries of Labor of the Americas, who, in the framework of the IACML, have widely recognized the indispensable role of labor inspection in labor administration and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen and update it. At the XXI IACML, the Ministers once again recognized labor inspection “as one of the central institutions for (...) guaranteeing compliance with labor legislation” and committed to “provide the appropriate training and resources to inspectors (...) to facilitate and increase the effectiveness of their work”. (Plan of Action of Buenos Aires, 2021, Art. 9, d). Due to this major role as guarantor of labor rights, it is imperative to ensure that skills and competences are available for the labor inspection system so that it incorporates a gender approach in its activities and daily tasks.

2. MAIN REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In order to meet the stated objective, the Dialogue was divided into two parts: the first focused on learning about national experiences, led by presentations from the Labor Ministries of Costa Rica and Chile, and followed by a space for exchange. This first part was aimed at answering two questions referring to the relationship that exists between the gender unit and the inspection area in each Ministry and the most useful strategies or elements to integrate the gender approach into labor inspection. The second part consisted of an exercise in sub-groups to define policy recommendations.

Below are the main reflections and conclusions that can be drawn from the Dialogue and, in a later section, the recommendations.

- There is broad consensus that **labor inspection has a very important role in achieving gender equality**. On the one hand, as the axis of labor administration to guarantee compliance with labor legislation, labor inspection must ensure that the law is applied equally to all. In addition, given its responsibilities to provide technical information and advice to employers and workers -in line with ILO Convention 81 on the matter-, labor inspection is a privileged tool for training and awareness-raising.
- Beyond concrete actions related to inspection, it was recognized that **gender mainstreaming in the Ministries of Labor requires having a systemic vision**, within which the gender units will have an advisory and guidance role, but they are not the only responsible party. These units cannot be encapsulated, they must have bridges with all areas of the Ministry under an institutional vision and commitment to gender mainstreaming. In this regard, the existence of gender bodies or committees within the Ministries and the existence of liaisons or gender focal points within the different areas stand out as an excellent practice, as exemplified by the experiences of Chile and Panama.
- Achieving effective gender mainstreaming in inspection and, in general, in all areas of action of the Ministries of Labor, requires a **policy and institutional commitment, as well as inter-**

institutional alliances. During the dialogue, the importance of working in alliance and permanent coordination with the national mechanisms for the advancement of women was highlighted.

- The **relationship that exists between the gender units and the inspection areas varies greatly** among the different Ministries of the Americas. The relationship seems much closer in the Ministries where there is a liaison or gender focal point in the inspection that maintains a link with the gender unit, where the gender units are stronger, and where there is a clear institutional commitment and high-level support to gender mainstreaming.
- In response to the guiding question: **What kind of work has been developed in the relationship between the gender unit and the labor inspection area—for example, awareness raising, training, advising services, exchange of information—and what results has it had?**, the following actions from gender units were identified:
 - **Guidance and advice** on the definition and preparation of inspection plans, methodologies, and instruments with a gender focus. The preparation of the Catalog of gender infractions and the Inspection Guide with a gender focus in Costa Rica stand out.
 - **Sensitization and training** for inspectors on central issues for gender equality. Gender-based violence and harassment were especially mentioned, as well as general training on gender equity and gender mainstreaming.
 - **Support and accompaniment in the work with enterprises/employers:** The gender units can advise labor inspection in specific cases after inspection visits; in addition, they have directly provided training to enterprises hand-in-hand with inspectors (Panama experience).
- **Training inspectors is fundamental from the beginning of the gender mainstreaming process.** It was highlighted that the training must be applied, rather than theoretical, grounded in the local context and include the analysis of fictitious and real cases. In Costa Rica they speak of a training-construction process where the different tools (Guide, catalog of infractions, Didactic Manual for the application of the Guide, etc.) and the training efforts are constantly reviewed and adjusted according to the findings in the field.
- The **contents or aspects of the world of work that a gender-responsive inspection** must include:
 - **employment / job placement**, in regard to selection, recruitment and hiring processes;
 - **labor relations**, which covers the wage gap, working conditions, and reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, respect for freedom of association and collective bargaining, among others;

- **occupational health and safety**, including physical facilities (lactation rooms, toilets);
 - **sexual harassment and workplace harassment**, both the existence of policies and knowledge and their application must be verified;
 - **recognition of specific situations by sector and occupation**. Inspectors must observe specific and different situations depending on whether they are masculinized or feminized economic sectors.
- In the debate it was mentioned that **labor inspection should and can act as a relevant and active agent of social change**. Particularly noteworthy is the experience of the Chilean Ministry of Labor, where the goal is to achieve a labor inspection with a feminist perspective that goes beyond mainstreaming the gender approach and verifying reality, and actively seeks to transform that reality.
 - The need to **strengthen a preventive approach to labor inspection**, whose approach has traditionally been reactive when activated by complaint, was reiterated. It was recognized that the preventive approach is essential to achieve changes in workplaces that benefit gender equality.
 - It is important to develop **sub-national strategies or plans to mainstream gender in inspection**, in order to respond to the different contexts, economic sectors, occupations and employment levels, among many others, that exist at the sub-national level (provinces, territories, etc.) and that require differentiated strategies.
 - The delegations highly valued the instruments developed and presented by Costa Rica at the Dialogue: The **Labor Inspection Guide with a Gender Approach, the Catalog of gender infractions, and the Didactic Manual** for the use of the Guide. The following stands out:
 - The Catalog of New Gender Infractions was developed in parallel with the Inspection Guide with a Gender Approach; the inspection visits provide permanent feedback to these instruments. The infractions were added to the general catalog of infractions and consequently to the inspection case system (SILAC), and include: discriminatory practices in promotions, salary differences, physical insecurity in access to toilets, among others.
 - The 5 instruments used when making inspections with a gender focus are: 1) Application of the employer interview, 2) request for documents, 3) interview with the worker, 4) visual inspection of the facilities, and 5) employer summons.
 - All the tools presented [are available on the Dialogue website](#).
 - As a lesson learned from the experience of Costa Rica, the **efforts to incorporate the gender approach into labor inspection can begin with a pilot project** where inspection visits are carried out specifically with that approach and a group of people is trained on the subject who later serve

as multipliers. In the medium and long term, the objective is to mainstream this approach in most or all inspection visits.

- Specifically, regarding **direct work with enterprises or workplaces**, the following was mentioned:
 - As this is still an incipient field in most countries, it is recognized that carrying out inspection visits with a gender perspective requires **sensitization, awareness and information** for employers and workers. In this type of visit, a lot of information is required from the employer, so their openness and willingness to collaborate is essential.
 - In the work with companies, **the granting of awards or 'stamps'** that recognize good practices in compliance with regulations, including a gender approach, was highlighted as a success. Mention was made of the "I do comply" seal of Panama and the registry of innovative good labor practices of companies in Chile.
 - Work with companies should seek not only to sanction, but also to **prevent behaviors and practices against equality**. The experience of Uruguay stands out, where companies that have had cases of harassment must take training courses on the matter, with a view to non-repetition.
- From the presentations and interventions, the **following key elements can be identified that have made it possible to achieve progress in mainstreaming gender in labor inspection**:
 - Existence of a gender unit and a gender liaison or focal point within the inspection area.
 - Ensure that gender mainstreaming is incorporated into national and institutional plans, that it is not an isolated effort.
 - Have the support of the Minister, commitment of the directives and budget assigned.
 - Starting from the technical experience of inspectors and legal advisers to start the gender mainstreaming process.
 - Having a catalog or list of gender infractions provides legal certainty and gives certainty to the parties involved. This is very important for the inspectors, by granting sustenance and support to their decisions.
- Some of the **challenges to the process of incorporating the gender approach in inspection** that were mentioned are:
 - Continuously identify gender infractions and, consequently, continuously update the catalogs of infractions.

- Have a budget to maintain continuous training processes within the Ministry for inspectors, legal advisors and other people involved.
- Incorporate in the inspection work the identification of aspects and social determinants that affect the mental health of workers.
- Maintain commitment and political support from higher levels.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS to mainstream gender in Ministries of Labor, as a necessary condition and conducive to incorporating gender in labor inspection:

- **Achieve and maintain commitment at the highest political and programmatic level.** This implies incorporating the objective of gender equality in national and institutional plans.
- Deepen and maintain **collaboration with the national mechanisms for the advancement of women.**
- Improve **research, diagnoses and disaggregated statistical analyzes** to continue studying, documenting, and making gender gaps visible. This allows building baselines to measure progress, as well as continuously supporting the need to incorporate the equality agenda in labor and employment policies at the national level, and in the institutional plans of the Ministries of Labor.
- **Strengthen gender units or areas** and have a systemic vision to mainstream gender in the Ministries of Labor that involves all areas of institutional intervention.
- Develop and adjust labor legislation to incorporate the gender perspective and ensure that it is **linked to international instruments.**
- Increase **work and awareness campaigns and information** on gender inequalities and the different realities of men and women in the world of work (pay gap, responsibility for care, violence, among others). There is still a lot of ignorance on the subject. The awareness actions must be different according to the sectors and services to which they are directed; for example, considering whether they are masculinized or feminized.

**Beyond the actions within the Ministries of Labor, the Dialogue mentioned the need to influence different decision-making spaces that affect the world of work. It was recommended, for example, to participate in national sectoral roundtables (industry, mining, etc.) and in the definition of public policies and legislative debates.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS to mainstream gender in labor inspection:

- **Continuous training** for inspectors and for the different instances within the Ministry that can influence the inspection work (such as legal advisory areas), involving the supervisors. Some contents of the training were highlighted:
 - situation of men and women in the world of work (analysis of existing gaps),
 - tools to incorporate the gender approach,
 - inspection guides with a gender perspective,
 - gender-based violence at work,
 - relevant international instruments and national regulations,
 - among others.
- Prepare **guides and protocols** for labor inspection with a gender approach. Other recommendations were raised in this effort:
 - build them with the assistance of inspectors,
 - ensure they have a practical and realistic perspective,
 - complement them with manuals and practical tools for their application,
 - review and update them constantly.
- Ensure that there is **gender parity in the inspection** and advocate for the hiring of more female inspectors, especially those involved in decision-making processes.
- Achieve **greater links between gender units and labor inspection areas**. To this end, it is recommended to have a gender liaison or focal point within the inspection that can coordinate the processes within the area and is in permanent communication with the gender unit.
- Strengthen **the preventive approach of labor inspection**, which involves awareness raising and training for employers and workers.
- **Increase the budget assigned** to inspection and its efforts to incorporate the gender perspective.

4. NEXT STEPS

- The delegations expressed interest in continuing the exchange on Inspection Guides and Manuals with a Gender Approach, highlighting the experience of Costa Rica. This may be a new activity of the RIAL/GENDER that the Secretariat is analyzing with the collaboration of the ILO and the CIM.
- With the support of the CIM, continue strengthening collaboration and coordination with the National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women to strengthen gender

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mainstreaming in Ministries of Labor as a whole, which will support gender mainstreaming in labor inspection.

- The RIAL/GENDER will continue to fulfill its 2022-2023 Work Plan, which includes the following activities:
 - Incorporation of more programs in the RIAL Program Portfolio. To this end, each RIAL/GENDER focal point has received their username and password.
 - Opening of the RIAL/GENDER WhatsApp group and documentation center during the last quarter of 2022 and early 2023.
 - 6th Virtual Hemispheric Dialogue on Paid Domestic Work – March, 2023
 - 7th Virtual Hemispheric Dialogue on Insertion into the Labor Market and Closing Occupational Gaps – July, 2023
 - Continue promoting bilateral cooperation – the call for proposals for bilateral cooperation will open in January 2023.

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ANNEX 6

Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the 6th Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor: “Toward a paid domestic work with rights”, held on March 15, 2023



Towards **paid domestic work** with **rights**



March 15, 2023



Virtual Event

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All event information is available at: <http://www.rialnet.org/?q=en/6GenderDialogue-DomesticWork>

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Hemispheric Gender Dialogue among Ministries of Labor “Towards paid domestic work with rights”, held virtually on March 15, 2023, brought together representatives from 27 Ministries of Labor of the Americas with the aim of sharing their advancements and strategies, as well as identifying lessons learned and policy recommendations to guarantee compliance with labor legislation and respect for fundamental rights and principles in paid domestic work. It was organized by the OAS General Secretariat, with the support of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), and also counted with the participation of representatives of workers and employers, and the government of Spain.

By virtue of the commitment assumed by the Ministers of Labor of the Americas with the mainstreaming and institutionalization of gender within their operations, policies and programs within the framework of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) of the OAS and the CIM have deployed various efforts to support the Ministries in this direction, including technical studies, participatory gender assessments, regional and subregional workshops, and bilateral cooperation activities, among others. These efforts resulted in the creation of the RIAL/GENDER, a specialized community made up of the people in charge of the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor of the Americas and pursues the purpose of contributing to achieving full gender equality in the world of work, through the strengthening of said units.

To meet this objective, the Network has tools such as the portfolio of programs, bilateral cooperation, and hemispheric dialogues or events, among others.

This 6th Gender Dialogue is part of the **RIAL/GENDER 2022-2023 Work Plan** and, like previous dialogues, it provided a space for exchanging experiences, reflecting and facilitating the formulation of proposals on paid domestic work by the participating delegations.

During the Dialogue, the results of the study "*Rights of remunerated domestic workers in the Americas: Progress and persistent gaps*", elaborated by the CIM together with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), were presented and provided an important guiding framework and basis for subsequent discussion. For their part, the Ministries of Labor and Social Security of Uruguay and Jamaica, considered two countries with important advances in the matter, presented their experiences. Additionally, there were spaces in the plenary session and subgroups for all the delegations to share their experiences, challenges and proposals on the central issues related to paid domestic work, such as regulations, inspection, social security coverage, training and professionalization, dissemination and awareness-rising, and alliances with social actors, as well as related emerging issues such as the care policies that are being implemented in different countries.

2. MAIN REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

To meet the stated objective, and as in previous opportunities, the 6th Dialogue was divided into two parts, preceded by the presentation of the results of the study carried out by the CIM and PADF. 1) The first part of the Dialogue focused on learning about national experiences, led by presentations from the Ministries of Labor of Uruguay and Jamaica and followed by a space for exchange. This first part was aimed at answering two guiding questions seeking to identify the main actions taken by the Ministries towards achieving the full exercise of the rights of paid domestic workers. 2) The second part consisted of an exercise in subgroups to identify the main successes and lessons learned from such actions, as well as recommendations on policies and measures that should be carried out by the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor to achieve the full exercise of rights of domestic workers.

Below are the main reflections and conclusions that could be drawn from the Dialogue and, in a later section, the recommendations.

- In recent decades **there have been many advances in the regulatory legal aspect of domestic work** to integrate workers in this sector into the labor spectrum that guarantees a level of social protection and occupational safety and health equivalent to the protection provided to any other workers. Various interventions indicate that progress has been made in the regulation of working hours, protection against unemployment, dismissal regime, affiliation to social security, among other benefits.

- In the debate on this issue, great importance was attached to the ratification and/or harmonization of regulations with ILO Conventions 189 and 190 to ensure that all countries in the region give paid domestic workers the same rights as everyone else in the workforce. It is worth mentioning that Convention 189 recognizes that “same rights” as everyone else is insufficient, stating that “Recognizing the special conditions under which domestic work is carried out that make it desirable to supplement the general standards with standards specific to domestic workers so as to enable them to enjoy their rights fully”.
- The **strengthening of the institutional framework** around domestic work is a prominent issue. To achieve more global policies centered on domestic workers, it must be considered that not only Ministries of Labor have a responsibility, but that it must be a State policy in which the Ministries of Labor have the responsibility of promoting actions and formulating policies with the participation of institutions and organizations of domestic workers and representation of employers, and where other ministries and entities that support domestic work are involved. In this regard, tripartite dialogues are mentioned as positive tools.
- **It is widely recognized that the formalization process for domestic workers is slow** and that it is necessary to promote recognition of the benefits of contributing to social security systems by domestic workers and employers, inform about rights and obligations, and make the advantages of and processes for formalization visible and easily understood. There is difficulty in reaching both the workers and the employers with information; in the case of workers, because they do not always have access to all means of communication or are not easily identifiable; in the case of employers, because in general they are not represented by an association or group and do not have information channels.
- Countries shared a major challenge around **the effective implementation of the regulations**, and considered it necessary to **develop an inspection model that allows monitoring compliance with the existing regulations** without violating the rights of individuals and the inviolability of the household (private space). To address this issue, it is necessary to establish better strategies for inspection within households, including undertaking routine, but unscheduled inspections not connected to complains to avoid undermining employer/worker relationship and considering the difficulty that workers have in submitting complains, either due to unfamiliarity with their rights, fear of retaliatory actions by their employers, or the accessibility of complaint mechanisms. Labor inspectorates should inform employers and domestic workers that inspectors will conduct these types of routine, unscheduled inspections and make clear the rights and obligations, as well as what actions or behaviors would constitute labor law violations.
- One of the issues that raises great concern is **the historical gap in social security coverage** to incorporate all domestic workers into social security systems, including access to retirement

and pensions. In this regard, there have been important advances in legislation, although implementation has been slower, so the challenge lies in improving the effectiveness of social policies aimed at domestic workers, ensuring that care policies include them and their families. Improving formalization of domestic work will assist in strengthening access to social security systems.

- **Raising awareness about domestic work stands out as a key element to achieve progress in respect for the regulations** so that the employer fulfills the established obligations, which implies a particular challenge, because employers do not usually have an association that represents them, which makes dialogue difficult and the process very slow. On the other hand, awareness-raising actions are needed for the personnel of government institutions, specifically those in labor inspection, so that they can detect infractions, accompanying the process with dissemination. It is also necessary to change public opinion around domestic work so that it is considered socially as a dignified job, with rights.
- Additionally, awareness-raising activities are carried out aimed at **expanding knowledge of the rights** of domestic workers and of the responsibilities of the State.
- In a cross-cutting way, the need to adopt an **intersectional approach to domestic work** was recognized, considering the heterogeneity of circumstances of domestic workers, whether of ethnic, racial, or rural origin and, especially, of migrant workers, and that the intersection of two or more of these identities can increase the situation of vulnerability in which a worker finds herself.

Regarding the answers to the guiding question: **What has worked? What are the main successes and lessons learned from these actions?** Various experiences were shared on the topics addressed in the initial reflection, which are presented below.

- **Progress has been made in the legal framework in relation to social security coverage** for domestic workers. Experiences with important achievements in the region were identified, such as:
 - The experience of Uruguay, where social security coverage for domestic workers covers a wide spectrum of social benefits extendable to caregivers of children, sick people, and personal companions. Also noteworthy is the rise in wages for domestic work, which increased well above the rest of the average private wages by being integrated into the tripartite body for fixing and adjusting minimum wages.

- The experience of Peru, where a registry of domestic work contracts has been implemented that allows inter-institutional monitoring of the obligation to contribute to the social security system.
 - The case of Mexico, which achieved significant progress by updating its regulations and establishing the obligation of employers to incorporate the 2.3 million domestic workers in the country, mostly women, into social security, as well as providing access to the rights and benefits that comprise a decent job for this same number of people.
 - In addition, various delegations mentioned during their interventions that progress has been made in the regulation of working hours, unemployment protection, dismissal regime, affiliation, and coverage of social security systems, among other benefits.
- Progress has been made in **developing efficient labor inspection and complaint mechanisms**. Countries have implemented various initiatives to identify labor violations, due to the difficulty for domestic workers to file complaints, often due to the lack of knowledge on the ways to present them or due to unfamiliarity with their rights. Experiences such as that of Uruguay are highlighted, where they carry out door-to-door inspection as a mass practice for inspecting all homes; in Jamaica, with the use of tablets for the work of the inspectors on the field, it was possible to receive complaints in-person. For its part, in Spain, a Decree Law was approved in 2022 through which it is possible to cross labor inspection data with the social security treasury to ensure that effective compliance with the minimum wage or social security contribution are correct and, in the case of detecting an anomaly, the employer is summoned to the labor inspectorate.
 - **Progress has been made in strengthening the information systems and registration mechanisms on domestic employment** as a way of activating the formalization and payment of social security. It was recognized that, due to the informal nature of this sector, it is difficult to track and collect data from it, but there is progress in such recording systems. In Paraguay, neighborhood tours are carried out with a view to advancing in the process of formalizing labor relations (subscription to an employment contract and registration with the Social Welfare Institute) and a positive impact could be verified in the visited areas after the crossing of data with the Social Welfare Institute in subsequent months. In Chile, training has been provided for the use of a registration and information portal on rights and duties and labor inspection where the workers can register and create a work contract.

- **In terms of training, there are also several initiatives and advances.** The technical training aimed at domestic workers is noteworthy, conducive to facilitating their work and going beyond care work. Here, the case of Jamaica is highlighted, where the Ministry partnered with the union of domestic workers to offer training with excellent results, as well as experiences in Chile and Guatemala. In the case of Mexico, the collaboration of the labor authority with civil society organizations to provide training and accompany the processes of certification of competencies in domestic work, as well as in the care economy and in tourist services was highlighted. Certification of skills based on useful knowledge and skills for domestic workers has also been promoted, including free programs with flexible hours to facilitate the participation of workers. There is great agreement on **the importance of generating professionalization actions** for paid domestic work in various areas.

- **Social dialogue acquires critical relevance in the identification of needs, challenges, and opportunities for domestic work,** which is why the representation of all the social actors that participate in the execution of said work is essential. In this regard, the following was identified:
 - **Support for organizations and unions of domestic workers is important,** particularly for their expansion/reach to peri-urban and rural areas, whether it is for the dissemination of rights and promoting formalization, for accompaniment in inspections, to facilitate the collection of information and obtain information from the sector and, fundamentally, to ensure the protection of their rights and the effective implementation of regulations. The importance of tripartite instances is recognized: in Uruguay, the 2006 Domestic Work Law arose with the support of the Tripartite Commission for Equal Opportunities, made up of the sectors of workers, employers, the Ministry of Labor, and INMUJERES. Paraguay also attributes a high degree of support in moving forward to the Tripartite Commission. On the other hand, Trinidad and Tobago mentioned the existence of a union and a cooperative of domestic workers that offer training, to which people go more frequently than to the government; Jamaica also works with unions to facilitate data collection and with its data agency to gain data from this sector.

 - **The organization of employers** is one of the greatest challenges in decent work public policies for domestic workers. Often, employers of domestic workers lack an organization that represents them, impeding information sharing and awareness raising with these employers.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations on policies and actions that the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor must carry out to achieve the full exercise of the rights of domestic workers are the following:

General Recommendations:

- Adopt an intersectoral approach to paid domestic work, considering linguistic and intercultural diversity and the situation of migrant domestic workers.
- Ensure both that labor legislation does not exclude domestic workers and that legislation that regulates domestic work enshrines equal conditions with respect to all workers. Avoid generating differentiated legislation because, in general, differentiation can lead to discrimination.
- Include paid domestic work in the care policies that are being developed in the countries, ensuring that these policies include domestic workers and their families, and improving access to formalization and social security systems.
- Promote the coordination of all relevant social actors at the local and national level.

Specific Recommendations

Regarding labor inspection:

- Design and implement awareness-raising processes and the incorporation of the gender perspective in labor inspections, both with domestic workers and their employers, so that they are aware of their rights and obligations.
- Train labor inspectors on detecting and addressing gender-based violence and harassment.
- Incorporate, in addition to the gender approach, the intersectionality approach in inspection. Include elements and necessary adjustments according to the conditions of each group served; for example, having materials in different languages.
- Develop inspection and complaint mechanisms and practices to meet the challenge of carrying out inspections without invading the privacy of households, considering the difficulties that domestic workers face when making complaints. Consider the implementation of routine, unscheduled inspections not connected to complaints to protect

domestic workers from employer retribution. Work to ensure that employers are notified in advance of these inspections, the rights of domestic workers, and what actions/behavior would constitute violations of labor law.

Regarding the coordination with different actors and social dialogue:

- Promote coordination with all stakeholders (employers, workers and organizations representing domestic workers) at the local and national level.
- Create inter-institutional tables with all the actors and adopt work plans with public policy objectives in the medium and long term.
- Strengthen the spaces for social dialogue, which allows knowing the needs of domestic workers to create policies and meet the needs of the employer sector. An example is tripartite commissions with a gender focus.
- Through social dialogue, make use of and promote appropriate language, as well as achieve a name for domestic work that is consistent with the needs and preferences of those who make up said sector.

Regarding social security coverage:

- Expand social security coverage accompanied by an awareness process aimed in particular at the employer. This coverage should go beyond pensions and include paid sick leave, paid maternity leave and unemployment, among other.
- Establish the obligation for employers to carry out the social security registration of domestic workers.
- Evaluate the creation of unemployment benefits so that this benefit can be given when the employment relationship is interrupted, especially when the domestic worker has more than one employer.
- Carry out an information cross-check of the data registered in the different State institutions to facilitate the verification of compliance with legal obligations in terms of contributions to the Social Security Systems.

Regarding professionalization and training:

- With input and collaboration from domestic workers, create and promote free skills certification programs with flexible hours aimed at formalizing, training, and improving their labor conditions.
- Generate actions to professionalize domestic workers in various areas, including care.

Regarding dissemination and awareness-raising:

- Carry out campaigns and dissemination and awareness-raising material on rights and obligations with all relevant social actors to publicize the regulations and work to consolidate a culture of compliance to them.
- Inform, sensitize, and advise domestic workers and their employers (through campaigns and dissemination through various media) about their rights and obligations, considering their particular conditions. Include information on how to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment, given it is a major concern of domestic workers in many countries.
- It is recognized as a success to support those domestic workers who speak another language with translations, so that they have the appropriate advice and knowledge about their rights in the workplace.
- Have guides and tutorials to raise awareness and train on how to create work contracts with coordination between state institutions to verify if the obligations to which workers are entitled to are met.
- Take a rigorous sensitization approach when it comes to raising awareness about the benefits of contributions to social security systems.

4. NEXT STEPS

Continuing with the fulfillment of the RIAL/GENDER 2023-2023 Work Plan, the following activities will be addressed:

- Implementation of the Documentation Center, which will contain important materials and resources for the gender units of the Ministries of Labor.
- Carrying out the 7th virtual Hemispheric Dialogue on insertion into the labor market and closing of occupational gaps — July 2023.

- Incorporation of more programs in the RIAL Portfolio of Programs, for which each RIAL/GENDER focal point has received their username and password.
- Continue promoting bilateral cooperation — During the 16th RIAL/OAS Call for Bilateral Cooperation, a bilateral cooperation was selected between the Ministry of Labor of Colombia (requesting institution) and the Ministry of Labor of Uruguay (providing institution) on “Formalization of Paid Domestic Work” that will be carried out during 2023.
- The Technical Secretariat of the RIAL/GENDER has proposed the publication of a repository of actions carried out by the Ministries of Labor throughout the region regarding domestic work, classified into five major areas of intervention: 1) Training and professionalization, 2) Dissemination and awareness-raising, 3) Inspection, 4) Social security coverage and, 5) Alliances with social actors. To do this, it has prepared documents for each country and is consulting each Ministry to validate and publish the information.
- The repository of actions mentioned above will be connected to the CIM microsite on the matter, which seeks to provide concrete tools and pieces of awareness-raising and dissemination (video, audio, graphics for social networks, etc.) to workers, employers, and public officials on key issues for the exercise of the rights of domestic workers (<https://www.oas.org/en/cim/domestic-work/pages/descargas.html>).

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