



Mainstreaming gender in training and employment strategies: **Closing occupational gaps**



July 26, 2023



Virtual Event

BASE DOCUMENT

(July 19 updated version – Includes updated Agenda)

7TH Hemispheric Dialogue on Gender among Ministries of Labor:

“Mainstreaming gender in training and employment strategies: Closing occupational gaps”

July 26, 2023

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (EST – Verify local time [here.](#))

All event information will be updated on the website:

http://rialnet.org/?q=en/7GenderDialogue_LaborInsertion

[Register online here](#)

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1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) of the OAS and the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) have supported the Ministries of Labor of the Americas in mainstreaming and institutionalizing gender within their operations, policies, and programs, recognizing these processes as means to achieve gender equality in the labor market. These efforts respond to commitments assumed by the Ministers of Labor of the Americas within the framework of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS. In recent years, they have centered on holding virtual dialogues at the hemispheric level on different priority issues, which resulted in the creation of the RIAL/GENDER network.

The RIAL/GENDER is a specialized community made up of the officers in charge of the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor of the Americas and pursues the great 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 a portfolio of programs, bilateral cooperation, and hemispheric dialogues or events, among others.

The 7th Gender Dialogue is part of the RIAL/GENDER Work Plan 2022-2023. Its purpose is to promote the exchange of experiences, reflection, and the formulation of recommendations on training and employment strategies to close occupational gender gaps - that keep men and women concentrated in certain economic sectors - and promote greater equality in the labor market.

Despite notable advances in education, with significant increases in years of schooling for women in recent decades, as well as the introduction of improvements in training systems and employment services, significant gender biases persist in the labor market. These biases are manifested in the existence of highly feminized or highly masculinized occupations, the persistent wage gap, and inequalities in professional development opportunities, among others.

Gender biases limit opportunities and perpetuate gender inequality in the workplace, since they influence the choice of studies and occupations, and sustain occupational segregation. For example, in fields like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), women are often underrepresented, while in sectors like nursing or primary education, men are underrepresented. According to UNESCO, globally, women represent only 35% of those who study higher education in STEM and less than 30% of scientific researchers¹. This segregation at the level of education and training, which translates into segregation in the labor market, is the result of the persistence of gender stereotypes and entrenched prejudices that influence the way in which the different occupations are perceived, valued, and distributed according to gender, as well as the lack of role models in non-traditional occupations for each gender.

Another manifestation of gender biases in occupations is evident in the persistent gender wage gap, since despite having the same skills and experience, women often receive lower wages than men. This is due, in part, to the unequal social and economic valuation of occupations considered "feminine" compared to "masculine". In the field of information and communication technologies (ICT), where salaries are higher than average, the participation of women is less than 18%²; while within paid domestic work, an occupation that is characterized by having very low salaries, women represent more than 91.1%³ of employment.

¹ UNESCO (2019) "Cracking the code: girls' and women's education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)".

² ECLAC (2023). "Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022: Transforming education as a basis for sustainable development".

³ El trabajo doméstico remunerado en América Latina y el Caribe, a 10 años del Convenio núm. 189. Lima: OIT, Oficina Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, 2021.

The presence of gender biases in occupations is also manifested through barriers and discrimination that hinder women's access and professional development. These barriers go beyond the lack of training opportunities and include the absence of support networks, particularly in caregiving, as well as discrimination in hiring and promotion processes. These constraints stem from the entrenched sexual division of labor and restrict women's opportunities to access higher-paying and more influential occupations.

The need to implement strategies to eradicate gender biases is based on the existence of a vicious circle that significantly affects equal opportunities. On the one hand, these biases restrict people's ability to freely choose their careers and occupations and perpetuate occupational segregation, which, in turn, contributes to the maintenance of the gender pay gap and the lack of representation of women in leadership roles.

In recent years, many organizations and governments have adopted a gender approach in their training and employment strategies to address and eliminate gender biases, promote equal opportunities and contribute to create inclusive and equitable work environments. The adoption of measures that guarantee that women have equal access to education and training programs in masculinized occupations (scholarships, subsidies or mentoring programs that help to overcome financial or knowledge barriers), as well as the establishment of alliances with enterprises, organizations, and governments to implement programs and policies that encourage the participation of women in masculinized occupations and vice versa, are actions that contribute to closing the occupational gender gaps and building a world of work where all people can fully and equally develop their potential. Multiple efforts are being made in both education and workforce development systems to close the gap in education and occupations, particularly by encouraging more girls and young women to access traditionally masculinized trades and STEM disciplines. For the purpose of the 7th Gender Dialogue described in this document, the discussions will be focused on actions undertaken by workforce development and training strategies.

2. DESCRIPTION

As in previous dialogues, the 7th Hemispheric Dialogue will bring together **the officers responsible for the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor** of the Americas to continue analyzing, exchanging experiences and proposing recommendations on central issues of equality and institutionalization of gender. On this occasion and in line with the Work Plan 2022-2023 of the RIAL/GENDER, the 7th Hemispheric Dialogue will focus on mainstreaming gender in training and employment strategies.

This dialogue is organized by the Technical Secretariat of the IACML in the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) of the OAS, in collaboration with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM).

Day and Time: July 26, 2023 — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (EST, Washington D.C. time — Check local time)

The dialogue will take place through the ZOOM platform.

Objective: Share advancements and experiences, as well as formulate recommendations, on mainstreaming gender in training, workforce development and employment strategies, with a view to addressing and eliminating gender gaps and occupational segregation.

Participants:

- Directors and representatives of the gender units or areas of the OAS Ministries of Labor, and officials of said Ministries interested in participating.
- Representatives of workers and employers, grouped in the advisory bodies of the IACML - COSATE AND CEATAL -.
- International organizations and others interested actors will be invited as observers.

3. AGENDA AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

July 26, 2023

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. EST – Washington DC time

(Please, check local time)

10:00 – 10:20 Opening and Introduction

- Kim Osborne, Executive Secretary for Integral Development of the OAS
- María Claudia Camacho, Chief of Section for Labor and Employment, Department of Human Development, Education and Employment, SEDI/OAS

10:20 – 11:40 Training, workforce development, and employment strategies to eliminate gender biases in the labor market: Exchange of experiences, identification of lessons learned and general recommendations (based on guiding questions 1 and 2)

Facilitator: Lylian Mires, Expert and Senior Consultant of the OAS on gender

- Presentation: Experience of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), by Eleanor Delamater, Policy Analyst of the USDOL Women’s Bureau
- Open dialogue between all the delegations to share their answers to the Guiding questions (max. 5 min per intervention)

Guiding questions:

1. What are the main strategies implemented by your Ministry, mainly through workforce development and employment strategies, to eliminate the gender gap in occupations? We suggest considering actions in terms of awareness, training, non-discriminatory hiring policies and practices, among others.
2. What has worked? What are the main successes and lessons learned that can be drawn from the implementation of these strategies? Please consider which elements of the actions carried out by your Ministry would be useful for other countries. [Question applies to both general discussion and sub-groups]

11:40 – 12:30 Work in *sub-groups* — Based on guiding questions 2 and 3

Guiding questions:

Question **Num. 2** is repeated.

3. What are the main recommendations on policies and actions that the gender units or areas of the Ministries of Labor should carry out to ensure that training and workforce development strategies contribute to eliminating gender biases in occupations?

12:30 – 13:00 Presentation of the sub-groups and closing

- Moderators of each sub-group
- Jesús Schucry Giacoman, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment, SEDI/OAS

4. LOGISTICS AND CONNECTION INFORMATION

Registration: Please complete the online registration form, preferably, no later than **July 10**, which can be done by [clicking here](#).

Access to the platform and connection: The meeting will take place via the ZOOM platform. The connection link will be automatically sent to the participants once they have registered.

Audio testing: The active participation of all delegations is expected in the dialogue. In this sense, we thank the delegates for connecting 30 minutes before the start of the meeting to carry out audio, connection, and interpretation tests.

Language: The meeting will have simultaneous interpretation in Spanish and English.

MORE INFORMATION:

If you require additional information, please contact: trabajo@oas.org.