



OAS | RIAL

Work Plan 2022 – 2023

The Network of Gender Focal Points

RIAL/GENDER

INTRODUCTION

The Network of Gender Focal Points in the Ministries of Labor is a specialized community of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL), as such it has been called RIAL/GENDER. It was created in March 2022 as an initiative of the focal points, and with the support of the authorities of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS.

The main objective of the Network is to strengthen the gender units or areas within the Ministries of Labor of the Americas. It has 8 tools to achieve its objective: An online portfolio of programs, hemispheric workshops, bilateral cooperation, membership database, virtual dialogues, a dedicated channel of communication, documentation center, and newsletter.

The foundational document of RIAL/GENDER, which complements this Work Plan, was prepared collectively by the gender focal points and defines the objectives, tools, areas of action, composition, and operation of the Network.

Said document contemplates a Steering Committee that was assigned the responsibility of preparing the first Annual Work Plan of the RIAL/GENDER. The Committee is made up of the Ministries of Labor that hold the Chairmanship of the IACML (Argentina) and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Working Group 1 (Chile, Costa Rica, and Trinidad and Tobago).

The Steering Committee met on June 24, 2022, with the participation of the coordinators and gender focal points of the four (4) Ministries, as well as specialists from the Inter-American Commission of Women and the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment of the OAS, the latter acting as Technical Secretariat.

This Work Plan is the result of the meeting of the Steering Committee and lays the foundations for the activities of the RIAL/GENDER between July 2022 and July 2023.

MAIN IDEAS THAT EMERGED DURING THE MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

- The practical and technical nature of the Network was highlighted: It should aim to provide the gender units with very practical tools and guides on how to mainstream gender in the different action/technical areas of the Ministries, as well as in their policies, programs, and legislation.
- The Network must support the units to strengthen collaboration with other areas within the Ministry, such as inspection, employment, labor relations, and social dialogue, among others.
- In order to continue their strengthening process, the gender units need to have more information and training on how to manage gender mainstreaming processes within the Ministries. The CIM has resources related to this topic, offered through the Educational Portal of the Americas, which need to be explored.
- A strength of RIAL/GENDER is that it will use and take advantage of RIAL's online tools. The Portfolio of Programs stands out since it already has a dedicated space for “Gender Equity” programs.
- The Committee endorsed the areas of action contemplated in the founding document of the Network and recalled the recommendations contained in the study "The institutionalization of the gender approach in the Ministries of Labor of the Americas: an update" published by the OAS in 2021. During the discussion, the participants referred in particular to the following priority issues:
 - Linkage of the gender units with the other areas of the Ministries of Labor.
 - Inspection with a gender approach.
 - The gender perspective in labor intermediation/role of intermediation and training policies in closing of occupational and wage gaps/recognition of companies committed to equity.
 - Gender analysis in legislation/in the legal phenomenon.
 - Gender gaps in social dialogue and collective bargaining, including female union participation.
 - Domestic work.
 - Care systems and co-responsibility of care – special mention was made of the Model Law on Care prepared by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM).
 - Collection of data disaggregated by gender.
- The concern was raised that all resources and information within the Network be bilingual Spanish - English.

- It was recognized that it is very important that the Gender Units understand the needs and work together with the social partners.
- Communication with the national mechanisms for women and their guidance/advice is essential for the work of the gender units. There is interest and commitment to strengthening this collaboration.
- The intersectionality approach and the particularities of different groups that face situations of vulnerability must be present in the actions of the units, as well as in the actions of the Network.
- The degree of consolidation and the challenges faced by the gender units or areas vary in the different Ministries; thus, the value of this Network.

WORK PLAN 2022 – 2023

The following are the activities that RIAL/GENDER will carry out between July 2022 and July 2023.

Activity 1: Open call to include initiatives in the RIAL Portfolio of Programs

Description: The Ministries of Labor will be invited to share the initiatives they are developing to promote gender equality at work, particularly in the action areas of the RIAL/GENDER, through the online Portfolio of Programs. Each Ministry will again receive its username and password to upload programs.

Date: August – October 2022

Activity 2: Virtual Hemispheric Dialogue on the Gender Approach in Labor Inspection

Description: This dialogue will present the guidelines developed by some Ministries to advise and train labor inspectors on how to mainstream gender into their work, understood as the axis of labor administration to guarantee compliance with labor legislation.

Date: September 2022

Activity 3: Virtual Hemispheric Dialogue on Domestic Work

Description: The gender units will share their progress and strategies to guarantee compliance with labor legislation and respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work in domestic work. The Dialogue will consider actions related to inspection and the expansion of social protection coverage.

Date: March 2023

Activity 4: Virtual Hemispheric Dialogue on Labor Market Insertion and Closing Occupational Gaps

Description: Despite having made significant progress in education -with considerable increases in years of schooling for women in recent decades-, and improvements in training systems and employment services; there are still strong gender biases in occupations. In this dialogue, experiences on the gender approach in job placement strategies will be shared, as well as the use of seals or distinctions for companies committed to gender equity, as tools to eliminate said biases.

Date: July 2023

Activity 5: Documentation Center

Description: The Network will have a documentation center with publications and useful resources for the units. It was agreed that the Technical Secretariat will make a proposal of parameters for the inclusion of resources in this space, which will be discussed and agreed upon by the Steering Committee. Once these parameters are agreed upon, the collection and systematization of documents will begin.

Date: July – December 2022

Activity 6: Open a permanent channel of communication

Description: The Committee agreed to open a WhatsApp group with the participation of a maximum of 3 representatives per country. It also highlighted the importance of having clear rules to manage this space and to avoid losing sight of its objective—to serve as a direct and permanent channel of communication between the focal points for the established purposes of the Network—. The members of the Committee will send to the Technical Secretariat recommendations for the rules of operation for this group. Once the rules have been agreed upon, the group will be opened and the focal points will be invited to participate. The Technical Secretariat will moderate this space.

Date: July – December 2022

Activity 7: Continue promoting bilateral cooperation

Description: In the 15th RIAL Call for Bilateral Cooperation (2022), two proposals related to the purposes of RIAL/GENDER were selected: Between Bolivia and Panama on strengthening women's cooperatives, and between Uruguay and Argentina on gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace.

Date: July – December 2022 to finalize the selected cooperation activities; 2023 for new activities.