



**ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**  
Inter-American Council for Integral Development  
(CIDI)



**FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUPS  
OF THE XIX INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE  
OF MINISTERS OF LABOR (IACML)**  
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Washington D.C.

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PROPOSAL

INTERSECTORAL WORKSHOP ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT:  
INTERSECTION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND LABOR

December, 2016 – Brazil

(Prepared by the Technical Secretariats of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor and the Inter-American Committee on Education)

*Note: This event is part of the Activities Calendar for 2016-2017 of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), after it was approved by the IACML authorities during the Planning Meeting held in February, 2016 in Washington, D.C. It is also being included as part of the activities of the Inter-American Committee on Education that gathers the Ministries of Education of the region.*

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

This inter-sectoral workshop will convene the Ministries of Labor and the Ministries of Education of the OAS Member States, and other relevant actors to discuss the strategies they are developing, especially in coordination, to improve the situation of youth in the labor market.

**FRAMEWORK AND BACKGROUND<sup>1</sup>**

The relationship between education and labor is a priority for the region, that has generated continuous discussion in the development of labor, education, development, and productivity policies.

Education is a fundamental process to develop human capital, training children and youth to acquire key abilities and knowledge that will allow them to actively participate in the integral development of their countries. This is done through their insertion in a productive and decent life, that at the same time contributes to the construction of more democratic, inclusive, and socially just societies.

Work is a means for personal realization and social contribution that allows individuals to develop their capacities, acquired and learned throughout their lives. It is through work that the benefits (or

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the document “Outline for the Dialogue Between Ministers of Labor and Ministers of Education in the framework of the XIX Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor” of October 15, 2015 – OAS/Ser.K/ OEA/Ser.K/XII.19.1, CIDI/TRABAJO/doc.6/15.

lack thereof) of human capital are exposed. In the hemisphere as well as in other regions, the quality of work and the probability that it is decent, productive, protected and well paid depends largely on the level and quality of education.

Groups of people living under conditions of poverty or vulnerability possess fewer opportunities for accessing and completing a quality education. Consequently, they have fewer possibilities for accessing quality and well-paid jobs. In most of these cases, they insert themselves in precarious and lower-paying jobs, reproducing a vicious circle that deepens poverty and inequality in the region.

In addition to the above, the region faces a great paradox: on the one hand, millions of people can not find jobs, and on the other, businesses can not find the talent they are looking for. This mismatch, which has been described in recent studies<sup>2</sup> as occupational inadequacy or skills gap, poses a threat to employment, productivity, and increased social inclusion in the region.

This gap affects mostly young people in the region. They face unemployment rates that double or triple those of adults, are over represented in the informal economy, and face high levels of inactivity.

Additionally the rapid changes in the workplace driven by the fourth industrial revolution's technological advancements require significant education and vocational training adjustments to be made. According to a recent study conducted by the World Economic Forum, 65% of children that are entering primary school will work in jobs that do not exist today<sup>3</sup>.

**This situation, which includes the unequal status of various groups in the labor market based on their educational level, skills gap, difficult situation for youth, and accelerated changes in the world of work, makes it urgent to have greater coordination between the Ministries of Education and Labor regarding: strengthening vocational and educational training systems, skill certifications and employment service systems, and prepare the workforce to respond to the development needs of the countries and the demands of the productive sector.**

The Organization of American States (OAS) has made significant strides to improve the dialogue and coordination between the Ministries of Labor and Education in the region, through its Ministerial Meetings. A space for dialogue was opened for the Ministries of Labor of Mexico and Panama, in representation of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML), during the Meeting of Ministries of Education, held in February 2015 in Panama. Likewise, the XIX IACML held in Cancun in December, 2015, hosted a panel about "Education and Labor: integrated public policy making to promote effective inclusion in the labor market", with an intervention from the Minister of Education of Panama, who is the President of the Inter-American Committee on Education and represented the Ministers of Education in the region.

Currently, the goal is to strive towards a technical exchange between the Ministers of Education and Labor to discuss and exchange experiences on strategies to advance youth employment.

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<sup>2</sup> See for example: Manpower Group: Talent Shortage Survey, 2015 y World Bank Enterprise Surveys.

<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum. The Future of Jobs (2016)

## **MANDATES: HEMISPHERIC COMMITMENTS**

In the Plan of Action of Cancun, approved during the XIX IACML in 2015, the Ministers of Labor decided to:

- “Deepen intersectoral collaboration between Ministries of Labor and Ministries of Education in order to strengthen education and continuing training systems to better prepare the workforce, particularly young people, in accordance with the sustained, sustainable and inclusive development needs of our countries and the demand of the productive sectors, paying special attention to vulnerable populations.” (Article. 6, f)
- “Propose solutions and develop greater efforts to achieve a better match between, on the one hand, the contents of the training and skills of the workforce, and on the other, the needs of the productive sector. These efforts should include tools that anticipate demands for training, such as labor market observatories and prospective sector studies, as well as social dialogue platforms such as sectoral councils and spaces for tripartite discussions and decisions.” (Article. 6, i)

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Objectives:**

- Learn about the strategies adopted by the Ministries of Education and Labor to improve their education and vocational training systems, and prepare their labor force based on development needs and demands of their country’s productive sector. (Changes to the world of work, produced by the so-called fourth industrial revolution, are shaping these needs and demands)
- Identify and analyze specific collaboration and coordination initiatives between the Ministries of Education and Labor in the region to improve the labor inclusion of youth. Identify lessons learned and recommendations of these initiatives.

### **Participants:**

- Officers from the Ministries of Labor and Ministries of Education
- Worker’s and Employer’s representatives (advisory bodies of the IACML)
- Vocational training institutions and university representatives
- International Organizations
- Non-governmental organizations dedicated to improving labor inclusion of youth

### **Structure:**

2 or 3 days of work combining presentations from Ministries of Labor and Education regarding concrete initiatives that emphasize intersectoral coordination, and open dialogue spaces for all the participants. On-site visits or sub-group discussions could also be included.

**Financing:**

During the Planning Meeting of the IACML in February 2016, authorities agreed on the following contributions:

- The Brazilian government will cover the costs of logistics and assembly of the meeting, including English-Spanish simultaneous interpretation.
- The Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL), will assign \$25,000 dollars to co-finance travel expenses for representatives of Ministries of Labor from small economies and other expenditures that may be required.
- Other financing sources will be explored. Ideally, the Inter-American Committee on Education could identify resources inside of their working plan to help cover travel expenses for representatives of the Ministries of Education.