**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](http://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.