

**FOLLOW UP TO THE XII INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE
OF MINISTERS OF LABOUR (IACML)**

Final Document

**Lines of Action and General Recommendations Adopted at the Follow-up Meeting
to the Inter-American Program: Gender and Labour - SEPIA I**

Washington, D.C., December 11-12, 2001

Based on the commitment entered into at the XII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour (IACML), held in Ottawa, Canada, in October 2001, to integrate a gender perspective into the development and application of all labour policies, it is recommended that the governments of the OAS member states develop the lines of action stated below, to be implemented by the governments and especially, by their labour ministries.

These lines of action should be considered and integrated, as appropriate, in keeping with the priorities of the member states and with the topics established for each working group created by the XII IACML (Group 1. Labour dimensions of the Summit of the Americas process; and Group 2. Building the capacity of labour ministries), in which the CIM should offer to participate in a technical advisory capacity on the issue of gender.

They also take into account the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality, adopted by the XXX OAS General Assembly and endorsed by the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit of the Americas, which recommends that the governments of the member states formulate public policies and strategies and take steps to promote women's human rights and gender equity and equality in all spheres of public and private life, bearing in mind women's full diversity and their life cycles. (Based on IAP IV.I.I)

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), recognizing the advances achieved in the integration of a gender perspective in the Declaration and Plan of Action from the Third Summit of the Americas and in the Declaration and Plan of Action of Ottawa from the XII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour, considers that these advances can only be sustained if they have continuity and are implemented as long-term policies.

The following lines of action are proposed:

1. Institutionalization of the gender perspective

- 1.1 Strengthen coordination with national machineries for the advancement of women to integrate the gender perspective into labour policies.*
- 1.2 Explicitly integrate the gender perspective within the mandates of the ministries of labour, ensuring that it is reflected in the objectives, design, implementation, and monitoring of policies, plans, and programs, as well as in the criteria for recruiting and training staff through the establishment or strengthening of the appropriate mechanisms, with due regard for the budget resources needed for execution.*
- 1.3 Establish coordination strategies for mainstreaming the gender perspective in labour policies, with particular attention to the ministries or national institutions*

responsible for devising and negotiating macroeconomic policies on economic, productive, commercial, and financial development.

- 1.4 Establish formal and informal consultation mechanisms, convened by the ministries of labour, for the formulation of policies, including in the social dialogue such sectors as women's organizations, microentrepreneurs, and workers in the informal sector.*
- 1.5 In coordination with the national machineries for the advancement of women, design and implement consciousness raising strategies directed to the social actors to stimulate a change in cultural patterns that affect gender equity.*

2. Research and studies

- 2.1 Improve labour information and statistical systems from a gender perspective, in coordination with the national offices of statistics, to produce statistics broken down by sex and introduce new measurement instruments that allow information to be gathered on key issues and provide a better understanding of the situation of women.*
- 2.2 Conduct studies and research to:*
 - Determine the impact of globalization and economic integration on urban and rural women workers, with particular emphasis on social and labour dimensions;*
 - Identify gender stereotypes in human resource and labour policies that prevent women's full and equal access to employment;*
 - Examine the linkage between the educational system and the productive sector, to harmonize labour supply and demand in order to identify new employment opportunities for women;*
 - Identify the differential impact of macroeconomic policies on men and women in the labour market;*
 - Analyze the impact of labour and social security reforms from a gender perspective;*
 - Identify the labour situation of women throughout their lifetimes and promote the exchange of best national practices, particularly for implementing actions aimed at achieving active, productive, and healthy aging for women;*
 - Identify the impact of labour policies on the working conditions and relations of rural women; and*
 - Quantify the social and economic contribution of unpaid work performed by women and promote its inclusion in national account*
- 2.3 Carry out a thorough analysis of the database of the Survey on Progress in the Plan of Action of Viña del Mar in order to identify measures that have an impact on women, such as the regulation of the new forms of contracting or cross-cutting measures that were not identified as such.*
- 2.4 Promote the conducting of a survey on the follow-up to the plan of action of Ottawa with a similar methodology; this would allow specific progress in integrating the gender perspective through focused and crosscutting measures to be estimated and compared.*

3. Training

- 3.1 *Promote training for male and female labour ministry professionals in the use of gender-based analysis that incorporates a system of indicators to monitor and assess the impact of labour policies on working women.*
- 3.2 *Promote training and technical advisory services on labour rights from a gender perspective directed at:*
 - *staff in oversight agencies;*
 - *workers; and*
 - *union and business negotiators.*
- 3.3 *Foster in the training of judges - in accordance with the respective national systems - the inclusion of programs that ensure effective legal protection for female workers' rights.*
- 3.4 *Train women in nontraditional occupations, to expand and diversify the opportunities available to the female workforce, particularly in new technologies, to facilitate their entry into cutting-edge growth sectors of the economy.*
- 3.5 *Promote training programs for self-employed workers and microentrepreneurs, with emphasis on such areas as labour rights, project design, management and administration, building entrepreneurial capacity, and leadership.*
- 3.6 *Promote training programs to help working women and female employers rise to decision-making positions through the development of skills in management, leadership, direction, and supervision.*
- 3.7 *Promote programs to strengthen the technical capacity of social actors to integrate gender issues into the agendas, collective bargaining processes and bipartite and tripartite social dialogue.*

4. Reviewing, strengthening, and enforcing rules

- 4.1 *Review labour legal provisions that, in the context of the new global economy, could affect the most vulnerable sectors.*
- 4.2 *Review the legal provisions governing domestic employment and bring them into line with those for other salaried workers.*
- 4.3 *Promote standards that facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life for male and female workers with family responsibilities.*
- 4.4 *Establish mechanisms to regulate minimum health and safety standards in the workplace, taking into account the gender perspective, with particular attention to the informal sector.*
- 4.5 *Promote the development of measures to prevent, suppress, and punish sexual harassment and other forms of violence in the workplace.*

4.6 *Promote changes in the provisions of social security systems so as to extend coverage to male and female workers in the informal sector.*

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Strengthen the coordination between the ministries of labour, CIM/OAS and the specialized gender units of international organizations: ILO, ECLAC, IDB, the World Bank, PAHO, and other pertinent agencies, to work together to promote the adoption of crosscutting gender measures in the ministries.*
2. *Participate actively in international conferences and assemblies that include the issue of women and labour in their agendas, such as the II United Nations Global Assembly on Aging (Madrid, April 2002), the II International Conference on Rural Women (Madrid, October 2002), the XXIX Session of ECLAC and others.*
3. *Urge governments to comply with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up, adopted in 1998, and consider the ratification and implementation of ILO conventions that promote gender equality in the workplace and in economic development, such as the ILO conventions on maternity protection (No. 3, 103, and 183) in accordance with the situation in each country; equal remuneration (No. 100), discrimination (No. 111), and workers with family responsibilities (No. 156).*