Management Report 2019

Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE)

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Introduction

In 2019, the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE) contributed to improving the living conditions of all citizens and to protecting economic, social and cultural rights in the region, through political dialogue and technical cooperation. SARE´s work expanded the opportunities to continue advancing the social inclusion agenda of the Organization of American States (OAS) aiming at reducing social gaps and structural inequalities.

SARE continued supporting member states providing technical advice during the review, design and implementation of social policies, as well as initiatives to overcome poverty and inequality. Among the highlights of 2019 is SARE´s Strategic Plan 2020-2021, which was presented to the Secretary General and member states in December of 2019. The plan was prepared by the entire team of the Secretariat and describes the Secretariat objectives and how to achieve them contributing to the institutional strengthening of the organization.

The partnership between the OAS and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to consolidate the Regional Integral Framework for Protection and Solutions (MIRPS for its Spanish acronym) to support the Governments of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama to implement the Framework as a regional contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees. The Secretariat participated in the High-Level Session of the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, on December 17 and 18, 2019 and presented the OAS contribution towards the MIRPS.

Similarly, SARE facilitated the participation of over 800 representatives from civil society and social actors in the forty-ninth regular session of the OAS General Assembly, June 26 to 28, 2019, in Medellin, Colombia. During the event the organizations presented proposals and recommendations on ways to innovate to strengthen multilateralism in the hemisphere.

The Department of Social Inclusion (DSI for its Spanish acronym) provided assistance as Technical Secretariat of the Meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities of Social Development (REMDES, for its Spanish acronym) during the fourth REMDES, on March 28-29, 2019, in Guatemala. The Ministers and High Level Authorities representing 24 member states adopted for the first time a Plan of Action (2019-2021) which will serve as an Inter-American Agenda for Social Development to follow-up on relevant issues for the region such as multidimensional poverty, strengthening social protection systems and promoting regional cooperation.

Through the Program for the Promotion of Inclusive Education in the Americas more than 6,000 professionals were trained during 2019 in inclusion and exercising the rights of persons with disabilities. Similarly, 150 OAS staff members and non-staff personnel increased their knowledge on mainstreaming the LGTBI group perspective in programs and projects of the

GS/OAS, and on intersectionality to address Groups in Situation of Vulnerability (GSV), and in particular, in collaboration with the CIM and the IACHR.

These initiatives are some of the numerous actions that SARE has put in place to fulfill its mission, i.e., ***to build more inclusive and equitable societies, promoting access to rights, the empowerment of groups in a situation of vulnerability, and citizen participation***.

In 2020, SARE will continue working with member states promoting political dialogue and technical cooperation to build more inclusive and equitable societies, fostering access to rights, the empowerment of groups in a situation of vulnerability, and citizen participation.

1. Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE)

The Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity, was established in 2015 by the Permanent Council Resolution CP/RES. 1055 (2036/15) "Structure of the General Secretariat"[1], and performs its functions according to the Executive Order 08-01 Rev. 9, of December 11, 2015[2]. It is the technical and political area of the General Secretariat whose task is to support the efforts of the OAS Member States to monitor regional juridical instruments on human rights; to implement policies and programs that facilitate the enjoyment of those rights, as well as a greater social inclusion, equity and social justice, with special emphasis on populations in situations of vulnerability such as indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and persons with disabilities; persons in situations of poverty and extreme poverty; LGBTI persons; children and adolescents; young people; migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, stateless persons, victims of human trafficking; older persons, among others.

SARE is comprised of the Executive Office of the Secretary for Access to Rights and Equity and the following areas:

- Department of Social Inclusion (DSI)
- Relations with Civil Society and other Social Actors (part of the Executive Office)
- Access to Justice (Inter-American Judicial Facilitators Program)

SARE STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2021:

In 2019, after four years of operation of the Secretariat, it was decided to develop a two-year strategic plan with objectives to be achieved by the end of 2021 to concur with the OAS Comprehensive Strategic Plan 2016-2020. The strategic planning exercise was carried out by all members of the department in addition to their regular duties with the expectation to achieve the following objectives: to review and redefine the strategic objectives of the Secretariat and ensure that they were aligned with the objectives of the OAS Comprehensive Strategic Plan 2016-2020; to improve the institutional narrative to present clearly and consistently the mission, vision, objectives, programs, and activities of the Secretariat; to position the crucial role of SARE in fulfilling the OAS mission of ensuring "more rights for more people" in the Americas; and to strengthen institutional mechanisms for transparency and accountability by aligning the objectives of the Secretariat personnel with the objectives of the SARE Strategic Plan 2020-2021 in order to facilitate the implementation of a results-based management model in the Secretariat.

[1] For more information see http://www.oas.org/legal/english/gensec/cp34979e08.pdf
[2] See Executive Order 08-01 Rev. 9 http://www.oas.org/en/sla/docs/executive_order_08-01_Rev9_eng.pdf

The strategic planning exercise resulted in the following mission, vision and strategic objectives of SARE:

- **MISSION**:

To work together with OAS Member States ***to build more inclusive and equitable societies, promoting access to rights, the empowerment of groups in a situation of vulnerability, and citizen participation****.*

- **VISION**:

To be ***the hemispheric benchmark for dialogue, technical cooperation, design and implementation of policies*** *and initiatives with a rights-based approach for social inclusion with equity.*

- **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**

  - *To promote results-based* ***hemispheric dialogue and technical cooperation*** *with and among OAS Member States on issues related to access to rights, social inclusion with equity, empowerment of groups in a situation of vulnerability, and citizen participation, in order to strengthen the capacity of state institutions in charge of these areas.*

  - *To* ***generate knowledge bases****, build capacities, and manage and disseminate information on public policies, laws, programs and good practices of the Member States aimed at promoting social inclusion with equity, empowerment of groups in situations of vulnerability, citizen participation and access to justice.*

  - *To contribute to the* ***observance of human rights*** *in the region by monitoring the norms and standards of the inter-American system.*

  - *To* ***strengthen the capacities of civil society*** *and other social actors, and facilitate their participation and articulation in OAS activities.*

- *Intensify **SARE's institutional strengthening** efforts to ensure optimal working and budgetary conditions that enable it to effectively fulfill its mandates and responsibilities.*[3]

SARE´s work focuses on the critical points to achieve the global and regional goal of reducing social gaps, promoting equity, social inclusion and exercising rights, in order to contribute to the full realization of the human rights of the citizens of the Americas, through the promotion of social inclusion and equity.

To advance the agenda of access to rights and equity in the region, SARE will continue working with member states in their efforts to eliminate structural barriers to accessing equal opportunities and to improve the living conditions of persons in situations of vulnerability through technical cooperation, the exchange of experiences and best practices, political dialogue and the implementation of specific and focused development projects with emphasis on populations that are in a situation of poverty and / or greater vulnerability, which represent a high percentage of the population of the Americas.

[3] See SARE´s Strategic Plan 2020-2021 at:
http://www.oas.org/es/sadye/publicaciones/SARE_Strategic_2020_ENG.pdf

2. Programs of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity

SAREs´ programs have the objective of strengthening the institutional capacities of national agencies with responsibilities for inclusion and social development, access to justice, migration and attention to groups in vulnerable situations. In this effort, the programs that SARE implements facilitate the exchange of information and good practices, identifies successful experiences and provides training to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of policies, programs and projects in these areas. The programs implemented by SARE are:

❖ PROGRAM ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN THE AMERICAS

The objective of this program is to support OAS member states in their initiatives to improve the governance of migration in the region; better address the challenges associated with migration, maximize opportunities with a rights approach; and generate responses for the best care of populations that face situations of vulnerability in migratory processes including children, girls and adolescents, indigenous and Afro-descendant populations and LGBTI people.

- **Commission on Migration Issues**

The Committee on Migration Issues (CAM for its acronym in Spanish) is the organ of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) that addresses migratory issues in the Americas in an integral manner, covering the different realities and dynamics in migration flows that occur in the hemisphere.

The Committee promotes a constructive and informed dialogue among member states on the causes of the current international migration flows, the solutions necessary to respond to the challenges of this phenomenon and how to maximize the opportunities that it generates.

Also, one of CAM mandates is to be accountable to the institutions of the inter-American system that are in charge of implementing activities related to international migration.

The work of the Committee in 2019 produced the following results:

- Nine CAM meetings facilitated and supported by the Technical Secretariat. These meetings covered different themes such as the international standards on protection of migrant workers, steps that member states are taking toward meeting goal 10, particularly the target 10.c, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of Migrant Remittance, of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and on good practices and lessons learned for States currently implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration through different regional scenarios. High level officials from the following institutions: the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the

International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), the Migration Policy Institute, the World Bank, as well as members from the Technical Secretariats of the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) and the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) and scholars from different universities.

- As part of the activities of the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of the Human Rights of Migrants, Including Migrant Workers and their Families, during the CAM sessions in 2019, several informal meetings took place with those responsible of the objectives of the Program. During these meetings staff from the Department of Public Security of the OAS, the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and the Inter-American Children´s Institute (IIN) were present. A report was presented and approved by the CAM.

- The draft resolution "Regional Cooperation Regarding Migration in the Americas" was presented to the CAM and four paragraphs were considered for the draft omnibus resolution "Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development" and were approved during the forty-ninth regular session of the OAS General Assembly, on June 28, 2019, in Medellin, Colombia.

- As part of the activities of the joint project "Venezuelan immigration in South America: support to the socio-economic insertion in receiving countries" that is being carried out among the OAS, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Ministries of Labor of the following countries: Argentina, Brasil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay, received recommendations on the socio-economic integration of the Venezuelan population, as part of the *Hoja de Ruta del Proceso de Quito,* during a meeting that took place in Bogota, Colombia on November 13, 2019. Among other objectives this project promotes regular migration for all workers and equal opportunities and treatment for women and men migrants and it linked with goal 8 on economic growth and decent work, of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly objective 8.8: "Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment".

- **Continuous System of Reports on International Migration in the Americas (SICREMI)**

The SICREMI responds to a mandate by the OAS member states to develop an instrument that facilitates the access and analysis of international migration trends in the Americas and that can

provide support in the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly the 17.18 target of goal 17 on data disaggregation, as mandated in different resolutions by the Permanent Council and the General Assembly since 2007[4].

In the pursuit of this mandate the SICREMI has facilitated the collection and processing of data related to of international migration flows in the Americas. Data collection has been done by adopting the methodology of the Continuous Reporting System on Migration known under its French acronym as SOPEMI, originally developed by the Secretariat of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)[5]. This methodology, however, has been adapted to the realities of countries of the Americas where there has not been a systematic collection of data on international migration and where data collection practices may differ from those of the OECD members.

The SICREMI operates through a Network of National Correspondents that are designated by the member states that participate in the report including. Argentina, Barbardos, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

The main product of SICREMI is the biannual preparation of the report on International Migration in the Americas that is published every two years. So far there have been four reports (2011, 2012, 2015 and 2017).

In addition to the concept notes that were prepared and presented during 2019 to invite donor prospects to consider supporting SICREMI, on November 5, 2019, the Department of Social Inclusion, in its role of Technical Secretariat presented to the CAM the advances related to the "Cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank on the SICREMI Project".

Other activities carried out under the "Program on International Migration in the Americas" during 2019 were:

- Participation of SARE and support provided during the preparation of the Conference of Health Ministers on enhancing regional coordination in response to the impacts of forced displacement in the region. A total of 14 member states participated in this event. 18 recommendations resulted from the conference and member states agreed to

[4] On October 24th, 2007 the Permanent Council of the OAS established the Committee for Migratory Affairs with the mandate of, among others, develop a data matrix for the analysis of international migration flows in the Americas. The result was the creation of SICREMI two years later.

[5] OECD, *International Migration and the SOPEMI,* 2011, available at: https://www.oecd.org/migration/48342373.pdf

work on actions to expand vaccination programs and to increase medical services to displaced populations, among other agreements.

- SARE organized in collaboration with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), the International Forum “the Protection of the rights of Refugees and Migrants in Peru and Colombia, within the International, Inter-American and National frameworks: Possibilities and Opportunities.” This event took place in Lima, Peru, on August 7-8, 2019. Presenters in the event included representatives from the governments of Colombia and Peru, from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the International Labor Organization (ILO). Participants in the event included national government officials from Peru and Colombia, as well as mayors, and representatives from NGOs and academia. The event helped to generate awareness among participants about the relevance of respecting the human rights of migrants and refugees based on the principles enshrined in the Inter-American system of human rights.

- The colloquium "The Role of Local Authorities in Cities Hosting Migrants and Refugees: Lessons from Colombia" organized by SARE was held at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., on December 4, 2019. The event was attended by the Director of Democracy, Governance and Human Rights at the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), the President of the Committee on Migration Issues (CAM), the Presidential Advisor for the Border with Venezuela, the Secretary of Social Inclusion of Bogota, the Mayor of Villa del Rosario (Norte de Santander), the Mayor of Fonseca (La Guajira) and the First Lady of Ipiales (Nariño). Based on the Colombian experience, the discussion showcased the challenges and opportunities faced by the Colombian local authorities involved in the reception, assistance, protection, socio-economic and cultural integration of Venezuelan migrants and refugees. During the event, the participants shared good practices, lessons learned and proposals for solutions that could be replicated by other countries of the region.

❖ PROGRAM TO SUPPORT THE REGIONAL INTEGRAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS MIRPS (OAS/UNHCR JOINT UNIT)

The Regional Integral Framework for Protection and Solutions (MIRPS for its Spanish acronym) was established in the Declaration of San Pedro Sula, in 2017, by the Governments of Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama to work jointly on the implementation of the Comprehensive Response Framework for Refugees as a regional contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees adopted at the UN General Assembly on December 17, 2018.

The MIRPS constitutes a regional cooperation framework between countries of origin, transit, and destination, that promotes shared responsibility mechanisms, strengthens protection, and enhances solutions for refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, and returnees with protection needs. It brings together Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, and is a clear expression of collaboration between governments, civil society, private sector, academia, regional and international organizations and development banks. The MIRPS serves as a practical tool to mobilize the support of the international community.

Within this program and during 2019, the OAS/UNHCR JOINT UNIT achieved the following results:

- At least 15 meetings have been organized with OAS Permanent Missions and nine virtual meetings with the technical teams to coordinate aspects related to MIRPS, prepare annual meeting and negotiate the Declaration of Mexico City.

- Proposal for the establishment of a MIRPS Voluntary Fund to finance activities presented to the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) of the OAS Permanent Council to follow-up on OAS Resolution AG/ RES. 2941 (XLIX-O / 19) “Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.”

- Presentation of the MIRPS Second Annual Regional Report including updated national plans from the seven participating countries: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, during the Second Annual Meeting of the MIRPS, in Mexico City, Mexico, on November 8, 2019.[6]

[6] The Second Annual Regional Report is available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/II%20Annual%20Report%20of%20the%20Regional%20Comprehensive%20Protection%20%26%20Solutions%20Framework%20%28MIRPS%292019.pdf

- Adoption of the Mexico City Declaration, on November 8, 2019, to promote a coordinated regional response to the phenomenon of forced displacement in the region in the short, medium and long term.[7]

- First subregional meeting with civil society organizations, on December 7, 2019, in Mexico City, with the participation of 25 civil society organizations to propose a civil society participation mechanism in the MIRPS process.

- Presentation about the OAS contribution for the protection of refugees in the High Level Session of the first Global Refugee Forum, December 17-18, 2019, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Second Annual Meeting of the MIRPS

[7] The Mexico City Declaration is available at: https://www.refworld.org.es/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain/opendocpdf.pdf?reldoc=y&docid=5de6a23f4

❖ PROGRAM TO PROMOTE THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS IN SITUATIONS OF VULNERABILITY

The objective of the program is to support OAS member states in promoting the rights of groups in situations of vulnerability[8] and in designing and implementing public policies for social inclusion, as well as preventing and eradicating of racism, discrimination, and intolerance in the Americas. The program to Promote the Rights of Persons in Situations of Vulnerability works with older adults, people of African descent, children and adolescents, young people, people with disabilities, LGBTI people, and indigenous peoples.

- **Persons with disabilities**

The work related to the rights of persons with disabilities is defined in a cross-cutting manner in the implementation of two instruments of the Inter-American System: the Inter-American Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (CIADDIS for its acronym in Spanish), and the Program of Action for the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2026 (PAD).

The Department of Social Inclusion of SARE provides support and technical assistance to the member states by implementing these instruments through two lines of action: a) monitoring of regulatory frameworks; b) the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.

a. Monitoring of regulatory frameworks

In order to follow-up on the commitments made by the 19 States Party that have ratified the CIADDIS[9], Article VI of the Convention called for the establishment of the Committee for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (CEDDIS), which serves as a forum to review the progress made in the implementation of the Convention and to exchange experiences among States Party. SARE, through its Department of Social Inclusion (DSI), serves as Technical Secretariat for the Committee.

Likewise, the DSI participates in the monitoring and implementation of the Program of Action for the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. With the adoption of this program, OAS member states have committed to gradually adopt, within a reasonable time, the administrative, legislative, judicial measures, as well as the public policies

[8] Groups in a Situation of Vulnerability refers to the group of people who due to race, color, lineage or national or ethnic origin, cultural identity, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, migratory, refugee, returnee, stateless or internally displaced person status, disability, genetic characteristics, or bio-psycho-social conditions or any other conditions, have historically been discriminated against and have had the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of their rights denied or violated. Definition based on the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance. Available at: http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter_american_treaties_A-69_discrimination_intolerance.asp

[9] Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

necessary for persons with disabilities to be on par with others. The DSI also acts as the Technical Secretariat in charge of coordinating the activities of the Program.

The highlight of 2019 in the monitoring of regulatory frameworks was the presentation on the progress made by States Parties in the elimination of all discrimination against persons with disabilities, during the Twelfth Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that celebrated the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the CIADDIS, on June 12, 2019.

b. Promotion of rights of persons with disabilities

The line of action for the promotion of rights is oriented towards social awareness and the generation or strengthening of capacities of government authorities or entities, judicial operators, legislators, civil society organizations, the business sector and areas of the OAS General Secretariat in general, to adopt inclusive public policies, mainstream the disability perspective and eliminate the gaps caused by discrimination. The objectives of this line of action are: a) to train the different public and private actors within the community and protagonists of the educational processes in the countries, in theories and practices of educational inclusion of and with persons with disabilities at all levels of the educational system, and b) to strengthen the capacities of persons with disabilities and their families to act as facilitating agents to eliminate barriers for quality educational inclusion of students with disabilities.

Among the programs being implemented by SARE is the "Program for the Promotion of Inclusive Education in the Americas," within the framework of the agreement signed between the OAS and the International Telethons Organization (ORITEL), to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disability in the region.

The program, initiated in September 2017, is the first synergistic action between both institutions and consists of the joint implementation of two-day seminars-workshops in nine OAS member states that also belong to the ORITEL Network.

Some results achieved in 2019 under the line of action "promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities" are the following:

- Agreement signed between the OAS and Associated Universities INC (AUI) to promote initiatives on inclusive education in the Americas in the framework of the Program of Action of the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2026 (PAD) Launch of a Global Online Survey on resources for educational inclusion, within the framework of the agreement.

- 6,000 people from Argentina, Chile, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Ecuador, Panama, and the United States, increased their knowledge on the Program of Action of the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2026, rights of persons with intellectual disabilities and neurodiversity; inclusive education, legal capacity; access to justice; women with disabilities and prevention of gender violence, political leadership of persons with disabilities, and inclusive public policies for Persons with Disabilities.

- Technical assistance provided in the subject of legal capacity of persons with disabilities during the discussions of the law that guarantees the full legal capacity of all adults with disabilities on equal terms with other people approved on June 20, 2019, by the Colombian Congress.

- Core Group of 10 member state Friends of Persons with Disabilities, created with the support from DSI-SARE and composed by: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador (who leads the group), Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, and Peru. The group is open to the participation of more member states, and its objectives are to promote actions, programs, projects, public policies and initiatives aimed at guaranteeing the rights and social inclusion of this population in the Americas and fostering collaboration between countries.

- Exhibition of the Spanish film: "Champions," to the Permanent and Observer Missions to the OAS, staff of the GS-OAS, academics, international organizations, cooperation agencies and the general public of Washington, DC. The film won the Goya award 2019 for best film and is based on the story of a basketball team made up of players with intellectual disabilities. The presentation was sponsored by the Spanish Foundation ONCE, and the Permanent Observer Mission of Spain to the OAS.

- 400 people increased their knowledge during a seminar on Inclusive Education in Peru. The Seminar facilitated discussions on the new Public Policy in Education currently under development. The event, broadcasted by webcast, included officials of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, Ministry of Labor, teachers and educational community of regular and special schools; students with and without disabilities, students of pedagogy and law in different universities and leaders of civil society organizations of people with disabilities and their families, among others.

- Document on recommendations to make inclusive education effective in schools prepared and presented to public authorities of Ecuador.

- **People of African Descent**

People of African Descent are among the most vulnerable groups in the hemisphere as a result of poverty, underdevelopment, social exclusion, economic inequalities, which are closely linked to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance practices. In 2016, the OAS General Assembly adopted the Plan of Action of the Decade of People of African Descent in the Americas 2016-2025 and member states committed to gradually adopt administrative, legislative, judicial and budgetary measures to ensure that People of African Descent in the Americas enjoy their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

In 2018, as part of the implementation of the Action Plan, the Inter-American Network of High Authorities on Policies for Afro-descendant Populations (RIAFRO) was created. RIAFRO's mission is to promote dialogue, coordination, and permanent collaboration between national authorities, with the objective of ensuring the implementation of policies for People of African Descent, according to international and regional obligations in the Americas.

SARE's work in 2019 to promote the rights of People of African Descent resulted in the following products:

- Celebration of the Second Inter-American Week of People of African Descent with the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and Member States.
- Organization of the "Afro-descendants in the Americas" Photography Contest in conjunction with the MERCOSUR Institute of Public Policies in Human Rights (IPPDH).
- Creation of the 360 VR Photo Exhibition "Afro-descendants in the Americas" in conjunction with the IPPDH.
- Collaboration with the Afro-Latin American Research Institute of Harvard University (ALARI) for the creation of the Certificate on Afro-Latin American Studies.
- Organization of the exhibition "The Afro-descendant Art of the Museum of Art of the Americas of the Organization of American States (AMA)" in conjunction with the Art Museum of the Americas and ALARI.

360 VR Photo Exhibition “Afro-descendants in the Americas”

Top left © Salomao, Helen. March 29, 2018
Top Right © Salomao, Helen. November 23, 2015
Bottom left © Diaz-Cano, Andres. February 28, 2019
Bottom right © Garcia Pereira, Rodrigo January 26, 2019

- **Indigenous Peoples**

Indigenous peoples have been and are victims of discrimination and historical exclusion, facing many challenges to the exercise of their human rights. Given this situation, the General Assembly of the OAS has been approving various resolutions, and in June 2016 it approved the American Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - after 17 years of negotiation. The Declaration is the OAS instrument that promotes and protects the rights of indigenous peoples of the Americas.

In 2017, the OAS General Assembly adopted the Plan of Action on the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2017-2021). The main objective of the plan is to contribute to the full recognition, exercise and enjoyment of the rights of indigenous peoples at the national and hemispheric level through the support of the Organization of American States and other instances of the inter-American system.

In 2019, SARE's efforts to promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples resulted in the following achievements:

- Celebration of the Second Inter-American Week of Indigenous Peoples with the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and Member States.
- Agreement signed between the OAS General Secretariat and the Amazon Conservation Team (ACT) for the inclusion of interns from Indigenous communities in the OAS Internship Program to promote the efforts of protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples according to the Plan of Action on the American Declaration on the Rights of. Indigenous Peoples.

- **Older Persons**

In the Americas, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), there are about 106 million older persons living in Latin America and the Caribbean, and it is estimated that by 2050 this figure will reach approximately 310 million, of which 190 million will be living in Latin America and the Caribbean. Given this situation, the OAS General Assembly adopted the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons. The Convention aims to promote, protect and ensure the recognition and full enjoyment and exercise, on equal terms, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of older persons, to in order to contribute to their full inclusion, integration and participation in society.

SARE has the responsibility of carrying out the agenda of rights and social inclusion of older persons, with the Convention as a framework for action.

Some results achieved by SARE in 2019 related to social inclusion of older persons are the following:

- Layout and dissemination of the pocket edition of the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons.
- 300 Ecuadorian public officials trained on the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons to implement the inter-American instrument in their country.
- Strategic Alliance with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador.
- Strategic alliance with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Center for Research on Aging Rights of the National University of Rosario (Argentina).

- **LGBTI Persons**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) persons face discrimination, stigmatization, and intimidation because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Despite some advances in the protection of their rights and their inclusion, LGBTI persons are subject to human rights abuses such as violence and discriminatory laws and practices, mainly as a result of the weak state of law in most countries.

In 2013, the OAS General Assembly adopted the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, which is the first inter-American legal instrument and the only one at the global level that includes LGBTI persons as subjects of international protection. In 2016, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, United States and Uruguay, created the OAS LGBTI Core Group. The objective of this group is to promote collaboration and the exchange of practices among countries to protect the rights of LGBTI persons.

The DSI of SARE has the mandate to work on behalf of the rights and social inclusion of groups in situation of vulnerability, which includes LGTBI persons.

SARE's main achievements in 2019 in this field of work were:

- 150 OAS staff members and non-staff personnel of the GS/OAS increased their knowledge on mainstreaming LGBTI rights in programs and projects of the GS/OAS, and on intersectionality to address Groups in Vulnerability Situation (GSV). DSI worked in collaboration with the Inter-American Commission of Women and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to deliver these workshops.

- Organization of the Roundtable on Economic Prosperity for All: Tourism and the LGBTI Community, which took place on April 5, 2019, at OAS Headquarters in Washington, DC, in collaboration with the Department of Economic Development of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) and the Rapporteurship on the Rights of LGBTI persons of the IACHR. Over 70 people from the private sector, civil society and universities attended and learnt about experiences in the region that promote economic prosperity for all and result in economic benefits for countries of the region.

- **Youth**

According to the World Youth Report of 2018, the proportion of the youth in Latin America and the Caribbean is 17% and 10% of the working youth of the region are living in poverty.[10] Youth experience higher unemployment rates and lower wages than older generations which affects the exercise of their rights. In 2016, the OAS General Assembly, approved resolution AG/RES. 2887 (XLVI-O / 16) "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights", in which member states called for the strengthening of protection systems to guarantee the full exercise of the rights of children and adolescents and promote universal and inclusive public policies with special attention to traditionally excluded groups.

SARE, through its Department of Social Inclusion (DSI), works towards the social inclusion of the youth working with Member States to strengthen social protection systems and promote inclusive policies to reduce the vulnerability of the youth.

One of the highlights of SARE's work in 2019, in the promotion of more inclusive policies to protect the youth is the agreement signed between the OAS General Secretariat and JA Worldwide Inc. (JAWW), a 100-year nonprofit organization committed to preparing young people for employment and entrepreneurship, to establish cooperation mechanisms to coordinate activities on the social inclusion of young people in vulnerable situations.

- **Consumer Rights**

The protection of the rights of consumers through surveillance of the safety of consumer products and the prevention of the impact of dangerous consumer products on the health and well-being of consumers requires the adoption of coordinated actions among the competent agencies to combat their circulation in the markets. In 2010, the OAS member states created the Consumer Safety and Health Network (CSHN), to strengthen national and regional cooperation capacities to contribute to the early detection of dangerous consumer products to avoid their circulation in the markets.

Under the work plan 2018-2019 of the Consumer Safety and Health Network the work of the network resulted in the following achievements:

- Presentation of the evaluation report on the development of alerts in the member states of the CSHN spearheaded by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce of Costa Rica (MEIC). The report gathered information on how the procedures for the publication and dissemination of dangerous product alerts are carried out in the RCSS member states.

- Agreement signed between the OAS General Secretariat and the Superintendence of Industry and Commerce of Colombia (SIC) for the transfer of the administration of the Rapid

[10]United Nations (2018). World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development p. 13 Available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf

Alert System (SIAR). This agreement allows for the update and sustainability of the platform at no cost for the OAS.

❖ PROGRAM FOR THE PROMOTION OF EQUITY

The objective of this program is to promote the social development commitments approved by the member states in the inter-American instruments, through political dialogue, knowledge management, technical cooperation, and monitoring of these instruments in order to strengthen the social policies of the States party and the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR). Within this program and during 2019, progress was made in the following processes:

- **Monitoring and Compliance Mechanism on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

The Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights, in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, "Protocol of San Salvador" is a binding legal instrument that has been signed by 20 countries and 16 have ratified it: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Uruguay. The Department of Social Inclusion of SARE serves as Technical Secretariat of the Working Group for the Analysis of National Reports envisioned in the Protocol (WGPSS).

The main functions of the WGPSS include providing inputs to promote the equity agenda in the region and the discussions on economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), and providing concrete tools for monitoring and improving public policies in this area. It is composed of four government experts, two independent experts, and the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (REDESCA for its Spanish acronym) of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

Among the main achievements of the Working Group in 2019, are the following:

- Preparation of the Guidebook for the Operationalization of the Indicators of the Protocol of San Salvador from a Cross-Cutting LGBTI Perspective. The guide provides recommendations on how to use the 714 progress indicators of the Protocol to collect information that is currently unavailable concerning the exercise of ESCER by LGBTI persons.[11]

- Preparation of the Auxiliary Guide for the Preparation of the Consolidated Report of the States Parties to the Protocol of San Salvador and technical assistance provision to Honduras, Peru and Uruguay during the elaboration of these reports.

[11] The Guidebook for the Operationalization of the Indicators of the Protocol of San Salvador from a Cross-Cutting LGBTI Perspective is available at: http://www.oas.org/en/sare/social-inclusion/protocol-ssv/Guia_Operacionalizacion_Indicadores.pdf

- The WGPSS evaluated the reports of Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay and delivered its observations and recommendations for the effective realization of ESCER.

- **Ministerial Process on Social Development**

An additional space for dialogue in the OAS to build regional consensus and promote technical cooperation among member states are the Ministerial Meetings on Social Development (REMDES for its acronym in Spanish) where the Ministers and High-Level Authorities of the region meet to exchange useful information, to review, design and implement social policies, social protection and economic inclusion initiatives to overcome poverty and inequality. In these meetings, the governments of the region establish commitments to advance the implementation of the Action Plan of the Social Charter of the Americas, the Protocol of San Salvador, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Department of Social Inclusion (DSI) serves as Technical Secretariat of the Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities of Social Development (REMDES for its Spanish acronym), and its Inter-American Commission for Social Development (CIDES for its Spanish acronym). The Department of Social Inclusion coordinated the preparatory activities for the fourth REMDES (Guatemala, March 2019).

During the fourth REMDES participants learnt about nine best practices on social policies from the following member states: Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico.

Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Social Development

The following are the main achievements of the fourth Inter-American Ministerial Meeting on Social Development:

- First ever Plan of Action on Social Development (2019-2021) approved by the 24 Member States that attended the meeting. This plan of action will be a road map for the implementation of concrete activities related to multidimensional poverty, social protection systems and promotion of regional cooperation.

- Agreement to work on 26 priorities related to the promotion of social development in the region.

- Identification of cooperation opportunities between the OAS and other international organizations such as the World Bank, ECLALC, PADF, EUROsociAL, and the Central American Social Integration Secretariat (SISCA for its Spanish acronym), to implement the plan of action.

- Approval of the Omnibus resolution "Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development" during the forty-ninth regular session of the OAS General Assembly, on June 28, 2019, in Medellin, Colombia to establish a Voluntary Fund to finance activities related to the Plan of Action.

Additionally, in 2019, among other actions that were carried out under the “Program for the promotion of equity” was the publication of the Interamerican Guide on Strategies for Reducing Educational Inequality together with the Inter-American Dialog and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF for its Spanish acronym). The guide offers strategies to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at the pre-primary, primary and secondary level through actions that respond to the specific and diverse needs of different marginalized groups and provide them with high-quality education.

Presentation of the “Interamerican Guide on Strategies for Reducing Educational Inequality”

❖ PROGRAM FOR THE PROMOTION AND INCREASE OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL ACTOR PARTICIPATION IN OAS ACTIVITIES

The presence of civil society, including local organizations and vast networks of non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and social actors has contributed to reaching hemispheric objectives in the strengthening of democracy, the protection of human rights, the promotion of integral development and multidimensional security, as well as other ongoing initiatives of the OAS, which are part of the Inter-American Agenda. Mutual trust and understanding between civil society organizations (CSO), social actors and the OAS have significantly progressed over the years, which has resulted in an increase in the level of participation of CSO and social actors in initiatives, projects and activities which the organization carries forth.

SARE's work in this area focuses on four points: guaranteeing the conditions for the participation of civil society in the forty-eighth regular session of the OAS General Assembly; act as secretariat and provide technical support for the Commission on Inter-American Summits Management and Participation of Civil Society in OAS Activities (CISC), managing the registration of civil society organizations with the OAS; and last, generating an expansion of civil society participation in OAS activities.

For the period covered by this report, the following results were obtained:

- 27 new CSO were registered with the OAS, for a total of 569 registered CSO from 542 the previous year. An additional 55 requests were received and are current being analyzed.

- The process of organizing civil society into groups of like-minded organizations and actors was institutionalized and the Coalitions were made permanent, with a total of 33 coalitions.

- Proposals and recommendations were collected (and presented to the member states at the forty-ninth regular session of the OAS General Assembly, June 26 to 28, 2019, in Medellin, Colombia) from over 800 representatives from civil society and social actors, on ways to innovate and strengthen multilateralism in the hemisphere.

- Participation of civil society representatives in the 49th OAS General Assembly increased by 143% compared with the previous General Assembly, and the number of CSO present at the Assembly increased by 120%.

- There was also a 204% increase in the participation of representatives from Indigenous Peoples and Communities of African Descent at the 2019 regular session of the General Assembly with a total number of 64 participants compared to 21 the previous year.

- Establishment of two additional civil society coalitions that defend and promote Women's Human Rights, during the forty-ninth regular session of the OAS General Assembly, June 26 to 28, 2019, in Medellin, Colombia, for a total of three coalitions compared to the previous year. Likewise, the percentage of women representatives of civil society organizations in the forty-ninth regular session of the OAS General Assembly was 58%.

Dialogue of Heads of Delegation, with the Secretary General and representatives of civil society and other social actors

❖ INTER-AMERICAN PROGRAM OF JUDICIAL FACILITATORS

The objective of the Inter-American Program of Judicial Facilitators (IPJF) is to increase access to justice for populations in vulnerable condition in the Americas. The program began under the framework of the peace agreements in Nicaragua in the 1990s, after more than two decades of internal conflict due to the absence of the State and its institutions in the provision of justice to groups in situations of vulnerability.

Through the Secretariat of Access to Rights and Equity, the IPJF works with judicial bodies in accordance to the the mandates of the General Assembly to facilitate access to justice. The IPJF provides technical assistance to member states' judicial institutions through the establishment of a "National Service of Judicial Facilitators." This Service is adopted and provided by the national governments, and consists of training local facilitators in conflict prevention and resolution to serve as a bridge between legal institutions and the population.

Participants in the program include leaders elected by their own communities - called judicial facilitators - who provide mediation, advice, and dissemination of information on rights and obligations to members of their community. These judicial facilitators are volunteers, identified and chosen at the local level to provide information on citizens' rights and the rule of law, provide legal guidance and advice to community members, conduct mediations, and collaborate with local authorities. The judicial facilitators are appointed, trained and supervised by local judges. The Program is currently operating in Argentina, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay, and works actively with judicial institutions to build the capacities they need in order to progressively integrate the Service into the judicial process and ensure its sustainability.

The program creates more rights for more people by improving citizen security and bringing access to justice to vulnerable populations and communities with limited, or no access to existing judicial institutions. The cross-cutting program supports all four OAS pillars democracy, human rights, integral development and multidimensional security.

Due to the changes made in the management of the project, 2019 was a transition year. During this period the following activities took place:

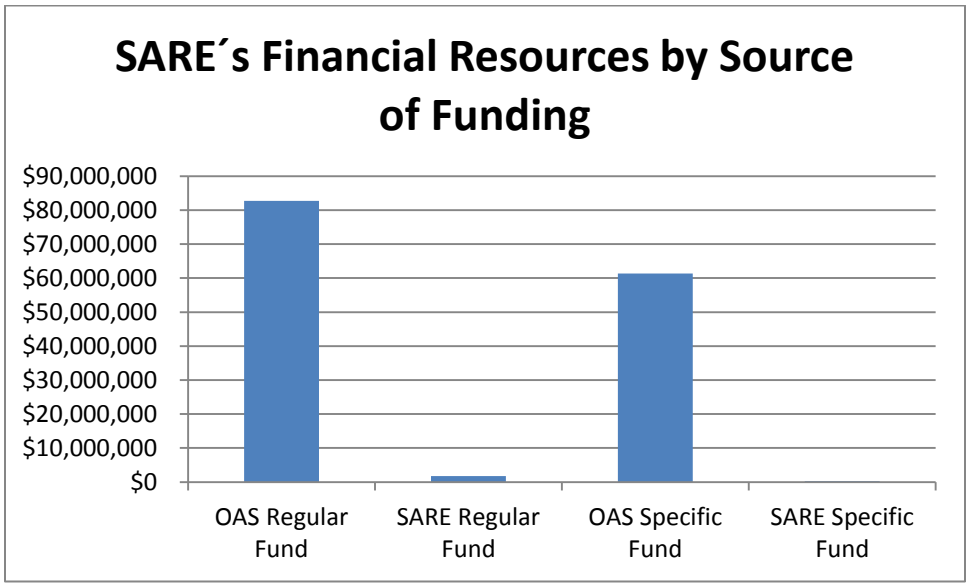
- Fact-finding visits to the participants countries to collect information for a diagnostic to re-evaluate the program's potential impact in Central America as well as to support the creation of national plans of action to support the program.
- Preparation of the program's operational plan, which is being developed jointly with the counterparts and national offices in the program countries in order to strengthen the figure of the judicial facilitator in rural and urban areas and indigenous communities.

- Participation of Secretary Gastão Alves de Toledo, in the First Inter-American Forum on the National Service of Judicial Facilitators in San José, Costa Rica, on September 24-25, 2019. The participants included judges and judicial facilitators from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama.

3. Financial resources 2019

In 2019, the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE) received 2% (US$1,731,400) of the total Regular Fund budget (US$82,700,000) of the OAS, representing one of the Secretariats with the fewest Regular Fund resources allocated, as well as the fewest staff.

With regards to specific funds, the GS/OAS received a total of US$61,312,975 in 2019 of which SARE received US$201,185 or 0.33% of the total amount of specific funds of the Organization.



4. Partners

To optimize the fulfillment of its task in the hemisphere, SARE has created alliances with governmental institutions, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and other international organizations at the regional and global levels: