

XII Conférence interaméricaine des ministres du Travail
XII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour
XII Conferencia Interamericana de Ministros de Trabajo
XII Conferência Interamericana de Ministros do Trabalho

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES
WORKING GROUP 2

Working Group 2 is halfway into the mandate established for it by the Ottawa Plan of Action. The following is a review of work undertaken to date and some tasks ahead.

A. OBJECTIVES

The next meeting of Working Group 2, which will take place in Montevideo, April 1-3, 2003, will address capacity building of labour ministries, with a particular focus on the needs of smaller economies; other areas will include technical assistance, child labour, the ILO *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, and the Report of Working Group 2. There are two areas where follow-up is required:

1. REPORT OF WORKING GROUP 2

The Working Group's final report will be tabled in Rio de Janeiro in October 2003 at the XIII IACML. A draft outline of the report will be presented for discussion and approval in Montevideo. Following that, a preliminary report will be drafted and circulated to participants for approval prior to the Preparatory Technical meeting in Brasilia, scheduled for July.

2. ONGOING OBJECTIVES OF IACML

As Chair *pro tempore*, Canada has proposed a joint meeting of Working Groups 1 and 2 in Montevideo to identify next steps to respond to the ongoing objectives of the IACML, namely: how to strengthen the capacity of labour ministries; develop and manage capacity building technical assistance projects; and undertake research into labour administration issues. The Secretariat will circulate a project proposal in advance of the meeting.

B. STATUS

Activity 1 (Ottawa Plan of Action)

→ *Develop new mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of projects and technical assistance to build the capacity of smaller economies and their institutions*

At the first meeting of Working Group 2 in Santo Domingo, April 2002, several papers were tabled on work being undertaken in the area of labour administration. These included a framework for best practices and technical assistance needs (ILO), an overview of the survey on the needs of smaller economies, and a study of best practices in occupational health and safety (OAS), and an experience with horizontal cooperation related to labour competency certification (OAS/Mexico).

For the second meeting of Working Group 2, a number of products to be delivered was agreed to, some of which follow:

- The ILO will compile a preliminary inventory of technical assistance in the Americas. Based on this, it will prepare a diagnostic on how best practices could be promoted in the hemisphere, with a view to guiding and defining a series of horizontal projects and technical assistance for smaller economies;

- The OAS will complete a survey of smaller economies' needs for capacity building of their labour administrations and for future horizontal cooperation;
- CARICOM, Dominican Republic and Chile offered to share examples of best practices in labour administration;
- The OAS and the ILO will present a catalogue of best practices in occupational health and safety;
- COSATE and CEATAL will present their analyses on capacity building for smaller economies in labour administration, with suggested best practices.

Activity 2 (Ottawa Plan of Action)

→ *Focus on the most effective means to implement labor laws and standards and to foster equality of opportunity as well as strategies to promote employment, training, life-long learning and human resource development*

A number of studies will be tabled in Montevideo, including:

- a regional assessment of education, employment and poverty in the Americas, implications for labour policy, and a proposal for action; the study will include a sub-regional diagnostic report and analysis of social indicators (OAS);
- best practices in labour ministries from the gender viewpoint (CIM);
- best practices in occupational health and safety (OAS).

Activity 3 (Ottawa Plan of Action)

→ *Work with the assistance of the ILO to promote public awareness of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up, and to promote initiatives involving the private sector, including those of both business and labor*

At the first meeting in Santo Domingo, the ILO provided useful information on how a number of governments are promoting the Declaration in the Americas. The Dominican Republic and Chile shared their experiences in raising the awareness of the Declaration, while business and labour groups looked at non-government initiatives and underlined the need to continue the dialogue and to monitor employers' progress in the application of the Declaration's principles.

For the Montevideo meeting, the ILO will prepare a preliminary report of best practices of regional promotional activities with particular attention to challenges, as well as a preliminary analysis of lessons learned with experiences and active measures employed to put into practice the Declaration's principles.

Activity 4 (Ottawa Declaration)

→ *We will continue to work towards the elimination of child labor and ... promote hemisphere-wide ratification and implementation of the 1999 ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182)*

- A half-day workshop on Technical Assistance, based on the experiences of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), is being organized in Montevideo by the ILO project team supporting the IACML. The ILO will also highlight some of the advances made in the Americas to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.
- Mexico, Chile and Dominican Republic will report on their progress.