



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



**FIFTH MEETING OF MINISTERS AND  
HIGH AUTHORITIES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON THE FOURTH MEETING OF MINISTERS AND HIGH-LEVEL  
AUTHORITIES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (IV REMDES)**

Prepared by the Department of Social Inclusion of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity  
(SARE/OAS)

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Inter-American Committees of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) is to coordinate the implementation of the inter-American ministerial dialogue in their respective areas of competence by following up on the agreements reached at ministerial meetings, on the mandates of the OAS General Assembly, and on those arising from decisions adopted at the Summits of the Americas, and by identifying multilateral initiatives and inputs for the execution of OAS partnership for development policies in accordance with the Organization's Comprehensive Strategic Plan.<sup>1</sup>

In the area of social development, the Inter-American Committee on Social Development (CIDES) was created in 1996 to strengthen inter-American dialogue in support of the formulation of policies and the development of cooperation actions in social matters, particularly those aimed at combating poverty and discrimination in the Hemisphere, with emphasis on mechanisms to close gaps. The Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity of the OAS Department of Social Inclusion serves as the technical secretariat for CIDES and for the social development ministerial process.

To fulfill its purpose, CIDES leads the organization of the Meetings of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development (REMDES), the purpose of which is: (a) to provide a forum for dialogue on social policies and consensus-building among OAS member states, (b) to identify regional trends and priorities, (c) to facilitate exchanges of experiences and best practices in the design and implementation of policies, (d) to identify opportunities for cooperation among the ministries and other entities responsible for social inclusion, and (e) to define the OAS working agenda to support member states in addressing regional social development priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Committees of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (adopted by resolution CIDI/RES. 328 (LXXIX-O/18) of May 29, 2018).

Since the creation of CIDES in 1996 (when it was originally called the Social Development Committee), four social development ministerials have been held: Reñaca, Chile (2008), Cali, Colombia (2010), Asunción, Paraguay (2016), and Guatemala City, Guatemala (2019).

One of the most important outcomes of the most recent ministerial meeting was the adoption, for the first time in the area of social development within the OAS, of a plan of action — the [Plan of Action of Guatemala 2019](#) — which set down lines of work and specific actions to be implemented over the period from its adoption until the next Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development in 2022.

The three-year social development ministerial cycle has been delayed from the deadlines established in the “General Guidelines for Sectoral Ministerial Processes within the Framework of CIDI” (CIDI/doc.228/17). One of the reasons for this delay was the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected our region since March 2020, which brought significant pressures to bear on the response capacity of all government institutions and, in particular, of the institutions involved in this ministerial process (ministries of social development and equivalent agencies), which were forced to prioritize their attention on the national challenges and burgeoning demands they faced; this affected their ability to make progress with the implementation of the phases of the ministerial cycle within the deadlines set.

At the same time, the formation of the working groups for the implementation of the [Plan of Action of Guatemala 2019](#) took time. This was mainly due to the fact that the Plan of Action of Guatemala, as previously noted, is the first plan of action in the social development area to be adopted within the Organization of American States (OAS), requiring a series of efforts to socialize its contents among the sectoral social development authorities and to encourage the authorities to join and lead them. The result was the creation, for first time in this area, of two working groups at the end of 2019.<sup>2</sup>

## **II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION OF GUATEMALA**

Despite these obstacles, the authorities of the Inter-American Committee on Social Development (CIDES) and the Troika — comprising Mexico, Paraguay, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic — reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Plan of Action of

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<sup>2</sup> [Working Group 1](#): “Measurements of multidimensional poverty and the design of public policies intended to guarantee well-being and enjoyment of a good quality of life.” Chair: Secretariat of Well-being of Mexico; Vice Chair: Employment and Social Development Canada; other members: Ministry of Social Development of Guatemala, and Ministry of Social Development of Paraguay.

[Working Group 2](#): “Social protection systems that lead to social development, through the reduction of poverty and inequality, and expand social protection with a comprehensive approach.” Chair: Social Policy Coordination Cabinet of the Dominican Republic; Vice Chair: Ministry of Human Development and Social Inclusion of Costa Rica; other members: Ministry of Social Development of Guatemala, Ministry of Social Development of Paraguay, Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion of Peru, Ministry of Social Development of Uruguay, and Ministry of Social Development of Argentina.

Guatemala and held numerous virtual working meetings through which they developed and approved a work plan in April 2021 (CIDI/CIDES/RPA/doc.3/21 rev. 1).

Since then, the working groups have remained active and they have met periodically since 2021, defining and designing activities for the implementation of the Plan of Action of Guatemala 2019 as a road map for addressing the priorities and lines of action agreed on in the adopted Declaration and, in that way, for continuing to advance with its objectives related to poverty eradication, inequality reduction, expansion of social protection, and hemispheric cooperation to promote social development.

A list of the activities carried out by the active working groups during 2022 appears below.

### **Working Group 1:**

1. Organization of a **Virtual Workshop** titled “Multidimensional poverty indexes, good practices and lessons learned in the Americas, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty.” The workshop was held on April 26 and 27, 2022.

Workshop aims: To present current poverty indexes and the design of multidimensional poverty measurement systems, and to discuss how multidimensional poverty measurements can be a useful tool for decision-making and the formulation and implementation of public policies intended to mitigate and address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on vulnerable groups.

Working method: The OAS member states and experts in the field were invited and encouraged to give presentations at the different thematic plenary sessions and/or to attend the workshop. In addition, in February 2022, a questionnaire was distributed to the member states inviting them to share, in written form, their experiences, promising practices, and lessons learned in the design and application of multidimensional poverty measurements. The workshop was simultaneously interpreted into the four official OAS languages (English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish) and was attended by 170 participants from 21 OAS member state delegations. The information gathered through the questionnaire and through the interactions at the workshop sessions served as key inputs for the production of a Compendium of regional experiences in measuring multidimensional poverty.

2. Preparation and publication of the **Compendium of experiences and lessons learned in the measurement of multidimensional poverty in the Americas.**

Aim: To publish a compendium with updated information on: (i) multidimensional poverty measurements in the region, (ii) the situation of multidimensional poverty among people belonging to groups in situations of vulnerability and/or extreme poverty, and (iii) regional experiences with the use of multidimensional poverty measurements for the design and review of public policies to eradicate poverty.

The Compendium is an unprecedented publication that compiles the experience of fourteen of the region's countries in this area (Argentina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru) and expert inputs from the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). The compendium has been published in Spanish and English and will be translated into French and Portuguese in December 2022.

The exchange of experiences, promising practices, and lessons learned from the development and implementation of multidimensional poverty measurements contained in this compendium is essential for the countries of the Americas to learn from each other and for the region to return to its pre-pandemic poverty reduction trends.<sup>3</sup>

### **Working Group 2:**

1. Organization of a **Virtual Workshop** titled “Policies and innovations in social protection to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic,” held on May 26, 2022.

Aim: To identify gaps, innovations, and lessons learned by social protection systems in the region during the current crisis, highlighting the tools and instruments that were useful, raising the profile of the role played by social development ministries, and recognizing the importance of investing in adaptive social protection during extreme climate events and crises.

Working method and results: OAS member states were invited to share their national experiences with the design and management of social protection systems and public policies in this area; prominent experts were also invited, who contextualized the issues addressed and provided general conceptual frameworks. The workshop involved two consecutive plenary sessions, structured as follows: experts' presentations, presentations of experiences with national public policies and programs (Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, Ecuador, Mexico, and Colombia), and an open discussion among attendees. This workshop, which offered simultaneous interpreting between Spanish and English, was attended by 150 people who were able to learn about some of the experiences implemented in the region in response to the social needs triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants also discussed the challenges and opportunities of monetary transfers as a strategy to support the population and considered possible alternatives for the fiscal and financial sustainability of social protection systems.

It should be noted that these activities were dependent on the availability of technical and financial resources, and so special thanks go to the contributions made by the Governments of Canada and the Dominican Republic, who, as the leaders of the working groups, provided the necessary economic inputs for these activities to take place.

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<sup>3</sup> Moreno, H. and Pinilla-Roncancio, M. (2021) “Multidimensional Poverty and COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: Recent Trends and the Route Ahead,” OPHI Briefing 57, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), University of Oxford.

It should also be recalled that, in order to ensure the sustainability of the working groups and the proper conduct of their activities, a specific fund was created by a 2019 resolution of the General Assembly,<sup>4</sup> to receive voluntary contributions from OAS member states, international and regional organizations, foundations, and other public and private bodies interested in providing support. Those institutions are encouraged to contribute, to the extent of their possibilities, to ensure funding for the initiatives to be pursued under the Plan of Action of the Dominican Republic 2022.

### **III. PREPARATION PROCESS FOR V REMDES**

At its regular meeting of February 22, 2022, the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) approved the formal convening of the Fifth REMDES, as well as the necessary updates to the triennial ministerial process calendar, which made it possible to maintain the date selected for the ministerial meeting (November 17 and 18, 2022).

The CIDES authorities, with support from the social development ministerial process's technical secretariat (SARE/DIS), have met periodically over the course of 2022 to follow up on the proposed schedule and ensure compliance. Thus, they prepared preliminary drafts of the central documents of the Fifth REMDES: (a) proposals for slogan and themes, (b) the draft Declaration, and (c) the draft Plan of Action. These documents include inputs provided by the CIDES authorities, the Troika (Paraguay, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic), and the members of Working Groups 1 and 2. In addition, nine informal meetings were held between June and November to negotiate the documents, and a formal preparatory meeting for the Fifth REMDES was held on October 20, 2022.

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<sup>4</sup> [AG/RES. 2939 \(XLIX-O/19\)](#) “Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development,” adopted by the OAS General Assembly at its forty-ninth regular session, held in June 2019 in Medellín, Colombia, operative paragraph 29.