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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (SEDI)

TO THE INTER-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (CIDI)

(January -December 2020)

(Approved during the regular meeting held February 23, 2021)

ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (SEDI)

(January- December 2020)

INTRODUCTION

The work of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development of the Organization of American States (OAS/SEDI) is guided by the core tenets articulated in the OAS Charter and Social Charter of the Americas. SEDI derives its mandates from the Summit of the Americas, the OAS General Assembly and the various sectoral meetings at ministerial level. Fundamental to the work of OAS/SEDI is political dialogue and technical cooperation among the member states working towards the socio-economic development of the region. Through high- level political dialogue, OAS/SEDI works with member states to define policy and priorities that they consider critical to the alleviation of poverty and the elimination of inequality in the Hemisphere. Policy imperatives are translated into programs, projects and activities which are implemented through cooperation and in partnership with other regional an international public and private institutions and civil society organizations with common goals. The OAS Comprehensive Strategic Plan approved in 2016 tasked OAS/SEDI with some specific objectives in the following areas: education, competitiveness, small and medium enterprises, labor, culture, science and technology, resource management, renewable energy and energy efficiency, tourism and sustainable development. Activities in these core areas are primarily geared towards human capacity building and institutional strengthening to foster a strong socio-economic ecosystem which allows for the amplification of democratic governance in each member state. Additionally, OAS/SEDI promotes competitive, secure, sustainable, and inclusive port development in OAS Member States.

The organizational structure of OAS/SEDI includes the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES),three departments: (i) the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment (DHDEE); (ii) the Department of Economic Development (DED); and, (iii) the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD), and the Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP). OAS/SEDI also works closely other Secretariats within the OAS as well as with OAS affiliates such as the Trust for the Americas, the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT), and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF). Additionally, SEDI has established partnerships with other international organizations; then too, civil society organizations, the academic community, and the private sector, pursuant to its remit.

In addition to being the Secretariat of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development(CIDI)- the primary multilateral forum for dialogue on the development challenges facing the region, OAS/SEDI provides advisory services and direct technical assistance to member states on specific issues and finances, implements, and/or coordinates specific development projects with resources from the Development Cooperation Fund (DCF/OAS) and with external resources from member states, Observer Member States, Development Banks, the private sector, academia and other partners. The core remit as articulated in OAS Charter SEDI continues to be a conduit for Triangular, South-South, and Horizontal cooperation. Through its many networks, programs and projects, OAS/SEDI facilitates the transfer of knowledge lessons learned and good practices between and among members states as they lead and manage their own socio-economic development.

While much of SEDI’s work is funded by voluntary contributions from member states and other donors, recent decline in the development dollars for the Latin American and Caribbean region, among key donors has presented the Secretariat with the challenge of inadequate resources which has negatively impacted it’s ability for fully respond to the emerging needs of member states. For this reason resource mobilization remains a key component of SEDI’s work.

In 2020 the member states of the Organization of American States confronted unprecedented challenges. The public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic exploited and amplified structural weaknesses to generate economic, social, and political turmoil that upended progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, in its role as the development arm of the Organization, pivoted in its execution of activities under the OAS 2016 Comprehensive Strategic Plan to reposition existing programs and initiatives to meet the emergent needs of member states in their response to the complex challenges occasioned by the pandemic. This work was supported by the development and leveraging of strategic partnerships that expanded the resources available to respond to the crisis.

This year’s report includes the results attained by SEDI in each of the strategic lines and objectives included in the development pillar portion of the Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the Organization. [AG/RES. 1 (LI-E/16)]

**STRATEGIC LINE 1: PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND COMPETITIVE ECONOMIES**

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, SEDI programs such as the Caribbean Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) program, and the recently launched Facebook and WhatsApp Business initiatives have provided micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and policymakers with capacity building opportunities and business tools to aid their response, recovery and resilience building. Additionally, 11 special editions of the OAS-MSME Newsletter have supported knowledge sharing on measures adopted by the member states to mitigate the pandemic's economic impact on MSMEs. Other initiatives, such as the RIAC COVID-19 Ideas Accelerator, virtual HUB on Technology Transfer and Commercialization for the Americas, and the RIAC meeting on "Re-Defining the Competitiveness Agenda for the Americas: Imperatives for the RIAC for a Post-COVID Recovery" held in preparation for the 11th Americas Competitiveness Forum have also contributed to identifying tools and new policies to strengthen the MSME ecosystem in member states.

**OBJECTIVE 1.1. Enhance the capacity of member States institutions that support the design and implementation of policies and programs that encourage productivity, entrepreneurship, innovation and internationalization of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), as well as cooperatives and other production units.**

**OAS MSME Digitization Program**

* Organized six (6) roundtables through the OAS-Facebook Initiative with MSME authorities of member states and shared 25 good practices with more than 85,000 viewers to help small businesses recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Also shared presentations on free Facebook online MSMEs tools.
* Launched a joint initiative with WhatApps Business to directly deliver customized virtual training programs to MSMEs and a train-the-trainer program for MSME authorities/centers to strengthen resilience and recovery from the pandemic.
* Digitized over 70,000 MSMEs in 11 member states to increase their visibility, access, profitability, and resilience.

**OAS Foreign Trade Information System SICE**

* Launched MSME Online Clearinghouse and OAS MSME Newsletter to enhance knowledge sharing on good practices, horizontal cooperation initiatives, policies, programs, and projects that support the MSME sector in OAS member states.
* Published 14 newsletters, including 11 special editions (English and Spanish) on measures adopted by member states to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on MSMEs.

**The Caribbean Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Program**

* Hosted **"Breakthrough***"* webinar series (May 18-20, 2020) in conjunction with Ten Habitat via Facebook live and Zoom that provided over 2,900 Caribbean entrepreneurs with tools and strategies to successfully respond to changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The practical and interactive sessions shared "real-life" case studies from Caribbean MSMEs.
* Hosted **"Moving Beyond the Likes: Social Media for Business Success"** webinar (June 15-16, 2020) in conjunction with Ten Habitat that provided over 1060 Caribbean entrepreneurs with tools and strategies to harness social media and digital technologies to promote and grow their businesses.
* Economic impact: 977 new business started; 5,717 small businesses served; 2,220 women entrepreneurs/ women-owned businesses served; over 684 jobs created and 12,391 jobs supported through SBDC interventions; $67,257,990.76 in sales revenue and $7,112,695.22in profit generated; 96 business expansions; and $1,121,028.60in Capital Infusion leveraged through loans and equity in six Caribbean member states.
* Launched the Network of Caribbean SBDCs to foster high-level policy dialogue, cooperation, exchange of best practices, and the adoption of initiatives among SBDCs and MSME Authorities in the CARICOM region.
* Implemented capacity building interventions for SBDC directors and advisors in strategic planning in partnership with LBL Strategies; SME Credit and Financial Analysis in partnership with Moody's; and strengthening of the supporting agencies in the MSME ecosystem in partnership with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA).
* Completed policy document on strengthening of the Guyanese MSME support ecosystem and received validation from relevant stakeholders.

**OBJECTIVE 1.2. Increase regional cooperation, the Exchange of knowledge, the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms and conditions and inter-sectoral collaboration among and within member States in the areas of competitiveness, productivity, and innovation.**

**The Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC)**

* Shared over 240 initiatives from 23 countries in the RIAC COVID-19 Ideas Accelerator on tech-driven tools, health solutions, business support initiatives, and economic response and recovery plans implemented by member states in response to the pandemic.
* Convened regional dialogue, hosted by the Government of Ecuador as Chair Pro Tempore of RIAC, on economic recovery and resetting the competitiveness agenda of the Americas to guide preparation and program development for the XI Americas Competitiveness Forum (ACF) scheduled for 2021.

**The Americas Competitiveness Exchange (ACE)**

* Supported the development of four collaborative projects initiated through the ACE Network:
  + Club of Entrepreneurs in Tucumán, Argentina created: provides training and co-working spaces to more than 1,400 members.
  + Bogota's ICT Business Incubator and Accelerator (BICTIA), Colombia started operations: supports scale-up of startups, invests in early-stage businesses, and offers training in coding to the underprivileged population.
    - Trained 1,066 beneficiaries in coding, accelerated and incubated 70 startups, and invested a total of $380,000 in 6 startups.
  + Aerospacefy LLC incorporated in Puerto Rico, USA, as a subsidiary of the Brazilian company Orbital Engenharia: provides research and development services for aerospace solutions.
  + FEDESOFT and Colombia Productiva started a collaboration with Toronto-based MaRS Discovery District (a business support center for tech-based startups): provides capacity building support and soft-landing services for Colombian SMEs to scale-up into Canada.
    - Workshops implemented in five Colombian cities
    - One Colombian company commenced operations in Toronto, Canada.
* Facilitated the signature of two agreements between ACE stakeholders:
  + The Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil in Ecuador and the United States-Mexico Foundation for Science (FUMEC) entered into an international cooperation agreement to promote academic and scientific exchange to accelerate and scale-up startups and SMEs in Ecuador.
  + The Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil and the San Carlos University of Guatemala entered into an international cooperation agreement to promote academic exchanges to advance science, new technologies, and applied research.

**The Group of Experts on Subnational Competitiveness (GTECS)**

* Launched the Inter-American Certification for good practices on construction permits with Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico at the Annual Permitting Meeting of GTECs, hosted by the Government of Mexico.
* Shared 20 good practices on advancing Regulatory Reform and Construction Permits with federal, state, and municipal authorities of member states.
* Hosted 12 virtual webinars with over 1,500 participants highlighting economic recovery experiences within the COVID-19 pandemic context with a subnational perspective.

**OBJECTIVE 1.3. Increase cooperation for strengthening member states institutional capacities on incorporating innovation and transformative technology to create added value and diversification in their economies in a sustainable and inclusive fashion.**

**Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI)**

* Shared 15 national strategies, experiences, and good practices on science, technology and innovation in response to the pandemic in three regional ministerial dialogues of the Inter-American Commission of Science and Technology (COMCYT).
* Extended the COMCYT Work Plan to the end of 2021 and included additional activities on applying science, technology, and innovation to the response and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Launched, in collaboration with the government of Mexico and the Technical Secretariat of the COMCYT, the second edition of Prospecta Americas under the theme **"Technology Foresight in the Americas: Challenges of a New Reality"** to improve initiatives on emerging technologies in the region and leading collaborative projects in the areas of technology foresight and future studies between public, private sector, and research centers of the OAS Member States.
  + Convened under the Prospecta Americas framework, in collaboration with the Peruvian National Council of Science, Technology and Technological Innovation (CONCYTEC) and the Scientific University of the South, webinars on neuroscience and technology which discussed rapid advances, future developments, and the impact of neuroscience in the Americas in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.
* Hosted a virtual **"HUB on Technology Transfer and Commercialization for the Americas"** program, which provided support to entrepreneurs and innovators with the acceleration of technologies "from idea to market," development of innovative businesses, and technology-based solutions to address specific community problems.
  + Trained 35 entrepreneurs in the Dominica Hub for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and 45 technology transfer leaders from universities in Ecuador.
  + Formalized arrangements to host the 2021 edition of the regional HUB program with CONCYTEC of Peru and the launch of a HUB virtual mentoring platform (HUB COMUNITT).
* Organized, in collaboration with COMCYT Working Group 2 Partners, four regional forums for dialogue on engineering education, including two virtual editions, which supported the exchange of good practices and provided training in engineering education within the context of the pandemic for more than 1,500 professionals and engineering students of the Americas.
* Supported the launch of the regional dialogue **"Matilda Regional Chair on Women in Engineering in the Americas"** which recognizes and showcases the social, scientific, and intellectual contributions of women to the STEM fields, and contributed a chapter to the second edition of the publication "Matilda and Women in Engineering in Latin America" featuring women in STEM careers.
* Published, in collaboration with the Pontificia University of Medellin (UPB), a "Prospective Study of Engineering Programs to 2035," which identifies 164 problems in Engineering programs across six countries of the Americas and 64 possible scenarios for change and adaptability between now and 2035.

**OBJECTIVE 1.4. Support member States in strengthening the capacities of institutions that foster the generation of sustainable economic activities in the tourism and culture sectors.**

**Culture and Tourism**

* Developed, in partnership with the Convenio Andrés Bello Organization, a Methodological Guide for the implementation of Culture Satellite Accounts in the CARICOM region to support the measurement of culture's contribution to the economy and data-driven policy decision-making.
* Completed execution of the project **Enhancing the Framework for the Development of a Heritage Economy in the Caribbean.**
  + Established National Registrars of Heritage places in Jamaica and Barbados to promote Heritage places as viable economic resources, through the introduction of an efficient system of documentation of these places.
  + Developed Sustainability Proposals for each of the project components to facilitate post-project actions in beneficiary countries.
  + Delivered training in good practices in marketing and promoting Heritage places to heritage professionals and Ministry of Culture officials in the beneficiary countries.
* Finalized and received approval for the 2019-2022 Work Plan of the Inter-American Committee on Culture at the Planning Meeting of the Authorities of the CITUR on May 27, 2020.
* Convened, in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs and George Washington University, the First Indigenous Tourism Forum of the Americas in October 2020, which facilitated dialogue between community, business, and government leaders on development challenges impacting Indigenous people, the role of tourism in driving sustainable economic development, and Indigenous leaders plans for the post-pandemic reality.
* Developed **"Guidelines for the Development of Community Tourism in the Americas"**in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism of Peru in the framework of the CITUR Work Plan 2018-2021.
* Hosted information sharing and capacity building webinars on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Culture and Tourism sectors, including three sub-regional Webinars on **"The Effects of COVID-19 on Indigenous Communities and Tourism"** and other individual events on **"Biosecurity Protocols for Reviving Tourism," "Tourism Security in Times of COVID-19," "Travel and Visa Facilitation during COVID-19," "Reopening of the Tourism Sector: A Focus on Hotels and Restaurants," and "The Orange Economy in times of COVID-19."**
* Convened two meetings of the Inter-American Committee on Tourism to address issues related to the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the tourism and hospitality sectors, execution of Ministerial Mandates, and planning for the Twenty-Fifth Inter-American Congress of Ministers and High-level Authorities of Tourism.
* Compiled, in collaboration with the Secretariat for Multi-dimensional Security, information on travel protocols and regulations in OAS member states and analyzed common guidelines that support safe travel between countries.

**The Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP)**

* Published online compilation of 31 international, 25 national, and 4 hemispheric successful practices, directives, guidelines, protocols, and recommendations regarding COVID-19 safety measures and logistic operations' continuity in ports from member states during the early stages of the pandemic.
* Developed and published on the CIP portal CIP's **Green Port Guide,** in Spanish and English, to provide actionable recommendations on operating a port in an environmentally sustainable fashion and obtaining certification as a "green" port.
* Published and disseminated the CIP Magazine (Volume 30) on **"Port-City Relation: Mutual Empowerment Factor"** offering expert analysis on port-city relation, social responsibility, governance, and legislation.
* Awarded six (6) Maritime Awards of the Americas and three (3) honorary mentions to public, private, and academic institutions from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru for outstanding practices in Social Responsibility, Port-City-Relations, Green Port Operations, Disaster Risk Management, and Empowerment of Women.
* Provided technical expertise in eight virtual events organized by CIP Associate Members and strategic partners, which shared good practices with over 700 participants on topics such as port digitalization; the cruise industry; economic resiliency; future challenges for the port sector; disaster risk mitigation; and port security and protection.

**STRATEGIC LINE 2: STRENGTHEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 2016-2021 INTER-AMERICAN PROGRAM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PIDS).**

In the area of Sustainable Development, the OAS mobilized new sources of funding for projects in the Plata River Basin and delivered technical assistance to energy directors in 30 Member States to encourage the use of reliable, scientific and empirical data in energy management, renewable energy development, and air quality monitoring. The OAS-White Helmet Program enhanced the capacity of Argentina and member states in the Central American region to respond to the the COVID-19 pandemic. SEDI initiatives also helped member states to prepare for and respond to the compounding effect of the pandemic and the historically active hurricane season.

**OBJECTIVE 2.1 Enhanced member states capacities on disaster risk management as per the goals and strategic actions outlined in section 3.1 of the PIDS.**

**Disaster Risk Management and Adaptation to Climate Change**

* Provided technical assistance to the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR) in preparation for the compounding impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the hurricane season, and in response to the impact of hurricane Eta and Iota.
* Provided technical secretariat services to the CIDI Policy Committee to support review of all instruments of the Inter-American System and amendment of the statutes of the IACNDR and the strengthening of the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation (INDM) increasing collaboration with the Inter-American Defense Board for the maintenance of the Hemispheric Authoritative Database on DRM.
* Supported the execution of the OAS-White Helmet Program in Argentina and Central America in response to COVID-19.
* Initiated the execution of the project, **“Building Resilience of Small Tourism Enterprises in the Caribbean to Disasters.”**
* Initiated execution of the CIP capacity building project **“Disaster Risk Management for Port and Maritime Authorities of the Caribbean”,**.

**OBJECTIVE 2.3 Enhance Member States capacities on integrated water resources management as per the goals and strategic actions outlined in section 3.3 of the PIDS.**

**Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)**

* Developed proposal for COVID-19 prevention and containment program to be implemented in the rural area of the Trifinio Region in Honduras in March 2020.
* Continued execution of the La Plata River Basin project, developed through $2M of funding secured through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP), to accelerate actions in the priority areas of water security, climate resilience, and ecosystem health.
* Established groups, drawn from a consortium of 35 experts from the basin area, to provide technical assistance to the CIC for the duration of the project in six thematic areas, including definition of national and regional actions to implement the existing SAP.
  1. Decision-making Support System (DSS) (Chaired by CIC)
  2. Planning, Management and Sustainable Management of Water Resources (Chaired by Argentina)
  3. Environmental Protection/Rehabilitation (Chaired by Paraguay)
  4. Education, Communication and Public Participation (Chaired by Uruguay)
  5. Research and Technological Development (Chaired by Bolivia)
  6. Institutional Strengthening (Chaired by Brazil)
* Drafted La Plata Basin Projects Portfolio for SAP implementation, Sub-basin and National Interventions valued at $98 Million.
* Started execution of the IDB-OAS project **"Strengthening governance capacities in Latin America and the Caribbean to comply with national commitments set out in the Paris Agreement: a perspective from Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Jamaica."**
* Completed preparation of the GEF-UNEP-OAS project **"Fostering Water Security in the Trifinio Region: Promoting the formulation of a TDA/SAP for its transboundary Lempa River Basin***"* valued at $4.8 Million. Following a brief COVID-19 related delay, the project's execution can commence in early 2021 if the pandemic's evolution allows for the implementation of on the ground activities. These activities will be conducted over four years.
* Developed program proposal for strengthening water security and adaptation to climate change in countries and basins affected by glacier retreat in the tropical Andes.
* Continued execution of the **"Regional Framework for the Sustainable Use of the Bravo River Basin" project.**
* Implemented four regional virtual events under the Initiative for Strategic Partnerships for Water in the Americas:
  + 1 for South America.
  + 1 for Brazil.
  + 1 High-level dialogue for Central America and Mesoamerica.
  + 1 For North America (Mexico, U.S., and Canada in cooperation with Brazil).
    - Commenced preparation for a high-level dialogue for the Caribbean to be held in the first quarter of 2021.
* The Glaciers initiative:
  + Established a partnership with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Zurich University.
  + Published scientific article about the integrated management of Andean glaciers.
  + Developed two technical high-level dialogues.
* Commenced discussion with the IDB to develop a joint work program in the integrated water resources management area, focused, among other things, on resilience, transboundary water management, water stewardship, and knowledge management.
  + Signed cooperation agreement with the IDB in December 2020 to mobilize financial contributions towards the development of financial instruments for resilience in the water sector for the promotion of integrated water resources management in the wider Caribbean.
* Started preparation of the programmatic approach of water, which clusters all projects, actions, and initiatives under the Inter-American Program for Sustainable development (PIDS).
* Continued development of knowledge management and products, including:
  + Water and Gender methodology for mainstreaming gender approaches into water management projects.
  + Cooperation Index in Transboundary Waters Methodology.
  + Mainstreaming of the SDGs and the Water Portfolio of SEDI.

**OBJECTIVE 2.4 Enhance member States capacities in the area of sustainable cities and communities as per the goals and strategic actions outlined in section 3.4 of the PIDS.**

* Reviewed a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), opened to all Member States, on sustainable urban communities to provide youth with the tools and knowledge to influence changes in culture, practice and habits, and public policies to achieve sustainable and resilient communities.

**OBJECTIVE 2.5 Enhance member states capacities on sustainable energy management, prioritizing the promotion of clean, renewable, environmentally sustainable energy and energy efficiency as per the goals and strategic actions outlined in section 3.5 of the PIDS.**

**The Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA)**

* Delivered technical assistance to energy directors in 30 member states through workshops, exchange missions, and targeted expert advice to encourage the use of reliable, scientific, and empirical data in energy management, renewable energy development, and air quality monitoring.
* Delivered virtual energy dialogues, workshops and trainings on energy security, grid flexibility, natural gas and energy for economic recovery to over 1,500 participants from the public and private sector, utilities, regulators, multi-laterals, lending institutions, tourism and transportation sectors and academia from approximately 33 Member States.
* Provided technical assistance on energy policies and regulations addressing sustainability, reliability, affordability, and resilience to 30 Members States.
* Facilitated intra-sectoral dialogue between 29 energy ministers and high-level officials, 15 private sector executives, three international financial institutions, and two regional organizations on **"Energy Resilience and Investment Opportunities"**at the IV Ministerial Meeting of ECPA.
* Provided technical assistance to seven Central American countries to guide the drafting of energy efficiency regulations for lighting and raise awareness about the benefits of energy efficiency.
* Launched a network to link experts from metrology institutes across the Western Hemisphere to enhance the sharing of best practices.

**OBJECTIVE 2.6 Enhance member states capacities to attain efficient, effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions for sustainable development as per the goals and strategic actions outlined in section 3.6 of the PIDS.**

**Strengthening institutional capacity for sustainable development**

* Supported the implementation and monitoring (through RBM indicators) of the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) signed in the framework of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR).
* Prepared and submitted the 8th Evaluation Report of the CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation Program (ECP) to the CAFTA-DR Environmental Affairs Council, which showcases results, success stories, challenges, and recommendations of the ECP, in the areas of:
  + Strengthening institutional capacity for effective compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation
  + Building capacity to combat illegal wildlife trade
  + Developing air quality standards, including urban air monitoring systems
  + Strengthening wastewater and solid waste management
  + Strengthening the capacity to conduct environmental impact assessments (EIAs)
  + Promoting conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems
  + Fostering public participation and increasing civil society's knowledge of environmental legislation
* Provided administrative and technical assistance to the Secretariat for Submissions on Environmental Enforcement Matters under the U.S. – Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (U.S. – Peru TPA)," to receive and process public submissions asserting that a Party is failing to effectively enforce its environmental laws.
* Convened five meetings with stakeholders in Peru, and three in the United States to provide details on the Secretariat's work, the submission process, and what to expect when a submission is filed.
* Completed and published the final Factual Record for the Submission filed by the Native Federation of the Madre de Dios River and its Tributaries (Fenamad) from Peru in August 2020. This is the first factual record produced in the Secretariat's history.

**STRATEGIC LINE 3: PROMOTE EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT   
IN THE AMERICAS.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted education systems at a historically unprecedented level. It is also exacerbating pre-existing inequalities for many of the most vulnerable populations, including persons living in poor or rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities, and forcibly displaced persons. As distance learning solutions were implemented, these most vulnerable learners were disadvantaged by, among other things, limited opportunities to develop digital skills, and lack of access to the required hardware and connectivity. SEDI programs and initiatives, such as the Hemispheric Action Plan for the Continuity of Education (PHACE), have helped member states respond to the crisis and provide access to quality, inclusive and equitable education for citizens of the Americas. The virtual policy dialogues series, "CIE Work Plan Road Show," was a key process in engaging member states in the matching of their needs and priorities with specific activities towards the implementation of the Work Plan.

**OBJECTIVE 3.1. Strengthen member states institutional capacities to provide quality, inclusive, and equitable education.**

**The Inter-American Education Agenda**

* 24 projects shared by member states within the context of the CIE Work Plan 2019-2022, which are open for adoption or development by individual member states or by the region as a whole:
  + Sharing concrete initiatives for the implementation of the IEA
  + Deepening synergies between global, hemispheric, and sub-regional education initiatives
  + Promoting intersectoral cooperation with other social actors
* Developed Hemispheric Action Plan for the Continuity of Education (PHACE) to meet the adjusted priorities of member states in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the continuity of education at all academic levels, with particular focus on disadvantaged populations.
* Launched webpage sharing over 15,000 resources on educational programs, free training courses, videos examining priority issues identified by member states, and good practices adopted by regional Ministries of Education to promote educational continuity.
* Policy Dialogue maintained with High-level officials from member states with the support of the CIE Technical Secretariat:
* Convened virtual meeting with CIE Authorities and virtual events for high-level officials from the Ministries of Education of members states to share experiences and good practices on the COVID-19 pandemic response, including safe protocols to return to school, evaluation and assessment, and education continuity for persons with disabilities.
* Implemented, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab (J-WEL), Virtual Education Futures Forum under the theme **"Re-envisioning Education to create resilient and responsive systems,"** which facilitated dialogue between representatives of 18 member states on their visions and plans for improving quality, equality, and sustainability of education in the post-COVID-19 context.
* Commenced implementation of joint OAS and PAHO activities on the promotion, monitoring, and evaluation of school environments conducive to healthy eating and physical activity under the 2019-2022 Work Plan of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE) through webinar series to facilitate sharing of experiences.
* Implemented virtual policy dialogues with high-level officials on the topics of *“***Exchange of Experiences on Student Evaluation in the framework of COVID-19”** and **“Promoting Digital Accessibility in Education: Experiences and Challenges for Persons with Disability During COVID-19”** and launched the focus group on Exchange and Policy Discussions on Returning to the Physical Classroom: Indicators and Monitoring Mechanism.

**OBJECTIVE 3.2. Strengthen the teaching profession in the member states by creating more training opportunities.**

**The Inter-American Teacher Education Network (ITEN)**

* Trained 117,000 teachers in 34 Member States in gender-equitable, evidence-based practices through virtual seminars delivered by ITEN partners and the ITEN Teacher Fellows through the webinar series **"COVID-19: Teaching STEM in Quarantine"** and the ITEN **Virtual Seminar 2020.**
* Trained 1,271 teachers in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, Mexico, and the United States in gender-equitable, evidence-based practices in STEM education on diverse topics such as laboratory skills in chemistry, designing problem-based learning scenarios, and using free digital tools, through hands-on workshops delivered by ITEN partners.
* Trained 6,029 teachers across Latin America through MOOC developed and delivered by ITEN partners in Colombia, Mexico, and the United States on teaching STEM principles with Physics Education Technology (PhET) free digital simulations.
* Trained 60 pre-service and in-service teachers in the ITEN-University of the West Indies Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math (STREAM) Virtual Community on closing the gender gap in early childhood experiences and teaching STREAM through virtual seminars delivered by ITEN Teacher Fellows.
* Trained 150 pre-service and in-service teachers enrolled in teacher education programs with the University of the West Indies in STREAM content integration delivered by ITEN Teacher Fellows.
* 11 Project Teams composed of 35 institutions from 17 member states collaborated in multilateral groups to work on specific policy or practice problems in STEM teacher education.
  + Shared information on active learning and inclusive science education with three member states (Ministry of Education of Jamaica, Inafocam of the Dominican Republic, and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education of Washington, DC) through Cooperation Exchange with Stanford University.
  + Improved the use of gender-equitable, evidence-based instructional practices and leadership of 36 ITEN Teacher Fellows from 11 Member States through 20 hours of instructional coaching and the development of instructional and leadership portfolios.
  + 15 teacher education institutions engaged in ITEN's Project Teams authored manuscripts that will publicly showcase their work with ITEN as models of success through **Conexiones** (a publication of the Costa Rica Ministry of Public Education), *CIEDADES* (a publication of the University of San Luis Potosí (Mexico) with RECINATUR), and **Young Child** (a publication of the National Association of the Education of Young Children).

**The Educational Portal of the Americas**

* Awarded scholarships to 393 citizens of 25 member states for study in five professional development courses and two diploma programs in STEM education, public management and territorial development, developed in collaboration with the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences of Chile (FLACSO) and the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana of Colombia, which were delivered through the Education Portal of the Americas.
* Trained 380 people through six MOOCs delivered via the Education Portal of the Americas in subjects related to Education, Gender, and Sustainable Development.
* Provided technological equipment, including laptops, tablets, projectors, and routers, to 36 primary schools, supplied academic digital content in innovation and ICT integration in education, and trained 1,212 teachers in The Bahamas and Saint Lucia under the ProFuturo Educational Program.
* Expanded the ProFuturo Educational Program to all member states, which enabled over 11,700 teachers from 26 member states to access 40 online teacher training programs to improve the capacity of teachers to deliver quality education virtually within the contexts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 3,530 participants have completed at least 10 hours of training.

**OBJECTIVE 3.3. Strengthen member states institutional capacities to provide a comprehensive early childhood care.**

* Signed co-sponsorship agreement with the UWI to provide 19 scholarships for the 2020-2021 academic year to OAS-UWI PAEC Scholarship Recipients from the anglophone Caribbean member states registered in the Early Childhood Development and Family Studies certificate course.

**OBJECTIVE 3.4. Foster access to quality, inclusive, equitable educational opportunities at all levels, in all modalities, and in all the four official languages of the Organization.**

**The OAS Scholarship and Training Programs**

* Awarded4,009 (5,915 offered) needs-based scholarships, in partnership with various regional and international institutions, to citizens in 34 member states.
  + Modality: 93.5% Online; 6.5% Traditional / Hybrid
  + Level of Study: 50% certificate; 47% Master’s; 2% Doctorate; 1% Bachelor’s
  + Gender: 59% Men; 41% Women
* Offered 1,272 scholarships through partnerships with key institutions, including the Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities (GCUB) of Brazil, which offered 513 scholarships, the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico, which offered 715 scholarships. In addition, the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICIT) of Chile, which awarded 44 full scholarships to doctoral students.
* Signed two agreements with *Soluciones Integrales de Formación y Gestión* (STRUCTURALIA) to offer over 6,000 scholarships to citizens of the Americas in the largest OAS scholarship program ever established with one partner.
* Trained 930 CARICOM nationals in areas of emerging need related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the specific needs of the tourism sector, through the expanded Chilean Agency for International Development Cooperation (AGCID) Scholarship program:
  + 165 certificates awarded to 62 participants of the Emergency Management and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) independent courses through the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute
  + 179 records of training issued to 74 participants of the ServSafe COVID-19 Precautions training conducted by the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute
  + 28 full scholarships were awarded for the dLab Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship Certificate course, with specific focus on the development of climate resilience projects, at the Universidad del Desarrollo of Chile.
  + 766 full scholarships offered for the online Guest Service Gold Tourism Certification Course for Hospitality Staff provided by the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI).
* The Professional Development Course Selection Committee (PDC Committee), of the Professional Development Scholarships Program (PDSP), evaluated and ranked 24 shortlisted course proposals (out of 76 received) from 10 different institutions located in six OAS member countries (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru), 2 OAS Observer countries (Italy and Spain) and 1 from the SG/OAS. Based on the assigned budget for 2020 and the PDC Committee scoring system ($75,000), 12 courses were selected which aligned to OAS countries priorities. They included one course in English, one in Portuguese and two courses specifically addressing a response to COVID-19 pandemic in the area of sustainable development and the environment and the impact on the Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

**The Rowe Fund**

* Managed an investment portfolio of $20.8 million (financial statements as of September 30th, 2020) and administered close to 400 loan accounts worth $2.4 million with less than a one percent default rate.
* Delivered $983,400 in financial aid.
  + 101 interest-free loans awarded to international students from 21 countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region to help cover tuition/living expenses at 63 universities in the U.S.
  + 63 COVID emergency relief scholarships totaling $126,000 awarded to international students to offset the financial challenges created by the pandemic while studying in the U.S.
  + Granted educational and emergency loans to 20 GS/OAS staff members.
* Launched the **"Give to Education"** fundraising campaign to provide additional emergency scholarships.

**CIP Scholarship and Capacity Building Program**

* 401 scholarships, with a total value of $470,550, awarded to port officials from 29 member states, as well as the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, St. Marteen, and Turks and Caicos, through the MoU between CIP and the Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC), for 12 online certified professional development courses on topics such as logistics, trade, digitalization, security, management, and legislation; and two scholarships with a total value of $36,000 awarded to port officials from Mexico for the Master in Port Management and Multimodal Transport in Valencia, Spain.
* 3,245 port officials from 27 member states exposed to good practices on safety and security, digitalization and automation, trade, disaster risk management, dredging, cruise ports, port-city relation, and logistics through 15 technical Webinars organized through the strategic partnership with the Mexico International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Network.
* Launched the online Inter-American Certificate Program on Port Concessions and Auxiliary Services Management through a strategic alliance with the National Port Authority (APN) of Peru and Associate Member Maritime Policy Bureau and granted 32 scholarships to port officers from 12 member states.

**STRATEGIC LINE 4: PROMOTE DECENT, DIGNIFIED,**

**AND PRODUCTIVE WORK FOR ALL**

SEDI strengthens the capacity of member states to improve labor conditions, promote labor rights, and create jobs; in essence, to promote productive employment and decent work for all. The Covid-19 pandemic, which has disrupted labor markets across the region and worsened unemployment, informality, and labor inequalities, has heightened the importance of these objectives, putting them at the center of economic and social policy response. Since the onset of the pandemic, SEDI has geared its efforts to support governments in responding to the crisis while creating conditions for a sustainable recovery.

In 2020, SEDI focused on labor and employment in areas crucial to addressing the labor impacts of the pandemic in the short and medium terms, such as telework and the platform economy; social dialogue among governments, workers, and employers; occupational health and safety; workforce development, re-skilling, and up-skilling; the gender dimension of the crisis; and social protection.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1. Enhance member states capacities for the strengthening of education and continuing training systems to better prepare the workforce.**

* Adjusted the Work Plan of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) for 2020 to respond to the emerging Covid-19 pandemic challenges.
* Convened virtual meetings of high-level authorities, workers, employers, and international organizations to share policy responses, identify key elements to mitigate the negative effects of the crisis in employment and income, and provide policy recommendations on, among other things, occupational health and safety measures, re-skilling and up-skilling of the labor force, and telework.
* Deepened tripartite social dialogue through the forum provided at the 50th Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly for workers' and employers' representatives to present recommendations and engage with regional governments at the hemispheric level under the theme "Facing the challenges of COVID-19 in the Hemisphere: A Collaborative Approach to Address Vulnerabilities and Build Resilience in Times of Crisis, Based on the Four Pillars of the OAS".
* The Government of Peru provided technical assistance to the Government of Honduras to support the revision of procedures and reforms to expand and manage employment centers and technological adjustments to adapt their online employment platform within the COVID-19 pandemic context.

**OBJECTIVE 4.2. Enhance member states capacities to promote equitable and inclusive job conditions and opportunities for vulnerable populations and all groups that face the most significant challenges in the labor market.**

* Collated **"Portfolio of Responses from Ministries of Labor to COVID-19"** of over 400 measures adopted by member states to protect workers, employment, and income in response to the pandemic, and resources on the labor dimension of the crisis on the RIAL webpage.
* Published **"Repository of Deconfinement and Return to Work Guides and Protocols"**on the actions taken by member states and other countries to ease confinement measures, aid return to the workplace, and ensure the safety and health of workers.
* The Government of Canada provided virtual technical support to the Ministry of Labor of Argentina and shared information on the design and implementation of its pension system to support the formulation of policy alternatives for social security reform in Argentina.
* Strengthened capacity of the gender units of Ministries of Labor of member states to analyze and respond to emerging issues and challenges of gender equality and gender institutionalization in the COVID-19 pandemic context through the virtual Hemispheric Dialogue convened in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM). The dialogue complemented the study developed by SEDI, which included an in-depth analysis of gender mainstreaming and institutionalization in those Ministries and a set of recommendations and next steps to continue advancing in this issue.

**STRATEGIC LINE 5: FOSTER DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

**AND ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS**

**The OAS Development Cooperation Fund (DCF)**

Implementation of the 17 DCF programs across the region in the three priority areas of the Inter-American Education Agenda (IEA) was disrupted to varying degrees with the onset of the pandemic. As member states have put in place response mechanisms, the implementation deadline has been extended to December 31, 2021 and the programs adapted to reflect the local conditions and align with emerging national priorities. The programs also support the development and strengthening of member states' education policies to meet Goal#4 of the 2030 Agenda and facilitate cooperation initiatives and knowledge exchange among member states within the lines of action of the IEA.

These programs have been allocated seed funding of $1.5 million. The DCF also continues to foster cooperation with the private sector, academia, and governments to expand the scope, institutionalization, and sustainability of the programs. Among the efforts to increase the seed funding available for implementation and secure the sustainability of the program, is the establishment of partnership by participant countries of the 2017-2021 programming cycle with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Additionally, the partnership established with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to provide immediate support and solutions to the DCF programs has helped member states to respond to the challenges evoked by the COVID-19 pandemic for education systems.

In further response to the pandemic, CIDI approved the Area of Action **“Inclusive Resilience for an Effective Recovery, with a Focus on Science and Technology”** for the 2021-2024 DCF Program Cycle to complement the pandemic recovery efforts of the 17 member states eligible to participate in the 2021-2024 Cycle. Seed funding of $1.7 million will be allocated to finance the four approved program themes of:

1. Retooling MSMEs through innovation and technology
2. Innovative Reskilling for Tourism sector recovery and regional economies
3. Scientific and technological innovation for building resilience
4. Science for decision making in disaster risk planning

To date, over 5,000 citizens have been impacted by the implementation of programs in the 2017-2021 programming cycle. Noteworthy accomplishments include the following:

**Line of Action 1: Quality, Inclusive, and Equitable Education:**

* **Guyana: Improving Technical/Vocational Education in Secondary and Post-Secondary Institution*s***
  + 10 teachers from 4 Post-Secondary Schools commenced a two-year certification program to build capacity in the delivery of instruction in Heavy Duty Equipment Maintenance and Repairs, and Occupational Health Environment and Safety.
  + 15 Teachers commenced the Occupational Health Safety and Environment (OHSE) train the trainer course to build capacity in the delivery of training to 2,000 students. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the course was subsequently converted to a 70% online and 30% practical model.
* **Nicaragua: Strengthening the Capacities and Technological Skills of Student, Teachers and Directors of Remote Secondary Education in the Rural Areas**
  + 2,749 rural students enrolled in distance learning programs in 21 schools in Matagalpa, Zelaya Central (Nueva Guinea), and Sector Minero (Siuna) have benefitted from infrastructure and technological upgrades.
  + 21 principals, 63 teachers, and 2,749 students have access to and are incorporating ICT's in the teaching and learning of mathematics, English, language & literature, natural sciences, and social sciences.
* **Costa Rica: Community professors/Strategy *"Yo me apunto"* (I'M IN)**
  + Identified and mapped institutional barriers that encourage exclusion of students from the education system as part of the national pedagogical strategy program *"Profes comunitarios"* to increase the permanence and educational outcomes of students in the third cycle of Basic General Education in districts of priority of attention.
  + Implemented innovative strategies to serve persons at risk of being excluded and developed tools to promote the reintegration of excluded persons into the education system.
  + 400 students have benefited from the program (150 students at high risk of being excluded from the education system, and 250 students reintegrated into the education system).

**The Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP)**

* Fostered strategic alliances in bilateral, south-south, and triangular partnerships with the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA), Caribbean Marine Environmental Protection Association (CARIBMEPA), Caribbean Shipping Association (CSA), HudsonAnalytix, Marine Policy Bureau of Panama, Mexico International ISPS Network, National Port Authority of Peru (APN), Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC), and the Women’s International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA).
* Obtained the collaboration of 23 Member States for the strategic alliance with the International Association of Ports and Harbors' (IAPH) "COVID-19 Port Barometer" to measure the pandemic's impact on port operations and disseminated its results to 34 Member States and 75 CIP Associate Members and Strategic Partners.
* Provided technical support for the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) funded project **"Institutional and Operational Assessment of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Port Authority (SVGPA),"** in the formulation of recommendations for the Government of SVG to be implemented in its 2020 – 2024 Port Modernization Project.
* Co-organized with the National Port Commission (CPN) of Guatemala the XIV Maritime Port Congress, which facilitated knowledge sharing and dialogue between 2,200 port officials from 17 Member States on topics such as technology for port security, transition to a single window, modern legislation to facilitate the digital transition, post-pandemic projection, among others.

**Line of Action 2: Strengthening of the teaching profession.**

* **Argentina: Training of Trainers**
  + 1,218 teachers from 178 Higher Institutes of Teacher Training across the country, and 77 teachers from Belize, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Uruguay, updated and strengthened their knowledge and skills through the completion of 3 modules on "Training in and for practice," "Teaching and evaluation in teacher training." and "Interdisciplinary and project-based learning" accessed via virtual teaching and learning platform of the National Institute of Teacher Training within the framework of the "Academic Update" blended course.
* **Barbados: Strengthening of Teacher Professional Development to Improve the Quality of Education**
  + Established and equipped a Professional Development Centre at the Erdiston Teacher ́s Training College (ETTC) that focuses exclusively on the implementation of continuous development programs.
  + Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the courses were converted to online delivery to facilitate remote teaching and learning. As of March 30, 2020, all remaining sessions were taught using synchronous and asynchronous modes.
  + 442 students currently enrolled in courses using the online and blended modalities.
  + 264 teachers trained through Professional Development Workshops.
  + 23 faculty members attained proficiency in the successful integration of technology into the teaching learning cycle.

**Line of Action 3: Comprehensive early childhood care**

* **The Bahamas: Bahamas Early Start Project (BES)**
  + As a result of the transition of officers to working remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, greater attention and time were given to the completion of the curriculum reform exercise. Four of the five components of the new preschool curriculum are completed (Language, Cognitive (Math and Science), Physical). Additionally, pacing guides have been completed for each of these areas and serving as valuable standardization tools for teachers particularly in the remote learning model which is being implemented in the reopening of schools.
  + The **Early Childhood Education Awareness Campaign (ECEAC)** was relaunched in August 2020. The campaign used the three public service announcements (PSAs) produced through this project to communicate to parents and stakeholders the importance of healthy, positive experiences during the early years ([**https://youtu.be/Sa5x-5hKeG0**](https://youtu.be/Sa5x-5hKeG0)**).** The campaign has been more impactful within the pandemic context as professors, students, and parents use more social media and continuously access the Ministry's website for information.
* **St. Lucia: Towards a More Quality Assured Early Childhood Development Sector**
  + 80 public school teachers and teacher's aides assessed current preschool curriculum, revised and developed math and science components, and trained on the administration of the Preschool Exit Assessment Tool.
  + 132 Early childhood Centers that passed the inspection and training process on Safety and Environmental Health Standards and are now following the Code of Practice for the Establishment and Operation of Early Childhood Centers are eligible to re-register in the National System.
  + A Child Developmental Tool was created to track developmental milestones of children enrolled at early childhood centers.
  + Due to the pandemic, the focus was shifted to developing protocols for the safe reopening of early childhood development centers.
    - The Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards, in collaboration with a Technical Committee of stakeholders, spearheaded the development of the manual, "Guidelines for Early Childhood Development Centers in Response to COVID – 19."
    - Over 200 administrators employed in the sector were sensitized to the COVID – 19 protocols at a virtual Town Hall meeting.
* **Uruguay: Interinstitutional Integration of Information Systems for the Care and Education of Early Childhood in Uruguay**
  + Interinstitutional and intersectoral framework agreement established between six institutions (Ministry of Education and Culture, the Institute of children and adolescents of Uruguay, Council of Initial and Primary Education, Ministry of Public Health, Uruguay grows with you, Secretariat of the National System of Care and representatives of educators) to identify and disseminate quality indicators for comprehensive early childhood education and care.
  + 60 technicians from the different organizations related to Early Childhood that participate in the national Project "5,000 teachers" have benefited from the agreements.

**The Inter-American Cooperation Network (CooperaNet)**

The Inter-American Cooperation Network (CooperaNet), SEDI's online platform for development cooperation launched in 2020, has provided a consolidated space for the optimization of partnerships, the building of alliances and networks, leveraging of development assistance, and meeting the need for more demand-driven technical cooperation in the Americas, while also facilitating the regional attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The platform is also serving as an online hub for increased interaction and sharing of knowledge and experiences among Cooperation Authorities in the response of Member States to the pandemic.

* + Published 228 cooperation offers related to development focus areas and eight cooperation needs in the "Cooperation Exchange" from programs in execution in the framework of the DCF.
  + Published "Open Call for COVID-19 Offers and Needs" on the platform to increase knowledge sharing cooperation related to the pandemic.

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