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## **CIM/OAS and EUROsocial present a guide for companies on the implementation of co-responsibility measures for caregiving**

- *The document proposes seven essential elements for designing and implementing measures to redistribute care work between men and women, thus balancing family, personal, and work life.*
- *Measures such as flexible working hours, extended maternity and paternity leave, and childcare services have proven to benefit not only workers but also companies, resulting in better profitability, productivity, and reputation.*
- *This tool is available to all companies and published at <https://www.oas.org/es/cim/biblioteca.asp>.*

**San Jose, Costa Rica. Monday, July 29, 2024.** The Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States (CIM/OAS) and the European Union's EUROsocial program launched a guide for companies on implementing co-responsibility measures for caregiving this Monday.

The presentation of the document, held at the Costa Rican Chamber of Commerce (CCCR), was attended by Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM/OAS); Cindy Quesada Hernández, Minister for the Status of Women of Costa Rica; Arturo Rosabal, President of the CCCR; Felipe Armijo, Governance, Security and Peace Officer of the European Union Delegation for Costa Rica; Mariamalia Guillén, Director of the CCCR's Women in Business Program; Mayela Rojas, General Manager of Grupo Mutual; and Beatriz Piñares, CIM/OAS specialist.

The guide underscores the urgency of transforming the world of work and the organizational culture of companies so that both women and men can balance their work, family, and personal responsibilities. It also highlights the essential role of the private sector in creating conditions that facilitate this balance.

The document also seeks to raise companies' awareness of the importance of adopting co-responsibility measures for caregiving by providing concrete tools and recommendations tailored to the private sector's needs.

In this sense, and to achieve a fundamental transformation, the publication proposes seven critical elements for the design and implementation of social co-responsibility measures for caregiving in companies: committed leadership, diagnosis of personnel needs, social co-responsibility policy, training in gender equality and co-responsibility, design of policies and measures with a gender perspective, the impact of the measures, and a gender perspective as a transversal axis.

"We all need to receive and provide care at different times in our lives, so an organizational culture focused on co-responsibility benefits everyone in the company, helps close gender gaps, and actively encourages women to join the workforce. In addition, having a co-responsibility strategy in companies improves business results, reduces absenteeism and turnover, promotes staff well-being, increases the reputation of the organization, and generates better economic growth for the countries," said Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of the CIM-OAS.

Ana Pérez Camporeale, EUROsocial's gender policy coordinator, said: "Positioning co-responsibility as a central and transversal strategy in the private sector is key to success, equal opportunities, talent retention, and society in general. The guide aims to motivate more companies to implement these measures, highlighting experiences and innovative proposals beyond national legislation on co-responsibility for caregiving. At the same time, these measures could have a multiplier effect of improving public policies to move towards co-responsible societies and a more inclusive labor market".

**Better results.** Recent reports highlight the tangible benefits of implementing gender equality measures in the workplace. For example, a study by the International Labor Organization (ILO) that included more than 4,800 companies in Latin America and the Caribbean found that 6 out of 10 organizations surveyed improved their business results thanks to gender equality initiatives. Specifically, 58% of these companies increased their profitability and productivity, 51% reported greater creativity, innovation, and openness, 52% improved their prestige, and 29% increased their ability to meet consumer demand.

Additionally, an IBM study revealed that companies prioritizing women's career advancement and seeing gender inclusion as a driver of financial performance reap significant benefits. These companies report up to 61% higher revenue growth compared to other organizations; 60% say their businesses are more innovative than the competition, and 73% say they are leaders in customer satisfaction within their industry. Diversity allows these companies to be more responsive to external ideas and needs, including those of their customers.

The guide also includes practical examples. In Chile, in addition to the prenatal and postnatal period established by the legal framework, one company offers its female employees a progressive return to work. In addition, the organization provides leave for relevant activities, allowing fathers and mothers to attend family, medical, or school events and employees for medical consultations and to accompany elderly relatives in particular procedures.

Another company in Costa Rica found that to retain women's talent, it was necessary to offer care and education services for their children under six. It now provides a subsidy of 90% of the monthly fee for these services.

The guide presented on Monday was based on various analyses and research documenting how the absence of social co-responsibility measures for caregiving impacts women and men, companies, the economies of countries, and society as a whole and how its existence benefits them. The researchers considered the inputs from the dialogues held with groups of key stakeholders from the public and private sectors and social organizations, who contributed their knowledge, experiences, reflections, and practices in social co-responsibility.

## **\*\*/\*\* INFORMATION FOR JOURNALISTS**

### **About CIM/OAS**

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) is the principal hemispheric forum dedicated to promoting and protecting women's human rights and gender equality. Founded in 1928, the CIM has been a pioneer in identifying the barriers faced by women in the social, economic, and political spheres and formulating policies and programs to overcome those barriers. CIM works in collaboration with OAS Member States, civil society organizations, and other key actors to advance the gender equality agenda in the Americas.

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### **About EUROsociAL**

EUROsociAL is a cooperation program between the European Union and Latin America that aims to improve social cohesion in Latin American countries. Since its inception in 2005, EUROsociAL has worked in key areas such as governance, justice, social inclusion, and gender equality, promoting the exchange of good practices and supporting the implementation of inclusive and sustainable public policies. Through its focus on social co-responsibility and gender equality, EUROsociAL seeks to strengthen Latin America's social and economic fabric, promoting a more equitable and just development.

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