

***World Forum on Employment, Economic Exclusion and Transformation Strategies for Blind and Low Vision People. What the Market Doesn't See: Work, Visual Disability and Delayed Justice.***

**Date:** Tuesday 2 September 2025

**Time:** from 14.30 to 18.00 h

**Modality:** In-person

**Venue:** Distrito Anhembi Convention Center. Rua Prof. Milton Rodrigues, Santana, São Paulo / Dorina Nowill Auditorium

**Estimated Attendance:** 300 participants

**Format:** Moderated conversation panels with guiding questions and dynamic facilitation

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### **Context and Overview**

From **1 to 5 September 2025**, São Paulo (Brazil) will host the *World Blindness Summit* and the *11th General Assembly of the World Blind Union (WBU)*.

For the first time, an event of this nature will take place in Latin America. The Latin American Union of the Blind (ULAC), in collaboration with the ONCE Foundation for Solidarity with Blind People in Latin America (FOAL) and the World Blind Union (WBU), aims to convene a multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral space for dialogue and knowledge exchange on key issues for blind people around the world.

### **General Objective**

To analyze, from a global, cross-sectoral, and human rights-based perspective, the structural barriers—national, regional, and global—that hinder access to decent work for blind and low vision people. The forum will highlight regional inequalities, institutional models, and good practices, while exploring concrete pathways toward inclusive economic justice and the recognition of work as a human right.

### **Expected Outcomes**

By the end of the forum, the following outcomes are expected, contributing to the knowledge management of the employment inclusion ecosystem for people with visual disabilities:

- Current global outlook on employment inclusion for people with severe visual impairment
- Systematization of challenges and opportunities in international regulations, public policies, and the productive sector
- Draft guiding principles for inclusive employment

## FORUM STRUCTURE

Two moderated panels will be held, each lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes, with 15 minutes allocated for public questions and a 15-minute break between the two sessions. The forum structure and a detailed minute-by-minute agenda are outlined below.

### Opening Remarks (5 minutes)

**Master of Ceremonies:** Lucía García - ONCE Foundation for Solidarity with Blind People in Latin America (FOAL)

### Inauguration (15 minutes)

Brief remarks by representatives from WBS, FOAL, and ULAC, as well as a representative from national or regional employment authorities.

- **WBS:** TBC
- **FOAL:** Estefanía Mirpuri, Managing Director
- **ULAC:** Gladys Díaz, President
- **Public sector representative Brazil:** TBC

### PANEL 1 (1h 30 minutes)

#### Employment for All: Innovation and Diversity in the Global Labor Market - Multiregional Challenges of Labor Inclusion

**Duration:** 1h

**Format:** Moderated conversation

**Participants:**

- Praveena Sukhraj-Ely (South Africa) - *Employability of persons with visual impairments: Strategies for expanding employment opportunities, equity and inclusion.*
- Pilar Carvajo Arias, Disability Adaptations Unit of the Selection Sub-Directorate, National Institute of Public Administration (INAP) (Spain)
- Hans Jørgen Wiberg, Founder of Be My Eyes (Denmark)
- Stefan Tromel (ILO) - *Current trends in the employment of persons with disabilities*
- Elvira Vega, Director General (Mapfre Foundation) (TBC)

**Moderator:** Lucía García - International Cooperation Project Specialist and Brazil representative for the Ágora Programme - FOAL

## Objective

To analyze the main structural challenges faced by blind and low vision individuals in accessing decent work, using a comparative regional approach. The discussion will emphasize public policies, legal frameworks, education and employment systems, and the urgent need for robust, disaggregated data to design effective and sustainable responses.

## Scope

This panel will create a space for dialogue among representatives of multilateral organizations, public administrations, and technical cooperation networks to:

- Highlight persistent inequalities and institutional gaps hindering employment inclusion
- Reflect on the tensions between the “decent work” narrative and real-world contexts of informality or exclusion
- Exchange experiences and policy approaches that have shown progress or yielded important lessons
- Propose concrete action lines to strengthen inclusive employment governance from an intersectoral and multi-stakeholder perspective

## Guiding Questions

1. What is the current employment situation for people with visual disabilities in your region?
2. What are the tensions between the “decent work” approach and structural informality contexts?
3. What data gaps hinder the design and implementation of inclusive public policies?
4. What best practices and lessons have emerged from inclusive employment policies?

## Audience Q&A (10 minutes)

## Coffee Break (30minutes)

## PANEL 2 (1h 30 minutes)

### Successful Experiences and Pathways for Change: Employment Inclusion in Practice

**Duration:** 1h 10 minutes

**Format:** Moderated conversation

**Participants:**

- Tuan Rushdi (Sri Lanka)
- Chiranjeevi Paudel (Nepal)

- Cristal Vargas (Mexico)

**Moderator:** Jorge Cala, Secretary of Employment of the Latin American Blind Union

### Guiding Questions

1. How have accessible environments and effective employment inclusion strategies been developed within your organizations?
2. Which aspects of the ÁGORA approach have been key to its scalability and sustainability?
3. What reasonable accommodations have proven most effective in ensuring equal opportunities in the workplace?
4. What factors contribute to the long-term sustainability and replicability of these experiences?
5. How can we move toward a global alliance for monitoring, innovation, and joint action?

### Audience Q&A (10 minutes)

### Forum Closing (10 minutes)

- Synthesis of key learnings and messages

***\*\* Note for attendees: anyone who has previously registered for the World Blindness Summit may participate. \*\****