OCM September 2014

Discussion Paper

**SOCIAL DIALOGUE FOR DEVELOPMENT**

ToR for evidence oriented research

**The developmental relevance of social dialogue**

**CONTEXT**

* TU standing objective to include the DWA in development policies and strategies to enhance social and economic inclusiveness and fighting inequalities
* The growing/overwhelming priority given to “private sector” in development issues by governments and international institutions
* The importance of SD as a “governance” issue (as are Economic Policy and Labour Inspection)
* The EU Commission is preparing action on the matter (see document from the commission)

**THE RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE FOR THE BROADER DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

* The **Governance agenda and democratic ownership**

*The ILO underlines the importance of the “governance” instruments in order to implement economic and social (development) policies[[1]](#footnote-1). Social Dialogue is one of the 3 key instruments (together with Labour inspection and Economic Policy). Governance is often limited in development policy debates to traditional “government” issues such as rule of law, elections and formal democracy, budgetary oversight, anti-corruption, political rights. . In order to be sustainable, development strategies should also address social and economic governance, and include to that end all the economic and social actors. Development policies should be based on genuine democratic ownership (Paris, Accra, Busan Declaration). Social Dialogue is one of the strongest instruments to ensure ownership of economic and social development by the direct economic and social actors themselves.*

* **The “growth agenda”: consolidate labour market, social and economic policies**:

*Under the current emphasis on “private” sector, economic governance is seen an “invisible hand” or at best, a matter for auto-regulation of the private sector itself. As recognised in the Busan declaration (art 32 a) ff), the process has an important “enabling” agenda[[2]](#footnote-2) that is looking at the conditions for successful economic and social development through a multi-stakeholder approach. Well functioning labour markets and progressive social and economic policies need, as shown in many cases, a strong multi-stakeholder governance framework based on social partners’ participation.*

* **Enhancing democracy and institution building at enterprise level and in society**.

*Social dialogue needs a “machinery” as stated in the ILO C98[[3]](#footnote-3); in many countries there is no institutional setting to enhance and allow for social dialogue to take place and social partners to engage effectively and efficiently. Institutionalised social dialogue is an important asset for conflict prevention and resolution and a factor of economic and social resilience at micro (enterprise) and macro (national economic and social governance) level.*

* **Peaceful transition and state/community building, resilience**

*In many conflict countries and regions, reconstruction and reconciliation are key for community and state building. Social dialogue is a powerful tool, as shown in many post conflict situations and countries transitioning from dictatorships, to stabilise social relationships and to lay out the way forward. (Poland, Tunisia, South Africa, ...) by bringing around the table the actors of economic life.*

* **Facilitating accountability at enterprise and other levels**

*Rights, Legislation and policies do not lead by themselves to implementation and good development results. Accountability mechanisms need to be in place in order to ensure effective implementation and to allow for different interests to be reconciled and strategies to be adjusted for improved development outcomes. Social dialogue enhances accountability from the national to the local and enterprise level and facilitates monitoring and adjustment in view of improving effective and adequate implementation of strategies and measures.*

* **Allows for redistribution and solidarity mechanisms and fighting inequality**

*Collective bargaining and social dialogue allow, often more appropriately than legislation (alone), for addressing the inequalities in terms of income and social protection and allow to reduce the growing gap between productivity and salaries, as the root cause of impoverishment and growing economic and social inequality. Social partners engagement to foster economic and social development for all, fighting inequality and underdevelopment are most effective in establishing appropriate and rights based redistribution and social protection mechanisms lifting people out of poverty and informality and preventing social dumping.*

**WHAT IS OUR STAKE:**

1. Bringing evidence to the table to underpin the social dialogue approach for development
2. Prepare proposals to the EU for implementation
3. Linking objectives and evidence to the national, regional and international development policies and strategies (means of implementation) (briefing notes and policy papers)
4. Propose a “Partnership” on Social Dialogue for Development

**ToR FOR THE RESEARCH**

**Targets:**

The audience of the research outcome are **decision makers at national regional and international level**,

* social partner leadership,
* responsibles of national development agencies,
* ILO globally and at country level
* implementation actors: ministries of plan/development cooperation and ministries of labour,
* development cooperation sections of embassies and delegation (including EU)
* decision makers in OECD/DAC and DAC delegates
* members of international development cooperation platforms (GPEDC)

**Objectives**

**The main objective of the research** is to drawn up a **report that gathers the evidence on the development relevance of social dialogue**, as is shown in many countries and situations all over the world. Lessons learned and conclusions drawn should inform orientation for future development policies and approaches and allow for more effective implementation of social dialogue as a socio-economic and development governance instrument. Briefing notes and policy papers will be drawn from the reports’ findings to support debate, advocacy and proposals for implementation.

Following the results of the report further initiatives could be designed to promote social dialogue as a relevant and a key strategy for fostering sustainability in economic and social development. To that end, the report will identify relevant in-country experiences that could form the basis for an **Partnership on Social Dialogue for Development**. The report will also indentify possible partners and actors for such a Partnership.

The Partnership, as a multi stakeholder initiative will address national, regional and international policy challenges, and suggest innovative action to address ownership, good governance, accountability and sustainable results in economic and social development.

**Issues to be addressed**

The research should establish the evidence that social dialogue is relevant to the following development issues:

* In what way the social dialogue (SD) contributed to the governance agenda and democratic ownership of economic and social development
* How has SD contribute to the “growth agenda”: consolidation of the labour market, establishment of social and economic policies; has it been instrumental to address informal economy challenges?
* What has been the effect of SD in establishing dialogue structures at enterprise and community level and has it contributed to national democratic decision making on socio economic development
* How has SD contributed to conflict resolution in the social economic area and broader?
* Did SD addressed redistribution and solidarity mechanisms and what was its role in fighting inequality and promoting rights
* Facilitating accountability at enterprise and other levels

The research will in the preliminary face review existing literature on the matter and trace existing evidence (ILO, trade union partnerships, national cooperation programmes, ...).

In order to be able to address the issues listed above, a short overview has to be made from the SD experience addressed in terms of setting, content, methods and outcomes/challenges. The current research is not addressing the formats of social dialogue per sé, it concentrates on the contribution SD may have and its relevance to (socio economic) development and its sustainability.

**Suggested research methods.**

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| Fase 1 | Desk top research on existing projects, practices and evidence  | Sources: ILO, existing national trade union and social partners projects in development  | December 2014 |
|  | Meeting with research team | National and regional evidence will be gathered in cooperation with regional research institutes (IDEAM, ALRN, AP, ...) | 3 day team meeting to assess ToR and agree on research methods |
| Fase 2  | Identify and study relevant in-country experiences  | Sample of representative country experiences per continent  | March 2015  |
| Fase 3 | Formulate findings on developmental relevance of social dialogue  | First draft of findings | May 2015 |
| Fase 4 | Towards innovative practices and initiatives (seminar) | Seminar with TUDCN ad-hoc working group and partners to discuss first draft | May 2015 |
| Fase 5 | Draft report and formulate recommendations/proposals | Final report  | September |
|  | Launching of the Partnership  | Conference with partners EU + DAC partners  | October 2015 |
| Fase 6 | Dissemination and support  | translations and materials | December 2015 |

**Political outcome and follow up.**

The conclusions and proposals from the research is intended to be the catalyst for the creation of a “**Partnership for Social Dialogue in Development”** that bring together all interested partners in a “coalition of the willing” to bring social dialogue into the development strategies at all levels and promotes concrete programmes and approaches at country level.

*This Partnership could stand as a platform*

* *“in its own right” (bringing around the table govs, ILO and partners) or*
* *as part of our DAC follow up (to be presented at the TU-DAC Forum) or*
* *in the framework of the “voluntary initiatives” of the GPEDC (cfr inclusive development strand), involving also interested “private sector” players*
1. <http://ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. #####  32.We recognise the central role of the private sector in advancing innovation, creating wealth, income and jobs, mobilising domestic resources and in turn contributing to poverty reduction. To this end, we will:

##### a) Engage with representative business associations, trade unions and others to improve the legal, regulatory and administrative environment for the development of private investment; and also to ensure a sound policy and regulatory environment for private sector development, increased foreign direct investment, public-private partnerships, the strengthening of value chains in an equitable manner and giving particular consideration to national and regional dimensions, and the scaling up of efforts in support of development goals.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. #####  Article 3 Machinery appropriate to national conditions shall be established, where necessary, for the purpose of ensuring respect for the right to organise as defined in the preceding Articles.

##### Article 4 Measures appropriate to national conditions shall be taken, where necessary, to encourage and promote the full development and utilisation of machinery for voluntary negotiation between employers or employers' organisations and workers' organisations, with a view to the regulation of terms and conditions of employment by means of collective agreements.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)