

### Trade Union inputs on the Concept Note 'Investing in People Program' Annual Action Plan 2013

*The Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN), bringing together national trade union confederations from South and North, Solidarity Support Organisations and Global Union Federations as well as representation from International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Regional Organisations, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC), took note of the above mentioned Concept Note on AAP 2013 and puts forward the following comments feeding in the EC consultation:*

- We welcome this first draft of the AAP 2013 directly talking the issue of social dialogue support in developing countries, including trade union organisations support, which is the primary objective of trade union movement at global level;
- We strongly encourage the Commission to keep this theme, social dialogue support in partner countries, also for the future programming of the new thematic programme 'Global Challenges';
- Although we positively appreciate the link between international trade and employment in partner countries, we think that this should not be the exclusive criteria to select initiatives in support of social dialogue. According to the outcomes of the recent seminar organised by the EC with social partners, additional criteria have been suggested such as: "It has been emphasized that the EU financial instruments should be adapted to the needs of social partners...Select a number of countries based on criteria: A) Ownership: social partners that agree to cooperate on Social Dialogue B) Build upon existing initiatives and success stories that were stopped because funding has been withdrawn. C) GSP countries where improvement of application is needed (trade, development, labour market) - as well as countries, where it is a condition that CLS be respected; D) elements of South-South cooperation; E) Global /regional tools and instruments for scaling up of training on social dialogue capacity. Many initiatives of this kind already exist and are developed by the ILO ACT/EMP and ACTRAV, as well as ITUC and IOE and these could be used and benefited from their adoption, scaling up, translation, etc.";
- We very much welcome the "peer to peer" approach mentioned in objective (iv) Strengthening the capacity of social partners, and we suggest to adopt this modality also for objective (iii) ILO conventions – Fundamental Rights at work. Indeed, as already pointed out in the previous point, trade unions already have existing initiatives concerning this theme and they should be taken into account;
- The objectives of (i) *Social and employment impact assessment of trade* should be restated so to improve the knowledge and capacities of major stakeholders in partner countries, to assess the effects of trade and trade agreements on decent work. Decent work provides for a better scope of work and focuses not how to fix damages but on how to achieve more

productive work with higher levels of social protection and rights at work. Similarly, the expected results should also be informed in order to pursue decent work goals;

- Complementary action to reduce inequality and companion policies to trade should be included as objectives. A better distribution of trade gains through collective bargaining and social protection systems should be central in this project in order to provide for a better social sustainability and tackle increasing inequality. Capacity building action could also focus on taxation so as to render social partners capable of contributing to taxation policies with a view to reducing tax avoidance and evasion;
- There should be a special focus on unskilled workers adversely affected by trade which for the moment seems not to be the case. The human resources development aspects of the project should not be a mere 'find the skill gap' or 'find the skill mismatch' exercise; the development of analytical capacity should also be focused on how to achieve structural transformation to higher added value. Similarly, attention for skills needs to be linked to industrial policy to assure the necessary skills are available when upgrading production structures;
- The objectives of *(iii) ILO core conventions – Fundamental Rights at work* should include action to reinforce social partners' ability to identify legislative gaps and violations in practice, so to be active partners in improving adherence to the fundamental rights at work in practice;
- Finally, gender issues are also missing in this proposal, and more in general policy coherence between development and trade policies should be more emphasised.

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