



# PUTTING SOCIAL DIALOGUE AT THE HEART OF AGENDA 2030

REFLECTION PAPER FOR A FOLLOW UP ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

## Background

Decent work and social dialogue are key priorities that the whole TUDCN advocacy work has been always supporting since its very beginning. However, more recently in 2015, a specific work stream was launched, aiming at fostering the role of social dialogue as a rights based tool to implement sustainable and country-based social development<sup>1</sup>. This approach (further supported by the enshrinement of goal 8 within the 2030 Agenda) implies outreaching to governments and institutions, as well as, gathering country-based evidence to consolidate our asks.

Since then a copious number of initiatives were put in place<sup>2</sup> and important progresses have been achieved with key development policy makers and institutions.

In 2016, the outcome document of the High Level Meeting of the GPEDC<sup>3</sup> recognises - for the first time- freedom of association, collective bargaining and social dialogue as key elements in effective development cooperation.

In 2017, the EU new consensus for development also recognises decent work as priority to achieve sustainable and inclusive development, supporting the creation of decent jobs and engaging with trade unions in the promotion of social dialogue.

Furthermore, our engagement with the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), through the yearly TU-DAC Forum, has raised the profile of social dialogue with DAC members and several donor governments have shown support. A concrete sign is the proposed reform of "donors' modalities" in providing development cooperation which includes - for the first time- support to social dialogue<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, we have launched a series of "thematic discussions" (starting with the formalisation of the informal economy) where we have also engaged with the OECD's Development Centre.

Finally, our partnership with the ILO's social dialogue and tripartism unit has contributed to a greater impact of our work, backing up our advocacy-oriented research.

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<sup>1</sup> See [Social dialogue in development - The how-to for sustainable and country based economic and social development](#) and TUDCN strategy 2016-2020: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tudcn\\_global\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tudcn_global_strategy_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> It is out of the scope of this paper to provide an exhaustive list. Therefore only a few key initiatives are highlighted: [Social dialogue and development studies in Uruguay, Ghana and Indonesia](#); [Social dialogue issues paper](#); [Social dialogue and informal economy research](#) ; [2016 Social dialogue seminar](#); [2016 TU-DAC Forum](#); [thematic discussion on informal economy 2018](#)

<sup>3</sup> See [Trade Union Statement on the GPEDC 2<sup>nd</sup> HLM](#)

<sup>4</sup> See [2018 TU-DAC forum](#)

### **Involvement strategy:**

The 2030 Agenda provides the main framework to promote the role of social dialogue as a way to achieve sustainable policies. In the coming years the TUDCN will need to maintain this work and scale up its engagement at global, regional and national levels for a greater impact. In this sense, the TUDCN's engagement strategy will consist of three main pillars: strengthening advocacy, sharing experience and promoting dialogues.

#### ***Strengthening Advocacy***

The main target are national governments and key institutions, including donor governments, so that social dialogue is fully recognised also within development cooperation policy. The engagement of TUDCN members with their governments on these issues is crucial to uphold our strategy. For this, the TUDCN will carry on its evidence-based research on different topics around social dialogue and the SDGs. At global level the main target institutions will be:

- OECD-DAC: “thematic discussions” cycles on the role of social dialogue in the SDGs. The next one will be on just transition;
- Implementation of the TUDCN's GPI: the TUDCN's Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) in the framework of the GPEDC is a good opportunity to further our engagement with development stakeholders and the Global Deal initiative is a solid anchor for our efforts that will help to project our work;
- UN/HLPF: possible specific activities in light of the 2019 HLPF review of SDG 8 in cooperation with the ILO.

#### ***Sharing Experience***

In addition to the realisation of evidence-based research, internal debates in the framework of TUDCN activities (general and regional meetings and seminars) will help disseminate and discuss the conclusion of our studies amongst TUDCN members and strategize on how to focus our advocacy efforts. This year research will focus on the contributions of social dialogue to a just transition to a carbon free economy. Focus topics for the coming years will be discussed to establish the priority areas in the future.

#### ***Promoting Dialogues***

Employers are one of the three legs of the tripartite approach to social dialogue. The TUDCN will therefore need to engage employers in the work on social dialogue within Agenda 2030. This will be done through their involvement in different TUDCN activities in this area, but also through undertaking joint seminars on social dialogue at the regional level. These regional seminars or joint activities will gather the members of the regional networks and employers organisations in different countries and at sub-regional and regional level to discuss issues of common concern and build joint strategies. Coherence with existing initiatives will need to be granted.



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