

## Promote dialogue between tripartite actors

Social dialogue brings together the tripartite actors (workers, employers, and the government) and can be used to develop and promote the implementation of social protection mechanisms. As social dialogue allows for consultation and negotiation, it can also contribute to assessing the effectiveness and possible challenges of social protection mechanisms. Finally, through promoting open and inclusive communication, social dialogue can foster shared responsibility.

It is also an opportunity for workers to be represented at the table and have their rights defended, extended, and acquired. Promoting social dialogue can take the form of capacitating (informal) worker's organizations, such as trade unions. It can also include support to policy initiatives that promote the freedom of association and collective bargaining in the informal economy or support to formalization of work. Finally, while tripartite dialogue is the norm in Western countries, in low-income or fragile settings it could mean that including civil society groups works better.

### **Informal work**

The often-vulnerable position of informal workers makes that social dialogue is as important as it is for formal workers, but they are faced with specific challenges: most informal workers remain un-organized or lack the skills and know-how to effectively participate in social dialogue processes. Or they are not even invited to these dialogues or collective bargaining processes. Additionally the political will to engage with these groups of workers is often lacking while informal workers at the same time lack trust in institutional systems and refrain from engaging. In order to get informal worker representatives around the table it is important to acknowledge that building trust in a positive outcome should be incorporated in the process. And of course considering remunerating their participation as they generally only earn an income when working.

### **Gender**

Awareness about gender specific topics is another important element. Both men and women should be represented, as well as youth, to assure that the agenda includes topics relevant for all parties involved and outcomes beneficial to all categories of workers. Examples are:

- improve women's access to education and employment, as well as their remuneration, training and career development;
- guarantee equal and visible opportunities for women in managerial/leadership positions at all levels and in decision-making forums;
- pay attention to the position of youth within the workforce;
- be aware of gender specific issues around health and safety;
- be aware of practical and cultural questions of the balance between work and family;
- make sure to take into account the concerns and needs of workers with family responsibilities.