



INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING INFORMALITY AND PROMOTING TRANSITIONS TOWARDS FORMALITY

AFRICAN REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE-SHARING FORUM

13 –15 NOVEMBER 2024
MÖVENPICK HOTEL
ABIDJAN, COTE D'IVOIRE

Information Note

FRAMING THE EVENT

The International Labour Organization (ILO) Governing Body, 347TH Session, has decided to include on the agenda of the 113th Session (2025) of the International Labour Conference (ILC) an item on *innovative approaches to tackling informality and promoting transitions towards formality to promote decent work* for a General Discussion. At the same time, the year 2025 holds particular significance as it marks the 10-year anniversary of the adoption of Recommendation No. 204 concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, which provides guiding principles and policy guidelines to design and implement integrated strategies for transitions from the informal to the formal economy.

Therefore, as part of the preparations for the general discussion at the 113th ILC, the ILO will produce a background report on what does and does not work in facilitating transition to formality, and what are the innovative approaches that have contributed to the acceleration of transitions to the formal economy and reducing decent work deficits in the informal economy. The background report will provide evidence to support the discussions, which ultimately is expected to produce a consensus view on innovative approaches to be implemented in practice by constituents to accelerate and scale up the actions aiming to tackle informality and promote transition pathways to formality. The background report will be drafted based on the analysis of the progress in the in the efforts towards formalization since R204 came into effect, a compilation of innovative approach cases, reflecting the diversity of development levels, entry points, regional characteristics, and other aspects of the diversity of the informal economy. These innovative approaches include approaches implemented with or without the support of the ILO.

To facilitate the identification of innovative approaches and systematize the diversity of experiences and priorities of ILO's constituents, ILO's regional office proposes to organize tripartite Regional Knowledge Sharing Forums, in collaboration with ILO's Action Programme on Formalization (AP/F) and the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) in Turin.

CELEBRATING PROGRESS AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

In Africa, the *Regional Tripartite Knowledge Sharing Forum on innovative approaches to addressing informality and promoting transitions towards formality (RKSF)* will take place from **13 to 15 November 2024** in **Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire** and will offer ILO constituents in the region a unique opportunity to share and discuss good practices and innovative approaches, identify advances, remaining challenges, their priority needs and, above all, lessons learned since 2015.

This tripartite dialogue will be an essential contribution to the design and promotion of effective transition pathways from the informal to the formal economy in Africa. It will provide key information for the general discussion of the ILC 2025 as well as a space for policy debate on how to foster the reduction of decent work deficits and enable transformative economies boosting social inclusion. Finally, it will offer constituents opportunities to engage in innovative strategic partnerships with the ILO and other multilateral agencies and development cooperation donors concerned with the issue of the informal economy.

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE EVENT

In line with the objectives of the ILC 2025 general discussion, the RKSF will enable ILO constituents in Africa, with the technical and logistical support of the ILO/ITCILO, to share and discuss innovative approaches and good practices that can accelerate and intensify the implementation of Recommendation No. 204.

The aim is to build on common knowledge and go beyond to foster transformative change in a collaborative way:

- **Reviewing and go deeper into the operationalization of some aspects referred to in R204**, such as practical measures for increasing productivity in informal economic units, linking such increase in productivity with formalization of the units and, of the jobs within these units; the prevention of informalization of formal jobs, economic units and activities and addressing this risk; or taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the social and solidarity economy (SSE) to support formalization processes;
- **Assessing and showcasing innovative approaches that have gained prominence since the adoption of R204**, such as practical solutions to harness the potential of digital technologies to support transition to formality, and how to use the potential of the “traceability” of activities in the platform economy to foster formalization; just transition and formalization; further research on specific factors, characteristics, causes and circumstances of informality; strengthening the role of the social and solidarity economy in formalization processes.
- **Approaches that are not yet sufficiently capitalized by the ILO**, such as sectoral approaches, policies aimed at closing decent work gaps and increasing productivity in the informal economy; innovative approaches to organizing workers and economic units in the informal economy, developing alliances with representative workers’ and employers’ organizations and facilitating access to effective social dialogue. The development and strengthening of strategic partnerships, in particular partnerships with other agencies in the multilateral system able to address some of the root causes of informality including beyond the world of work or to enable inclusive dialogue, also fall under this third category.

The innovative approaches and best practices identified and documented will be brought together in a regional information report that will describe the progress of formalization

in Africa since 2015, the innovative approaches and best practices documented, and an analysis of the opportunities and challenges for further action. At the same time, the discussions and debates taking place during the event will feed into a final statement document for Africa, whose pieces will be put together on the last day of the Forum.

METHODOLOGY AND TARGET AUDIENCE

The RKSF will be a 3-day event combining plenary sessions and thematic groups' and country dialogues' interactive sessions bringing together tripartite representatives from selected countries and relevant multilateral development agencies. Plenary sessions will be streamed online to ensure that as many constituents and stakeholders as possible in the region and beyond can benefit from the presentations and debates, so as to strengthen their capacity to meet the challenge of the transition to the formal economy and decent work.

All the materials shared during the event, as well as the live streaming will be hosted by an online user-friendly platform developed by AP/FORMALIZATION extended team and the CATALYST and Employment Policy and Analysis Programme of the ITCILO. The platform will host also the materials and innovative approaches produced by the other Regional Knowledge Sharing Forum (Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Arab States, Europe) so to foster knowledge exchange. All participants will be granted free access to this platform.

LANGUAGE

The event will be delivered in English and French with simultaneous interpretation.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

To participate and for any information on logistics, please get in touch with the ILO Regional Office team by writing to the following email addresses:

ForAfrica@ilo.org

esse@ilo.org (Esse, Wilfried Fourrier)

Regional Knowledge Sharing Forum on innovative approaches to addressing informality and promoting transitions towards formality

Programme



Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire 13-15 November, 2024

	Wednesday, 13 November	Thursday, 14 November	Friday, 15 November
9:00 – 10:30	Welcome remarks Opening panel/talk show Where do we stand 10 years after R204? Celebrating progress, identifying the way forward Moving beyond formalization towards social justice	SESSION 4 Social dialogue and how to amplify the voice of workers in the informal economy	SESSION 8 Leveraging digital technologies to foster the transition from informal to formal economy
10:30 – 11:00	COFFEE BREAK		
11:00 – 12:30	SESSION 1 Reality check on informality Innovative approaches to respond to actual needs and operationalize R204 (introduction to background paper)	SESSION 5 Enhancing productivity and supporting decent work through value chains and supply chains	SESSION 9 Giving a voice to informal workers What are UN agencies doing? Why it is important for Africa to have a voice in the global discourse
12:30 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK		
14:00 – 15:30	SESSION 2 THINK TANKS ON INNOVATIVE APPROACHES Institutional coordination for integrated approaches	SESSION 6 THINK TANKS ON INNOVATIVE APPROACHES Sectoral approaches and/or prioritizing the most vulnerable	Way forward Collaborative production of African statement document
15:30 – 16:00	COFFEE BREAK		
16:00 – 17:00	SESSION 3 COUNTRY DIALOGUES (tripartite) PARALLEL SESSIONS (workers, employers, governments)	SESSION 7 COUNTRY DIALOGUES (tripartite) PARALLEL SESSIONS (workers, employers, governments)	Closing

