



International
Labour
Organization

Evaluation
Office

► Synthesis reviews & meta-studies (2025)

► Synthesis review of ILO evaluation reports on social dialogue interventions, 2019-25

October 2025



This review was prepared as an input into the International Labour Conference Recurrent Discussion on the strategic discussion of social dialogue and tripartism. The synthesis review has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

© International Labour Organization 2025.
First published 2025.



Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. See: creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0. The user is allowed to reuse, share (copy and redistribute), adapt (remix, transform and build upon the original work) as detailed in the licence. The user must clearly credit the ILO as the source of the material and indicate if changes were made to the original content. Use of the emblem, name and logo of the ILO is not permitted in connection with translations, adaptations or other derivative works.

Attribution – The user must indicate if changes were made and must cite the work as follows: ILO, *Synthesis review of ILO evaluation reports on social dialogue interventions, 2019-25*, Geneva: International Labour Office, 2025. © ILO.

Translations – In case of a translation of this work, the following disclaimer must be added along with the attribution: *This is a translation of a copyrighted work of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This translation has not been prepared, reviewed or endorsed by the ILO and should not be considered an official ILO translation. The ILO disclaims all responsibility for its content and accuracy. Responsibility rests solely with the author(s) of the translation.*

Adaptations – In case of an adaptation of this work, the following disclaimer must be added along with the attribution: *This is an adaptation of a copyrighted work of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This adaptation has not been prepared, reviewed or endorsed by the ILO and should not be considered an official ILO adaptation. The ILO disclaims all responsibility for its content and accuracy. Responsibility rests solely with the author(s) of the adaptation.*

Third-party materials – This Creative Commons licence does not apply to non-ILO copyright materials included in this publication. If the material is attributed to a third party, the user of such material is solely responsible for clearing the rights with the rights holder and for any claims of infringement.

Any dispute arising under this licence that cannot be settled amicably shall be referred to arbitration in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The parties shall be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of such a dispute.

For details on rights and licensing, contact: rights@ilo.org. For details on ILO publications and digital products, visit: www.ilo.org/publns.

ISBN: 9789220428719 (print); 9789220428726 (web PDF)
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54394/LWWQ3084>

The designations employed in ILO publications and databases, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the ILO concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. See: www.ilo.org/disclaimer.

The opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions, views or policies of the ILO.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the ILO, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

Printed in Switzerland

► **Synthesis review of
ILO evaluation reports on
social dialogue interventions,
2019-25**

October 2025

Preface

This report was prepared as the Evaluation Office (EVAL)'s contribution to the General Discussion of ILC 2026 on social dialogue. The study was conducted by Jan Van Ongevalle, Anne Guisset and Huib Huyse, independent international evaluation consultants from HIVA-KU Leuven, and managed by Ja Eun Lee, Evaluation Officer at EVAL. Guy Thijs, Director of EVAL, provided oversight to ensure the quality and independence of the study.

The report has benefited from input from several units and individuals inside the ILO, whom I would like to thank: The Labour Relations and Governance of Work Branch (Labgov), the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP).

A special thanks is also due to Patricia Vidal Hurtado, ILO Evaluation Specialist, for her continuous support and inputs throughout the project.

CONTENTS

Abbreviations	2
Executive summary	3
1. Introduction	8
2. Methodology	10
3. Social dialogue - current state and trends	11
4. Effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue	13
▶ Promoting tripartism and labour market governance	13
▶ Enabling conditions and barriers for social dialogue	21
▶ Making social dialogue processes more inclusive	28
5. Contribution of social dialogue to decent work outcomes	36
▶ Social dialogue and policy coherence	36
▶ Social dialogue as a lever for just transitions in a shifting global landscape	38
6. Lessons learned and good practices	46
▶ Institutions: shaping enabling structures	47
▶ Content: strengthening quality and evidence	49
▶ Actors: empowering social partners and stakeholders	49
References	53
Annex 1. Synthesis review questions	55
Annex 2. Methodology	57
Annex 3. Overview of evaluation reports selected for the synthesis review	59

Abbreviations

ACT/EMP	ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities
BW	Better Work (ILO programme)
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CSD	Council for Social Dialogue
FACB	Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
FPRW	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
FUNDAMENTALS	ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch
GEAR	Gender Equality and Returns (training programme)
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
INWORK	ILO Inclusive Labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch
ITC	Industry Tripartite Council
ITCILO	International Training Centre of the ILO
LABADMIN/OSH	ILO Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Dept
LSGSC	Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NORMES	ILO International Labour Standards Department
NSDI	National Social Dialogue Institution
ONEILO	Integrated ILO country programme approach
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PICC	Performance Improvement Consultative Committee
RMG	Ready-Made Garment (sector)
SAM-SDI	Social Dialogue Self-Assessment Methodology
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (ILO programme)
SDI	Social Dialogue Institution
SDIR	Promoting Social Dialogue and Harmonious Industrial Relations (project, Bangladesh)
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SSCBFB	Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
TSPC	Tripartite Social Partnership Commission
VZF	Vision Zero Fund
WRC	Workers' Resource Centre

► Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a synthesis review analyzing the effectiveness of International Labour Organization (ILO) interventions aimed at strengthening social dialogue and examining how dialogue mechanisms contribute to realizing Decent Work (DW) outcomes between 2019 and 2025. The review draws primarily on 53 independent evaluation reports and is intended to inform the recurrent discussion on social dialogue at the 114th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2026.

EFFECTIVENESS OF ILO INTERVENTIONS IN STRENGTHENING SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The ILO's interventions have leveraged its unique tripartite mandate to strengthen social dialogue, yielding mixed but generally positive results. Of the 53 projects assessed for their embeddedness of tripartite processes, 31 were rated as successful and 14 as highly successful. Projects categorized as unsuccessful or only partly successful often achieved technical progress but fell short in embedding social dialogue sustainably. The main constraints included weak design-stage consultation with tripartite partners, imbalanced participation of constituents, limited use of tripartite advisory committees, and a focus on technical or short-term emergency results rather than strengthening institutional dialogue capacity. Despite these limitations, most interventions effectively leveraged ILO's tripartite mandate and applied multi-faceted strategies such as institutionalization of dialogue mechanisms, capacity development, inclusion of vulnerable groups, using supply chains as entry points and broader stakeholder engagement, though with varying degrees of effectiveness and sustainability.

- **Institutionalization and formalization** efforts showed that effectiveness depends less on creating formal structures and more on the legal, political, and trust-based environment in which they operate. Where these enabling conditions aligned, dialogue mechanisms evolved into genuine platforms for negotiation and consensus-building across national, sectoral, and enterprise levels.
- **Capacity building and empowerment** of tripartite partners proved central to strengthening dialogue, but short-term or fragmented efforts rarely produced lasting change. Sustainable outcomes required long-term, continuous engagement that combined technical, organizational, and institutional development.
- Expanding **inclusivity** was another key strategy, with growing efforts to integrate women, workers in the informal economy, migrants, and youth into dialogue processes, often through collaboration with civil society and member-based organizations. This broader engagement has shown to be instrumental to reach underrepresented groups or to respond to contexts of crisis or political instability or legal restrictions.
- **Using domestic and global supply chains as entry points** allowed various interventions to address sector-specific decent work deficits while promoting systemic improvements in labour governance. Multi-level dialogue, linking workplace, sectoral, national, and global levels; proved effective in generating concrete policy and regulatory outcomes.
- **Broader multistakeholder engagement** through other forms of institutionalized dialogue has expanded participation beyond traditional actors to include civil society, academia, and international agencies. This inclusivity enhanced ownership and responsiveness, particularly in contexts of crisis or limited civic space, though it also introduced new coordination challenges.

ENABLING CONDITIONS AND BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The institutionalization, sustainability, and overall effectiveness of social dialogue are shaped by a dynamic interplay of enabling and constraining factors. The same factor can act as a driver of effective dialogue when well established or become a constraint when absent or weak. The synthesis identifies five key factors as critical to creating the enabling conditions for meaningful and sustained social dialogue.

- ▶ **Protection of fundamental rights, freedom of association and collective bargaining (FACB):** The protection of fundamental rights, particularly freedom of association and collective bargaining, is a foundational condition for effective social dialogue. However, various evaluation reports highlight that progress on decent work is often undermined by a profound lack of such protection. At the same time, targeted interventions seeking to address gaps in FACB, while limited in numbers, were shown to achieve meaningful results by leveraging external pressure, supervisory mechanisms, and targeted legal and institutional support. Positive outcomes included legal and institutional reforms to improve trade union registration and collective bargaining, the establishment of dialogue mechanisms such as tripartite action plans and forums, and capacity-building efforts to strengthen union organizing in informal and emerging sectors.
- ▶ **Capacity of social partners to engage in social dialogue:** Social partners' ability to engage meaningfully in dialogue depends on both institutional and human capacities. Overall, while capacity development remains one of the most effective levers for strengthening social dialogue, evaluations stress that short-term or fragmented efforts are insufficient. Sustainable progress requires long-term, holistic support, addressing institutional, technical, and financial dimensions simultaneously.
- ▶ **Employers' attitude towards social dialogue:** Employers participated most actively when dialogue produced tangible business gains, such as better productivity or market access. Approaches that emphasized shared benefits, relied on sectoral associations, and built trust through joint research and co-created solutions successfully reframed dialogue as a strategic management tool rather than a compliance obligation.
- ▶ **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of social dialogue interventions:** While robust M&E systems are an important enabling factor for social dialogue processes, they remain a weakness in a majority of the interventions. Weaknesses include the lack of a clear theory of change, measurable outcome indicators, or baseline data. Some promising practices were also observed like digital systems, participatory appraisals, and integrated results frameworks. These enhanced learning and adaptability. Projects embedding M&E as a continuous learning process demonstrated more responsiveness to evolving needs.
- ▶ **Cross-departmental collaboration within the ILO** enhances the coherence, technical robustness, and scalability of interventions. Evaluations found that joint programming, shared tools, and multi-unit coordination (e.g., among INWORK, DIALOGUE, ACTRAV, and ACT/EMP) improved efficiency and internal learning. This was, for example, the case in interventions using the ONEILO approach. Yet such collaboration remains uneven. Strengthening integrated, decentralized, and flexible collaboration mechanisms is therefore key to maximizing the ILO's collective expertise and impact in promoting social dialogue.

MAKING SOCIAL DIALOGUE MORE INCLUSIVE

The review finds that inclusivity remains uneven across ILO-supported social dialogue interventions. While many initiatives have made progress in engaging women, workers in the informal economy, youth, and migrants, deep-rooted structural, legal, and socio-cultural barriers continue to limit equitable participation and long-term impact.

- ▶ **Gender equality:** Many projects successfully integrated gender into social dialogue through legal and policy reform, capacity building, representation, and targeted support for vulnerable women workers. Reforms were supported by tripartite consultations on conventions such as C183, C189, and C190, while training programmes, like GEAR under Better Work, enhanced women's leadership and participation. Projects also fostered women's organizing and voice through cooperatives, unions, and safe spaces. Yet, entrenched gender norms, weak institutional capacities, and reliance on external funding undermine sustainability. Progress was also limited by measurement gaps and short project cycles, which constrained long-term gender mainstreaming. Lessons highlight the need for long-term engagement, early gender integration, and multi-level advocacy to address socio-cultural barriers.
- ▶ **Workers in the informal economy:** Extending social dialogue to the informal economy remains challenging due to legal restrictions, fragmented representation, and weak organization. Nonetheless, several initiatives created innovative dialogue spaces, such as tripartite working groups in Nepal and India, and local labour desks for workers in the informal economy, linking formalization and social protection. Projects also supported the formation of worker associations and cooperatives, strengthening collective bargaining power of workers in the informal economy outside formal structures. However, sustainability and institutionalization remain weak, often depending on external support, while coordination gaps and limited engagement of formal social partners hinder broader policy impact.
- ▶ **Youth:** Interventions increasingly target youth as both beneficiaries and actors of social dialogue, particularly around OSH, skills, and employment. Programmes like Youth4OSH built youth-led networks and advocated for youth representation in national bodies. Capacity-building initiatives in Africa and Asia linked young workers with unions and employers. However, youth engagement remains fragmented, with limited institutional integration, political resistance, and difficulties reaching vulnerable young workers in informal or precarious jobs.
- ▶ **Migrant workers:** Social dialogue for migrants has advanced through informal mechanisms such as Workers' Resource Centres in Jordan and Lebanon and grassroots associations like the Sandigan Kuwait Domestic Workers Association, which strengthened migrant workers' collective identity and bargaining voice. Tripartite reforms in Malaysia's palm oil sector and collective bargaining in Jordan improved protection and wage equity. Yet, legal restrictions on association, limited outreach to smaller enterprises, and weak international coordination continue to constrain systemic change. Projects often lack leverage over lead firms and global buyers, limiting the reach of reforms in transnational supply chains.

CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE TO DECENT WORK OUTCOMES

The findings from the synthesis review demonstrate that social dialogue can play a pivotal role in advancing decent work by fostering policy coherence, supporting just transitions, and strengthening labour governance. It provides a structured mechanism for governments, employers, and workers, sometimes joined by other stakeholders in other forms of institutionalized dialogue, to align strategies, build consensus, and implement solutions that are inclusive, evidence-based, and sustainable.

- ▶ **Social Dialogue and Policy Coherence:** Evaluations observed that, when these foundational rights apply, social dialogue can significantly contribute to developing integrated policy frameworks that address multiple rights at work, including OSH, gender equality, and the elimination of child and forced labour. Good practices included the integrated programming of the ONEILO approach as well as coordinated country office approaches and the establishment of sectoral joint project advisory committees serving multiple projects in parallel in different sectors.
- ▶ **Just transitions:** Social dialogue has been used as a lever for managing transitions by various projects, though integration remains uneven.
 - ▶ Green transitions were often treated superficially in project design, but when combined with OSH, resource efficiency, and green skills initiatives through multi-stakeholder dialogue, they strengthened environmental governance and policy alignment.
 - ▶ Digitalization created new opportunities for participation and transparency through inspection platforms and e-learning, though inclusivity gaps persist, particularly concerning platform and gig workers.
 - ▶ Supply chains emerged as an important entry point for promoting decent work. ILO-facilitated dialogue platforms in countries like Brazil and Malaysia mobilized companies around ethical sourcing and human rights due diligence (HRDD), extending protection to vulnerable groups such as migrant and home-based workers. Yet, weak worker representation, limited employer commitment, and unequal cost-sharing continue to restrict transformative impact.
- ▶ **Labour governance and public policy:** In various interventions, the use of Social dialogue has contributed to strengthened labour law, administration, dispute resolution, and public policy frameworks, leading to tangible outcomes such as legal reforms, improved mediation systems, and ratification of conventions. For example, tripartite councils in Georgia and Ukraine, supported by the ILO interventions, fostered trust and inclusive policy discussions on employment and social protection. Nonetheless, long-term success depends on national ownership, institutional continuity, and sustained investment in the capacity of all social partners.

LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES: THE TRIANGLE OF ENABLING CONDITIONS

The synthesis organizes key lessons learned into a 'Triangle of Enabling Conditions' for effective and inclusive social dialogue consisting of the following three interdependent categories:

- ▶ **Institutions** – Strong legal and institutional foundations that safeguard freedom of association and collective bargaining, supported by the ILO's impartiality, continuity, and adaptability. These ensure dialogue is embedded, credible, and sustainable rather than ad hoc.
- ▶ **Content** – Dialogue grounded in evidence and robust data systems that generate reliable labour market information, enabling informed negotiation, realistic policy solutions, and effective monitoring.
- ▶ **Actors** – Empowered and legitimate social partners with the knowledge, leadership, and ownership needed to sustain dialogue. Building capacity, cultivating local champions, and ensuring active involvement of workers' and employers' organizations are essential for long-term impact.

When these categories work in synergy, they create the conditions for trust-based, resilient, and inclusive social dialogue that adapts to changing labour markets and contexts and is equipped to deliver fair outcomes for all. An overview of the lessons learned and good practices identified by the synthesis review for each of these categories is provided below.

1. Institutions: Shaping Enabling Structures

- ▶ **Cornerstones are ILS and Supervisory Mechanisms:** Success is grounded in the ILO's normative mandate, using conventions (C87, C98) as the blueprint for legal reform, often catalyzed by external pressures (e.g., trade agreements, formal complaints).

- ▶ **ILO's Impartial Convening Role:** The ILO's neutrality and technical credibility build trust, bridge divides, and enable engagement on politically sensitive issues.
- ▶ **Programmatic Continuity and Adaptability:** Building on earlier relationships and institutional frameworks and integration of social dialogue in broader ILO country programs (like the ONEILO approach) secures long-term impact. Adaptability allows interventions to navigate complex contexts and crises (Ukraine, Myanmar post-coup).

2. Content: Strengthening Quality and Evidence

- ▶ **Evidence-Informed Dialogue:** Dialogue is strengthened by using monitoring tools, data systems (e.g., Brazil's SMARTLAB), and technical tools (IRLex, IRData) to provide reliable labour market information, supporting constructive negotiations and informed policy-making.
- ▶ **M&E for Learning:** Robust M&E must track qualitative changes in dialogue quality and institutionalization, moving beyond mere activity counts, to foster transparency and continuous institutional learning.

3. Actors: Empowering Social Partners and Stakeholders

- ▶ **Systematic Capacity Strengthening:** A fundamental lesson is the critical need to equip all tripartite partners with knowledge, skills, and resources, using targeted training, toolkits, and peer-to-peer exchanges. Crucially, structured follow-up is essential to ensure the application of acquired skills and prevent partners from reverting to previous practices.
- ▶ **Consistent Involvement and Ownership:** Sustainability is driven by the active and consistent involvement of social partners in all stages (design, implementation), ensuring relevance and national ownership of reforms.
- ▶ **Investment in Local Leadership and Grassroots Networks:** Strengthening leadership at the community level (e.g., home-based worker collectives, WRCs) promotes local-level problem-solving and ensures dialogue is grounded in workers' realities, though these nascent networks often require continued support. Strategic partnerships broaden expertise but must be managed carefully to avoid fragmentation of interests or resistance from traditional constituents.



► 1. Introduction

Social dialogue, defined as all types of negotiation, consultation, and exchange of information between representatives of governments, employers, and workers on issues of common interest related to economic or social policy, is a cornerstone of the ILO's mission to promote decent work (see Box 1). It plays a vital role in fostering fair terms of employment, improving working conditions, and achieving equitable economic progress, thereby supporting sustainable development goals.

The upcoming 114th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2026 will feature a recurrent discussion on social dialogue. This discussion revisits the topic last addressed in 2018, which led to a plan of action for 2019–2023. Since then, social dialogue systems have faced increasing demands and pressures due to the global challenges such as post-COVID-19 economic recovery, digital transformation, climate transitions, demographic shifts, and rising inequalities.

This synthesis review was undertaken to inform the 2026 ILC discussion and support institutional learning. It provides critical insights into how social dialogue interventions have responded to these complex issues and systematically analyse lessons learned, emerging trends, challenges and good practices across interventions implemented from 2019 to 2025.

The review also exemplifies effective collaboration between ILO functions. For years, the Evaluation Office has actively taken steps to ensure that evaluations better capture the ILO's specific normative and social dialogue mandate through specific [guidance](#). While it was independently managed by the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL), the work was financially supported by the technical department, underlining the role of evaluation in strengthening programme reporting and strategic dialogue. The methodological approach draws on EVAL's experience with synthesis review, ensuring rigor, alignment with past best practices and relevance for internal and external stakeholders.

It is important to note that the evidence base underlying this synthesis review reflects the focus of the evaluated projects. As most evaluations between 2019 and 2025 concentrated on strengthening workers' organizations, the findings are correspondingly more extensive on worker-related outcomes than on those of employers' organizations. This asymmetry stems from the available evidence rather than from any analytical emphasis in the review.

More specifically the aim of this synthesis review is twofold:

- To analyse the effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue;
- To analyse how social dialogue has contributed to realizing decent work outcomes.

These aims have been refined into a set of sub questions that guided both the analysis and the structure of the report (see annex 1). The next chapter (chapter 2), provides a brief outline of the review methodology (see annex 2 for a detailed overview of the methodology). Chapter 3 sets the stage by summarizing the current state and trends of social dialogue, drawing primarily on recent ILO publications. The presentation of findings begins in chapter 4, which examines the effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue. This is followed by chapter 5, which analyses how social dialogue has contributed to decent work outcomes across the reviewed interventions. While lessons learned and good practices are highlighted throughout the report, chapter 6 synthesizes them in a structured way, organized around three interdependent dimensions essential to effective and inclusive social dialogue: institutions, content, and actors.

Box 1: Social dialogue and collective bargaining and other forms of institutionalised dialogue

Social dialogue is defined as all types of negotiation, consultation or simply the exchange of information between representatives of governments, employers and workers (tripartite social dialogue) or between those of employers and workers (bipartite social dialogue) on issues of common interest. Social dialogue can occur at all levels, from the workplace to international levels and can take place through various modalities and degrees of formality (ILO, 2017). This definition recognises the unique role of trade unions and employer organizations as the social partners in processes of social dialogue, besides the government. This role of trade unions and employer organizations is defined and protected under international law, notably by ILO Conventions No 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and No 98 (Right to organise and collective bargaining).

Collective bargaining is a specific form of bipartite social dialogue and is defined in ILO Convention No. 154. It involves “all negotiations which take place between an employer, a group of employers, or one or more employers’ organizations, on the one hand, and one or more workers’ organizations, or, in the absence of such organizations, the representatives of the workers duly elected and authorized by them in accordance with national laws and regulations, on the other. Collective bargaining aims to determine working conditions and terms of employment, regulate relations between employers and workers, and manage interactions between employers or their organizations and workers’ organizations”. (ILO Convention No 154).

Other forms of institutionalized dialogue include all spaces or platforms where other civil society actors besides trade unions (e.g. informal economy worker organizations, NGOs, health mutuals, actors from the social and solidarity economy, etc.), sometimes together with trade unions, can make their voices heard towards counterparts from government or the private sector. Examples (non-exhaustive) include the non-statutory and less (or not) institutionalized ad-hoc or regular negotiations, consultations and roundtables as well as the more ‘institutionalized social dialogue plus’ mechanisms where civil society actors are allowed to participate in social dialogue processes alongside the trade unions¹.



¹ Examples of such ‘social dialogue plus’ or ‘institutionalised dialogue’ mechanisms include the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) involving community organizations alongside government, workers, and employers, the Commission Nationale de Dialogue Social (CNDS) in Niger where cooperatives join employers and workers. In Mali, the social and solidarity economy (SSE) has a formal role in the Economic, Social and Cultural Council as “other stakeholders” and in Colombia, a forum overseeing the ILO Domestic Workers Convention 189 involves the Ministry of Labour, trade unions, and smaller SSE entities focused on domestic work (Briones Alonso and Vlaminc, 2023).

2. Methodology

This synthesis review draws primarily on 53 independent evaluation reports of ILO interventions implemented between 2019 and 2025, and triangulated with ILO Evaluation Office meta-analyses on Decent Work results and effectiveness of ILO operations and other relevant ILO publications, recurrent discussion reports, and academic and grey literature. The selection of sources followed a three-step process: (1) preliminary screening of 873 interventions by the ILO Evaluation Office, identifying 77 reports linked to social dialogue; (2) refinement using quality-based exclusion criteria, resulting in a final sample of 53 reports; and (3) a systematic analysis combining AI-assisted thematic extraction (via Notebook LM) with manual validation and contextual interpretation. Each evaluation was reviewed for its findings on the contribution of social dialogue to decent work outcomes, good practices, and lessons learned. Regional clustering and cross-cutting synthesis were then used to identify trends across contexts and mechanisms.

While steps were taken to ensure methodological rigor - including triangulation with meta-analyses and recurrent ILO discussions - limitations remain due to keyword bias in report selection, variations in evaluation scope and quality, and uneven regional coverage. The selected evaluations reflect the integrated nature of the Decent Work Agenda: Of the 52 evaluation reports selected, a majority addressed multiple thematic areas simultaneously, reflecting the integrated nature of the Decent Work Agenda. While social dialogue featured in all the reports, it was a key thematic focus in 15 reports. Social protection was addressed as one of the key themes in 20 reports, with 18 of these also focusing on occupational safety and health (OSH). Rights at work were a central theme in 29 reports. Employment creation, including issues such as skills development and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), featured as a thematic focus area in 8 reports. In addition, labour administration was a thematic focus in 6 reports, the informal economy in 4 reports, and gender equality was highlighted as a specific thematic focus in 3 reports. The interventions span all ILO regions and a wide range of sectors, providing a robust but context-sensitive evidence base for the synthesis.

A detailed overview of the review questions is provided in Annex 2, while Annex 3 presents a more in-depth account of the methodology, including quality criteria, analytical procedures, and the geographic and sectoral distribution of the reviewed interventions.



► 3. Social dialogue - current state and trends

Across the world of work, social dialogue is increasingly recognised as a vital pillar of democratic governance and a powerful instrument for promoting decent work, inclusive growth, and social cohesion. Despite this growing acknowledgement, the landscape of social dialogue remains uneven, characterised by institutional endurance on one hand and persistent gaps in influence and inclusivity on the other. Drawing from relevant ILO reports and other relevant literature, this chapter provides a narrative overview of the state of social dialogue today, spotlighting emerging trends, continuing challenges, and strategic responses shaping its future.

Social dialogue institutions, especially national-level tripartite bodies, are widespread. According to the 2024 flagship report on social dialogue, 87% of ILO member states maintain national social dialogue institutions (NSDIs), the vast majority of which are formalised and tripartite in nature (ILO, 2024a). These bodies frequently contribute to the design and implementation of employment, social, and macroeconomic policies, and have proven especially vital during times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing climate crisis, for example, many of these institutions were instrumental in guiding emergency responses and recovery plans (ILO, 2022b; ILO, 2022a, ILO 2023a, Molina Romo, 2022).

A notable trend in recent years has been the expansion of the thematic scope of social dialogue. Beyond its traditional concerns with wages and working conditions, collective bargaining has increasingly embraced issues related to the green and digital transitions, as well as inequality and exclusion in labour markets. The extension of social protection is also increasingly featuring on the agendas of national social dialogue institutions such as economic and social councils. Moreover, collective bargaining has been instrumental in protecting workers and strengthening the resilience of enterprises and labour markets in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. (ILO, 2022a, 2024a). Nevertheless, also for these new thematic areas, it is important to note that the implementation of recommendations from national tripartite social dialogue institutions or the legal enforcement of collective bargaining agreements depends on political will, institutional mandates, and effective follow-up mechanisms (ILO, 2022a, ILO, 2021a, ILO, 2023b, ILO2025b).

CHALLENGES IN STRENGTHENING SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Across regions, a number of structural and operational challenges continue to undermine the full potential of social dialogue. Legal, institutional, and political barriers remain formidable. At the legal level, while many countries have ratified key ILO conventions, implementation remains inconsistent, especially for the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No.87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No.98) which are also some of the least ratified. In many contexts, these rights are weakly protected or actively curtailed, particularly in sectors with high levels of informality or political sensitivity (ILO, 2024c, ILO, 2024a, ILO, 2022b).

Structures and institutions for bipartite and tripartite social dialogue processes are often under-resourced. National institutions may exist in name but lack the staffing, expertise, or coordination mechanisms needed to function effectively. Fragmentation of mandates between ministries, or between national and subnational bodies, further hampers coherence (ILO, 2024a, 2022a).

Politically, the lack of early and meaningful involvement of social partners is a recurring grievance. Despite their formal presence, the influence of social dialogue institutions varies significantly. While social partners hold a generally positive view of the effectiveness of NSDIs, for example in delivering social pacts, recommendations and advisory opinions, they express concern about the ability of governments and public authorities to act on these outcomes or translate them into binding policies or visible reforms (ILO, 2024a).

Too often workers' and employers' organizations are consulted only after decisions have already been taken, diminishing their sense of ownership and weakening the legitimacy of outcomes (ILO, 2024a, ILO, 2023a). In some cases, social dialogue is reduced to a formalistic exercise, lacking substantive follow-through (Molina Romo, 2022). The 2013 and 2017 synthesis reviews further observed that the absence of clear mandates, weak follow-up, and sporadic engagement undermine the value of social dialogue mechanisms (ILO, 2013; ILO, 2017).

Furthermore, inclusion remains an uphill battle. While the importance of including women, young people, and workers in the informal economy is widely recognised, most institutions struggle to translate this aspiration into practice. A parallel concern is the persistent underrepresentation of these groups from institutionalised dialogue structures (ILO, 2022a; ILO, 2024c). Dedicated seats, capacity-building programmes, or informal consultations have been introduced in some settings, but they remain the exception rather than the rule (ILO, 2024a; ILO, 2024b; ILO, 2023b; ILO, 2022a). Although these types of targeted interventions and dedicated forums have emerged to address this gap (ILO, 2025b), meaningful inclusion remains a work in progress. Representation matters not only for legitimacy but also for shaping inclusive and forward-looking policy responses (ILO, 2024c).

LESSONS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

Despite these constraints, several positive trends and strategic opportunities are emerging. Across the referenced reports, a suite of measures has shown promise in revitalising social dialogue and enhancing its impact.

First, legal reform remains foundational. Countries that have aligned national laws with ILO conventions and granted institutional mandates to social dialogue bodies have seen greater coherence and credibility in policy dialogue. Legal guarantees help shift social dialogue from an ad hoc process to an embedded governance mechanism (ILO, 2022a; ILO, 2024c; ILO, 2025a; ILO, 2017b).

Second, investing in capacity is key. Various reports underscore the importance of equipping social partners with the skills, tools, and organizational support needed to engage in complex policy processes. Capacity building has also been highlighted as a good practice in development cooperation partnerships, especially when embedded in long-term institutional strengthening efforts (ILO 2025a, ILO, 2025b, ILO, 2017b, ILO, 2024a).

Third, innovation in formats and participation models is gaining traction. The use of digital platforms, hybrid meetings, and thematic working groups (e.g. the tripartite 'Apps working group' in Brazil discussing legislation related to the working conditions in the platform economy) has helped expand access (e.g. during the covid pandemic) and improve responsiveness. Similarly, integrating social dialogue within broader national strategies, such as climate transition plans, social protection frameworks, or recovery efforts, has reinforced its relevance (ILO, 2024a, ILO, 2022a, ILO, 2022b, ILO, 2021a, Molina Romo, 2022, ILO, 2025b).

Finally, robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are increasingly recognised as essential. These systems not only track outcomes but also create learning loops and ensure accountability. Where M&E is institutionalised, dialogue processes tend to be more dynamic and trusted (ILO, 2023a, ILO, 2025b, ILO, 2021a, ILO, 2017b).

► 4. Effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue

PROMOTING TRIPARTISM AND LABOUR MARKET GOVERNANCE

Findings from the 53 reviewed evaluation reports demonstrate that a large majority of the evaluated ILO interventions across Asia and the Pacific, Africa, the Arab States, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean have contributed to mixed but generally positive results in promoting tripartism and strengthening labour market governance. In some cases, strengthening social dialogue was a key objective of the project, in other cases social dialogue was strengthened while being used as one of the pathways within the interventions' theories of change to contribute towards decent work outcomes.

Applying ILO's measurement framework for assessing the embeddedness of tripartite processes and social dialogue in project design and implementation (see Table 1), the review found that social dialogue constituted a central focus across the portfolio. Of the 53 interventions assessed, 31 were classified as successful and 14 as highly successful. Seven projects demonstrated only partial success, while one project was rated as unsuccessful (see fig.1).

FIGURE 1: PERFORMANCE OF ILO INTERVENTIONS IN EMBEDDING SOCIAL DIALOGUE MECHANISMS

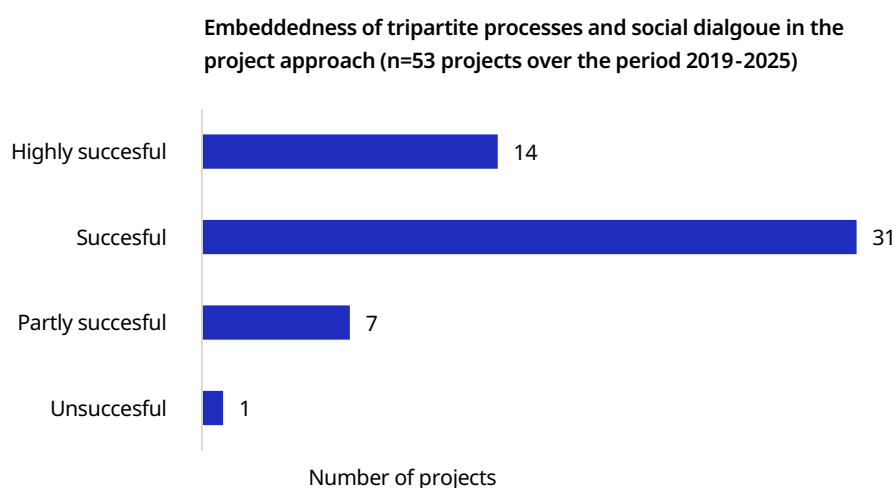


TABLE 1: MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK OF EMBEDDEDNESS OF TRIPARTITE PROCESSES AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN THE PROJECT²

Unsuccessful (score: 1)	Partly successful (score: 2)	Successful (score: 3)	Highly successful (score: 4)
Unsuccessful projects give negligible attention given to social dialogue and involvement of tripartite institutions and processes in design, implementation and intended results of project	Partly successful projects only show some attention to social dialogue in design and implementation, with limited progress	Successful projects integrate tripartism and social dialogue into the project	Highly successful projects integrate tripartism and social dialogue into the project, addressing targeted capacity gaps of tripartite constituents in order to strengthen tripartite processes, institutionalization of tripartite process and social dialogue to ensure sustainability

With regards to the unsuccessful and partly successful categories, while projects often achieved important technical results and also contributed to some extent towards the strengthening of tripartism, the limited embeddedness of social dialogue can be traced to different reasons. These included:

- ▶ design-stage weaknesses with tripartite constituents being consulted only superficially (e.g. RAF1653FRA),
- ▶ imbalanced participation of tripartite constituents, with engagement often leaning towards government actors or employers (e.g. GLO1754EUR),
- ▶ weak involvement of tripartite advisory committees, prioritized focus on technical results (e.g. labour inspection, OSH, skills) over institutionalized capacity of social partners with regards to social dialogue (e.g. BGD1905MUL),
- ▶ focus on temporary short term emergency-response (e.g. COVID-related) social dialogue structures (GLO2020MUL).

Overall however, the interventions largely leveraged ILO's unique tripartite mandate to strengthen social dialogue while employing a multi-faceted approach, utilizing various strategies tailored to regional, national and local specificities, albeit with mixed results in terms of effectiveness and sustainability. Key strategies applied in different combinations are further outlined in the paragraphs below and include institutionalization of social dialogue mechanisms, capacity development and an increased focus on vulnerable groups, domestic and global supply chains and formalization.

Institutionalization and formalization of tripartite and bipartite mechanisms

A recurring and effective strategy across ILO interventions has been to support the establishment, legal recognition, and strengthening of formal social dialogue structures at national, sectoral, and enterprise levels. Embedding these mechanisms in a governance framework, rather than relying on ad hoc arrangements, has, in various countries and contexts, enabled tripartite dialogue to influence policy and legislative developments in line with international labour standards. This finding is consistent with other recent ILO reviews of evaluation reports, which show that projects supporting the establishment of formal, well-structured dialogue bodies tend to achieve more sustainable policy impacts, whereas informal dialogues often fade after project support ends (ILO, 2025b).

² Based on the meta-analysis of evaluation reports using the evaluation office's 29 key performance matrix (the performance framework to measure DW results and effectiveness of ILO operation). Its scale is from 1 (unsuccessful) to 4 (highly successful).

However, the evidence from the current review also shows that the functionality, influence, and sustainability of these mechanisms are shaped less by their formal creation than by the contextual conditions in which they operate. In practice, the same institutionalized mechanism can be highly effective in one setting and largely symbolic in another. What makes the difference are factors such as:

- ▶ a conducive legal and political environment ensuring access to foundational rights such as freedom of association and collective bargaining,
- ▶ the capacity of tripartite constituents to engage meaningfully,
- ▶ the level of trust and cooperation among them,
- ▶ and their willingness to participate in dialogue.

These conditions determine whether social dialogue institutions become arenas for genuine negotiation and consensus-building, or whether they remain formal structures with little influence. Where these conditions align, the outcomes can be significant as shown in box 2 by the examples of projects contributing towards the institutionalization of social dialogue at national, provincial, sectoral and enterprise level.

Box 2: Institutionalising social dialogue at national, provincial and sectoral levels

At a National level the RAS1750DEU project's capacity building programmes in Cambodia were found to have contributed towards the integration of an annual wage review into a new minimum wage law. This process led to the institutionalization of the Labour Advisory Council (LAC) through the creation of a tripartite wage board with government, employers and workers equally represented. Important good practices included the demand-driven support through tailored and multi-faceted capacity building of tripartite constituents, providing evidence-based tools (e.g. Cambodia garment and footwear sector bulleting), and ensuring sustained engagement by the ILO intervention over more than four years which was critical for building trust and the necessary capacity.

At the provincial and sectoral level in the Philippines, the RAS2007USA project contributed to the revitalisation of sectoral Industry Tripartite Councils (ITCs) for the mining, banana, and fishing sectors in four target regions. By building their capacity for sectoral compliance planning, the project has helped place labour standards, gender equality, and OSH higher on their agendas. A key success was in Camarines Norte, where the project assisted small-scale miners' associations in gaining representation on the provincial mining ITC, giving them a voice in the governance of the sector. The project's strategy leverages existing tripartite industry structures to ensure ownership and sustainability of its interventions. Efforts were also made by various interventions to strengthen the capacity for and scope of collective bargaining, seen for example in amendments to the Industrial Relations Act in Malaysia (MYS1601USA) or initiatives to sign new Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in Indonesia (RAS1750DEU), Cambodia and Jordan (GLO1755MUL).

At the enterprise level, various interventions supported different bipartite dialogue mechanisms such as Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Committees contributing to factory OSH policies and observable OSH improvements (GLO1838EUR, KHM1701JPN, ETH1502SID), Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCs) in Better Work programmes contributing to improved conflict resolution (GLO1755MUL). While some of these committees such as the PICCs have been criticized for not working with unions or sound worker representation independent of management, these committees directly promote dialogue between managers and workers on operational issues, OSH, and working conditions, sometimes even in contexts that lack freedom of association.

Conversely, where enabling conditions are absent or only partially present, the results are more mixed.

In Bangladesh, the creation of national and sectoral tripartite councils in the RMG sector, supported by the ILO through the development of guidelines and support for a dedicated unit at the Ministry of Labour and Employment, represented a significant progress towards institutionalization. Yet their functionality and influence were not yet evident, with the evaluators noting the need for more regular meetings and stronger coordination by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (BGD1503MUL).

In Ethiopia, while legislation allowed for setting up tripartite mechanisms, a planned garment-sector forum failed to materialize due to gaps in project design, including insufficient attention to the limited mandate of the relevant trade union federation (ETH1502SID).

Similar constraints were also visible in some Arabic states, where new tripartite structures, such as Iraq's labour inspection committee or Saudi Arabia's planned social dialogue council, marked important first steps in their establishment but remain hampered by coordination challenges, limited capacity, weak legal frameworks, low employer engagement and, in the case of Saudi Arabia, freedom of association being highly restricted (IRQ2003EUR, SAU1801SAU).

Furthermore, even where high-level tripartite bodies are re-established, as in Georgia's Tripartite Social Partnership Commission, the absence of regular meetings, weak follow-through on strategic plans, and reluctance to tackle sensitive issues can undermine their effectiveness (GEO1302USA).

Capacity building and empowerment of tripartite constituents

Support for the institutionalization of social dialogue mechanisms goes hand in hand with capacity building efforts, equipping governments, employers' and workers' organizations with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary for effective participation in social dialogue. Various synthesis reviews and meta studies have revealed the fundamental role of capacity development to advance and sustain International Labour Standards (ILS) across diverse contexts through structured training, institutional support and ongoing technical assistance (ILO, 2025a). While the majority of evaluation reports point towards the strong relevance as well as effectiveness of capacity development initiatives implemented by the reviewed interventions, many evaluations also highlight some of the limitations faced by individual projects to sustainably address the considerable capacity gaps and the need for longer term follow up towards sustained change (see also section 6.2). Against this backdrop, the current review identifies distinct but interrelated patterns of capacity strengthening efforts focusing on technical skills as well as organizational and institutional capacity of tripartite constituents.

- **Towards government**, capacity strengthening activities frequently aim to bolster the technical capabilities of ministries of labour and associated bodies to align national laws and practices with ILS. This is pursued through direct technical assistance for drafting or amending legislation, such as the overhaul of Malaysia's industrial relations system to better align with ILS, the development of modern OSH and labour inspection laws in Ukraine (UKR1901EUR), creation of new OSH and labour units in Iraq (IRQ2003EUR) and drafting national OSH master plans and policies in Cambodia (KHM1701JPN). This legal and policy support is often complemented by strengthening government capacity for data collection and analysis, enabling more evidence-based policymaking, as seen in projects that helped national statistics offices in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan align child labour data with international standards (RAS1904GBR) or training of ministries of labour on data analysis and wage policy in Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan (RAS1750DEU).
- **For worker organizations**, projects in some cases start by strengthening understanding of ILS and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW), which serves as a foundation for more effective advocacy and representation. In countries such as Malaysia, Georgia, and Egypt, this approach enabled unions to contribute more meaningfully to law reform processes (MYS1601U SA, GEO1302, RAF1705FIN). Complementary efforts focus on developing organizational and technical capacity, including training to organize workers in the informal economy and rural sectors, and building the ability to conduct evidence-based wage negotiations and collective bargaining (RAS1706JPN, RAF1653FRA, RAS1750DEU).
- **For employer organizations**, support similarly combines normative and practical dimensions. Training often focuses on rights and responsibilities under national law and ILS, particularly in areas such as OSH, forced labour, and industrial relations, while also promoting responsible business practices. Projects also frequently enhance employers' capacity to deliver services to their members, for example, OSH training programmes in the Philippines and sector-based OSH integration in Latin America, or help desks to support the formalization of informal enterprises in Nepal and Fiji (OSH flagship evaluation, RAS2053UND, NPL1701GBR). In addition, employers' organizations have been supported to strengthen their role in wage-setting and policy reform through evidence-based social dialogue (RAS1750DEU, MOZ16001SWE).

While capacity development activities are generally considered relevant and effective across a majority of the evaluation reports, their ability to generate sustained institutional change largely depends on the degree to which interventions adopt a holistic approach that integrates technical, organizational, and institutional dimensions. Evidence from the evaluation reports shows that fragmented or short-term efforts rarely shift entrenched power dynamics or address underlying structural constraints. This observation is consistent with findings from other ILO reviews, which emphasize that capacity-building efforts must be inclusive, continuous, and supported by sustained institutional commitment beyond the project's duration to achieve lasting impact (ILO, 2025b).

Findings from the SIRAYE project in Ethiopia (see box 3) and the multi-country Sida-ILO Partnership Programme (see box 4) illustrate how more comprehensive, context-sensitive approaches to capacity strengthening can enhance the effectiveness of social dialogue and labour governance, while also revealing the ongoing challenges of ensuring continuity and local ownership. Furthermore, box 5 illustrates how capacity development interventions specifically aimed at strengthening collective bargaining were implemented with varied success, typically targeting tripartite constituents to enhance their technical and organizational skills for negotiation.

Box 3: A holistic approach to strengthening social dialogue in Ethiopia's garment sector

In the garment sector in Ethiopia, the SIRAYE project (ETH1701MUL) tailored its capacity development activities to address the specific challenges of the tripartite constituents which included limited resources and capacities to represent their members holistically. Moreover, employer's federations lacked strong coordination, while the trade union's resources were highly centralized towards central headquarters rather than the local branches where most of the interaction with workers takes place. Among the variety of activities implemented, the programme provided training for workers and employers organizations on social dialogue (representation, collective bargaining, grievance handling), inclusiveness (gender equality, disability, anti-sexual harassment), and ILS. Also, to address the government's concerns regarding gender inequality, the limited capacity of labour inspection, and the absence of a minimum wage, the project developed guidelines for establishing childcare centres, focused on building the capacity of labour inspection, and enabled constituents to discuss a minimum wage-setting mechanism in the garment and textile sector. The evaluation observed that the project through its holistic ONEILO approach had contributed to positive outcomes at various levels, including improvements in freedom of association, OSH, gender, and productivity at the factory level, the establishment of a tripartite Grievance Redressal Mechanism at the sectoral level and the development of policy documents (still to be implemented) on OSH and minimum wage. At the same time, challenges remain demonstrating the need for continued engagement. Women continue to face lower pay, underrepresentation in management, and underreporting of harassment, while national policy documents were still pending approval.

Box 4: Leveraging ILO tools to uphold freedom of association

The Sida-ILO Partnership Programme (GLO1859SWE) pilot tested an Industrial Relations Toolkit in Myanmar, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, strengthening the capacity of social partners in collective bargaining, workplace cooperation and grievance handling. This training activity was implemented in parallel with the development of an online assessment tool (SAM SDI) for national tripartite social dialogue institutions as well as the updating and expansion of the IRDatabase on industrial relations and the IRLex database on national laws and regulations concerning Industrial Relations (IR) in ILO member States. These global tools were also found to contribute towards the promotion of freedom of association. The relevance and effectiveness of these interventions were highlighted by the evaluation report. In Sri Lanka, for example, the use of the IR Toolkit contributed towards "the Tripartite Constituents at the national level agreeing on a set of procedures for electing workplace representatives to be included in forthcoming workplace trainings in 20 factories". At the same time the report also acknowledges that the long-term impact will depend on the integration of the increased capacity in the promotion of changes in industrial relations and social dialogue practices at different levels. Hence the importance for continued follow up and uptake by local stakeholders (GLO1859SWE).

Box 5: Promoting Collective Bargaining Through Targeted Capacity Development

The evaluation of the Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains (LSGSC) project (RAS1750DEU) reported significant success in Cambodia, where a highly focused strategy involving tailored training (including economics for non-economists) and evidence-based research supported by INWORK was directed at tripartite constituents (government, workers' and employers' organizations) to support negotiation processes. This approach worked due to high stakeholder demand following labor unrest and successfully contributed to advancing negotiations for a first-of-its-kind sector-wide collective bargaining agreement. In Indonesia, LSGSC targeted constituents through a successful Training-of-Trainers (TOT) approach to promote enterprise-level CBAs, which was effective in influencing factory-level bipartite negotiations; however, this model's impact remained modest and non-scalable because the project lacked the necessary additional time and investment to institutionalize the approach within national bodies. Nevertheless, the online courses on ILS and fair wages, supported by ACTRAV, being one of the LSGSC implementing units, managed to reach thousands of union leaders and activists. Similarly, in Pakistan, training on collective bargaining enhanced the capacity and awareness of over 80 trade union officials regarding regulatory constraints, but widespread adoption was limited by structural challenges, including low unionization and general employer resistance. Finally, in the SoLaR project in Lao PDR (LAO2101EUR), capacity building provided to staff from the Lao Federation of trade unions, CSOs, and farmer groups on collective bargaining principles did not fully achieve its goal of improving labor relationships or wage setting for waged workers; instead, the knowledge was unintentionally used by production groups/farmers to improve their commercial position and bargain prices with coffee and tea buyers.

Efforts towards increased inclusivity and focus on vulnerable groups

Various interventions are taking deliberate steps to bring in the voices of historically marginalized groups, such as women, workers in the informal economy, migrants or youth who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), into social dialogue processes. This introduces an additional layer of complexity, as these groups are often excluded from formal tripartite structures due to their limited representation within existing legal and institutional frameworks as well as within social partners organizations. To address this, projects have adopted multidimensional strategies, supporting the inclusion of vulnerable groups' voice in traditional tripartite mechanisms while, in cases where vulnerable groups are not appropriately represented through social partners, also collaborating with civil society organizations and member-based organizations to mobilize vulnerable groups and creating alternative, less formal spaces of dialogue as stepping stones towards more institutionalized arrangements. While such approaches have demonstrated effectiveness in broadening participation, they require sustained engagement and long-term follow-up which aligns with good practice as recommended in ILO's 2024 meta-evaluation (ILO, 2024d).

Examples of interventions specifically targeting vulnerable groups include efforts to unionize home-based workers in India and Nepal (RAS1706JPN), efforts to extend social protection to the informal economy in Egypt (INT2002EUR), and the fostering of "Youth Champions" for OSH in the Philippines (RAS1605USC). Other examples include projects actively supporting grassroots migrant worker associations in Kuwait (RAB1503CHE) and Workers' Resource Centres in Jordan and Lebanon (RAS1355UKM). These and other initiatives addressing the needs of women, youth, migrants, and workers in the informal economy are discussed in greater detail in Section 4.3.

However, when it comes to workers with disabilities, the review finds limited evidence of interventions that directly address this target group through social dialogue. Most references to disability inclusion instead relate to sensitization and capacity-building of social partners (RAS1706JPN, GLO2020MUL, ETH1701MUL) or, as was observed in the Better Work programme, to ad hoc initiatives based on country-level initiatives or national laws, but which had not been successful in ensuring coherence with the needs of people with disabilities in the programme. (GLO1755MUL). Other examples involve more indirect pathways, such as collaborating with national statistics bureaus to include disability-related questions in household and labour force surveys, or supporting disability organizations to promote decent work, non-discrimination, and inclusive workplaces. For instance, the national disability rights network in Kenya reported using ILO tools in its activities, which subsequently helped it to develop closer ties with the country's largest trade union confederation (High-level evaluation Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work - PPRF).

Strategic focus on domestic and global supply chains and formalization

Across various interventions, social dialogue has been deployed increasingly as a strategic enabler of decent work in domestic and global supply chains, and in a variety of economic sectors such as garment, agriculture and fisheries. Positioning supply chains as an entry point, in line with the ILO's strategy on decent work in supply chains (ILO, 2023c), has allowed interventions to address the concrete needs of constituents in specific sectoral contexts, targeting particular decent work deficits with tailored solutions. At the same time, this approach created pathways for broader systemic changes in labour governance by combining immediate improvements with longer-term institutional impact. Importantly, social dialogue was deployed through multiple, mutually reinforcing modalities at different levels including at the global level through engagement with brands and buyers; at the national level through codes of conduct, policy reforms, and collective bargaining agreements; at the sectoral level through dialogue platforms in supply chains such as cocoa, palm oil, and rubber; and at the workplace level through bipartite committees, notably the Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCs) in the Better Work programme.

An illustrative example is provided in box 6 by the Vision Zero Fund project (RLA1808EUR) in Mexico where the coffee supply chain was used as a direct entry point for social dialogue processes on OSH. This was instrumental in the development of intervention models that guided the project and contributed to tripartite policy agreements and regulatory improvements on OSH. Furthermore, in the brick and kiln industry in Nepal, the engagement of tripartite constituents as a standard practice in project activities, contributed towards the Federation of Nepal Brick Industries (FNBI), an employers' organization, to introduce a new code of conduct among brick kiln owners on child labour and forced labour, including a standard operating procedure and OSH procedure, which has been circulated to all brick industry operators (RAS1904GBR).

Box 6: Social dialogue driving OSH policy in the coffee value chain in Mexico

In the Vision Zero Fund project in Mexico (RLA1808EUR), social dialogue was embedded within formal OSH structures at national and regional levels. The Ministry of Labor (STPS), in collaboration with the Vision Zero Fund, invited key stakeholders in the coffee sector to validate research findings and co-develop interventions to improve OSH outcomes. Consultations were held in the main coffee-producing states of Veracruz, Chiapas, and Oaxaca, culminating in a national meeting in Mexico City. These discussions were conducted within the established national and regional tripartite OSH commission structures, COCONASST and COCOESST respectively, ensuring institutional anchoring and legitimacy. Key outcomes included the adoption of the OSH intervention models as public policy by COCONASST in 2019, the signing of the Concordia Pact to promote tripartite dialogue on OSH and to set the basis for the extension of social protection in the coffee sector, and the development of a regulatory analysis of occupational health services that informed a draft law on safety and health in teleworking.

Concurrently, promoting the transition from the informal to the formal economy was also a prominent theme for social dialogue in various interventions in specific value chains.

A notable example of an intervention addressing decent work deficits for informal homebased workers in various global supply chains is provided in Box 7. More examples with regards to domestic and global supply chains and formalization are elaborated in section 5.2.3 further in the report.

Box 7: Home-Based Workers (HBW) and social dialogue in global supply chains

The RAS1706JPN project focusses on homebased workers in the lower tiers of global supply chains in various economic sectors in Nepal, India and Sri Lanka. The project contributed to strengthening social dialogue on home-based and informal workers by establishing national level tripartite working groups in India and Nepal, engaging civil society networks, and initiating dialogue with international brands. It also collaborated with the Government of Uttar Pradesh to develop a roadmap for home based workers recognition and registration. These mechanisms fostered collective action on key issues such as wage determination, social protection, and formalization. The evaluation reported various outcomes to which the project had contributed such as in Nepal, where for the first time, home based workers were included in the labor force survey and covered under a new national OSH policy, while in India and Nepal, national-level working groups of trade unions and member based organizations were drafting a National Policy for home based workers to be used for policy advocacy and in Uttar Pradesh. Through its collaboration with the government, the project contributed to the registration of over 8,000 home based workers providing them with potential access to social protection coverage. At the same time, the project's impact was constrained by limited engagement from international brands, low government prioritization of C177 ratification, and uneven political commitment at subnational levels. Also, sustaining progress proved difficult, as many workers and enterprise initiatives remained dependent on external support (RAS1706JPN).

Broader multi-stakeholder engagement (ILO tripartite-plus consultations)

While traditional tripartism remains central, there's a notable trend in various interventions to involve a wider array of stakeholders beyond government, employer, and worker organizations. The objective of this approach is not to replace tripartite institutions but to reinforce them by capturing a wider set of perspectives and expertise, always in consultation with the established social partners. In practice, this has meant involving various ministries, civil society organizations, academia, other UN agencies, and specific industry players, aiming for more holistic solutions and broader ownership. Broader stakeholder engagement has also been used to provide a voice to underrepresented groups or to respond to contexts of crisis or political instability or legal restrictions.

Examples include Kenya's Public Private Development Partnership (PPDP) model which brings together the ILO, private sector organizations, trade unions around a tripartite approach, while also engaging with community groups at the local level in advocacy work and county planning (KEN1701SWE). More specifically, the involvement of community groups (via the Rights Way Forward (RWF) methodology) and sub-grantees enabled communities to lobby for increased access to public and social services. By involving specialized NGOs like Dandelion Africa and DRIC, the project was able to address emerging, critical issues that were not in the original design, such as Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) concerns. For instance, advocacy successfully led to flexibilities that allowed post-partum resumption of studies at the VTCs for female learners at vocational training centers, affected by earlier pregnancies.

In Latin America, Brazil's (PDFT) Project on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work brought together governmental, tripartite, and civil society actors, including those historically in dispute in order to address child labour and forced labour (BRA1750BRA). Furthermore, in Georgia, the tripartite social partnership commission (TSPC) was expanded to a "an extended tripartite consultation" format, which included NGOs, an expanded set of employers' associations, and elected officials and which was instrumental towards Georgia's ratification of ILO Convention No. 144 in 2018 (GEO1302USA).

Furthermore, the “Fairway Project” (RAB1503CHE) in various Arabic States used a “dual approach” by supporting grassroots organizing models for domestic workers while sensitizing existing unions to migrant workers’ voices, recognizing restrictions on traditional tripartism. And in Lebanon, where Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) were not allowed, school advisory boards (SABs) were established for multi-stakeholder dialogues at the local level.

ENABLING CONDITIONS AND BARRIERS FOR SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The institutionalization, sustainability, and overall effectiveness of social dialogue are shaped by a dynamic interplay of enabling and constraining factors. The same factor can act as an enabler of efficient social dialogue when properly applied, but become a constraint if it is absent or poorly implemented.

Five factors are identified in ILO interventions as critical for creating enabling conditions and lifting barriers to social dialogue

1. Protection of fundamental rights: freedom of association and collective bargaining
2. Capacity of social partners to engage in social dialogue
3. Employers attitude towards social dialogue
4. Social dialogue as a response mechanism in times of crisis
5. Monitoring and evaluation of social dialogue interventions
6. Collaboration between ILO departments

These factors operate across different levels, including national, sectoral, enterprise, and community levels. And while many are context-specific, the synthesis review identifies several recurring patterns that transcend regional boundaries. Some factors function as overarching conditions that shape the broader environment for social dialogue, such as political will, legal frameworks, external disruptions (e.g. coups, natural disasters and pandemics) or the capacity of social partners. Others are more directly linked to the implementation of social dialogue and the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ILO projects.

Protection of fundamental rights: freedom of association and collective bargaining

One of the most critical factors consistently identified across diverse contexts is the presence of strong political will and a clear legislative mandate, often formally enshrined in legal and institutional frameworks that ensure access to fundamental rights such as freedom of association and collective bargaining (FCAB). This provides the necessary statutory basis as well as the mandate and legitimacy for social dialogue mechanisms.

However, various evaluation reports highlight that progress on decent work is often undermined by a profound challenge of sustaining political will, which manifests in concrete violations of fundamental principles and rights at work (High-level evaluation FPRW). This challenge presents itself in various forms, from overt hostility to passive resistance. Where legal environments are restrictive or poorly aligned with international labour standards, they can severely constrain social dialogue. Some illustrative examples are provided in box 8.

Box 8: Illustrative Cases of Restrictive Legal and Political Environment

A notable example is provided by Bangladesh that was rated among the ten worst for working people in 2021 ITUC Global Rights Index and had faced an article 26 complaint for non-observance of Conventions on labour inspection, freedom of association, and collective bargaining (BGD1503MUL). Also, in several Arab States, including Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, and Bahrain, migrant workers are denied the legal right to organize, fundamentally excluding them from formal dialogue structures (RAB1503CHE; RAS1355UKM, GLO1755MUL). Even where workers' committees exist, as in Saudi Arabia, the lack of freedom of association limits their role in advocacy (SAU1801SAU). In some contexts, political will fluctuates due to instability and the rapid turnover of government officials, which disrupts institutional memory and stalls momentum for reform, as seen in Ethiopia, Myanmar, and Brazil (ETH1502SID, MMR1601MUL, MMR1902JPN, BRA1750BRA).

At the same time, the potential of targeted interventions to advance freedom of association and collective bargaining was underscored by the high-level evaluation of fundamental principles and rights. Although only a limited number of ILO projects between 2018 and early 2023 directly addressed structural gaps in FACB rights, the evaluation showed that where such interventions did occur, they achieved meaningful results by leveraging external pressure, supervisory mechanisms, and targeted legal and institutional support. Positive outcomes included legal and institutional reforms to improve trade union registration and collective bargaining, the establishment of dialogue mechanisms such as tripartite action plans and forums, and capacity-building efforts to strengthen union organizing in informal and emerging sectors. In Egypt for example, reforms to the Trade Union Law and grievance mechanisms improved union registration; in Guatemala, support for a national roadmap led to reinstatements of laid off workers, more CBAs, and case resolutions of union leader killings; in Vietnam, sustained assistance backed the 2019 Labour Law revision and preparation for independent worker organizations.

Furthermore, various evaluation reports provide useful insights on how some of the interventions used social dialogue and other forms of institutionalized dialogue as part of a multifaceted and contextualized approach in order to foster legal and administrative reforms in line with fundamental principles and rights at work. Box 9 and 10 illustrate how ILO interventions managed to address decent work deficits in the garment sector in Bangladesh and in the case of migrant domestic workers in Jordan and Lebanon.



Box 9: Using social dialogue to foster access to fundamental rights and principles at work in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the Promoting Social Dialogue and Harmonious Industrial Relations project (SDIR) (BGD1503MUL) supported the Government in introducing Standard Operating Procedures on trade union registration and on anti-union discrimination and unfair labour practices. These were integrated into the 2018 Labour Act, contributing to a sharp increase in union registrations in the garment sector. At the institutional level, the project helped establish the National Tripartite Consultative Council (NTCC) and the RMG Tripartite Consultative Council (RMG TCC), creating permanent high-level forums for tripartite dialogue on ongoing labour issues and reforms, albeit with challenges in ensuring regularity of meetings. Furthermore, a Workers Resource Centre was set up to provide low-cost, accessible dispute resolution through trained paralegals, resolving cases directly at factory level and bypassing the heavily backlogged labour court system.

Box 10: Addressing structural and political barriers in Jordan and Lebanon

The evaluation of the Work in Freedom (WIF) programme (RAS1355UKM) highlighted how the project addressed the severe constraints it faced in Jordan and Lebanon, where migrant domestic workers (MDWs) lack freedom of association and governments showed reluctance to address decent work deficits. To address these challenges, the project adopted a flexible approach which allowed for context-based interventions at various levels. At the worker level, partnerships with trade unions, NGOs, and civil society helped reach and organize MDWs, supported through Workers' Resource Centres that provided safe spaces for grievance-sharing, and for building a common voice. With employers and recruiters, WIF engaged the Syndicate of Owners of Recruitment Agencies in Lebanon (SORAL), which committed to a code of conduct on fair recruitment. The project also ran media campaigns in India and Lebanon based on research on employer attitudes, using short films in Lebanon as an innovative strategy for "influencing recruiter and employer attitudes. At the government level, WIF provided technical inputs and facilitated tripartite workshops, contributing to legal and policy reforms, such as integrating ILS in Nepal-Jordan migration agreements and influencing Lebanon's Ministry of Labour to reform its Circular on the classification of foreign employees employed within national and international establishments. In this restrictive environment, WIF demonstrated how a multi-actor, adaptive social dialogue approach can still strengthen voice, accountability, and incremental policy change.

Capacity of social partners to engage in social dialogue

Besides having a mandate for social dialogue, there is also a need for social partners to have the necessary operational and technical capacity to engage meaningfully and in a sustained way in processes of social dialogue. As was already highlighted above, the capacity building of social partners was pointed out by a large number of evaluation reports as an important contributing factor towards the promotion and strengthening of social dialogue in the various countries. Such capacity development is particularly relevant in light of the considerable constraints observed in the evaluations, affecting both workers' and employers' organizations.

- **For workers' organizations**, a recurring constraint is the lack of financial resources which is often linked to low union density, resulting in unstable income streams and dependence on external funding (GLO1755MUL, MYS1601USA, BGD1503MUL, KEN1701SWE, GLO1755MUL). This undermines sustainability, as was seen in the Dominican Republic where an inter-union committee lacked resources to continue its work (DOM1701USA), or in Pacific Island countries where unions relied heavily on volunteers (Thematic evaluation Pacific labour law). In some contexts, as was observed in Ethiopia, resources were centralized at national level, leaving local unions unable to operate effectively (ETH1701MUL). Human resource gaps further constrain unions. High staff turnover, inexperienced leaders, and aging leadership weaken institutional memory and bargaining expertise. In parallel, many unions struggle to develop the technical skills needed to address complex or emerging themes. Various evaluation reports highlighted the need for targeted training on legal issues, women's employment, OSH, gender-based violence, and even basic awareness of workers' rights. (ETH1502SID, KEN1701SWE, GEO1302USA, BRA1750BRA). Furthermore, structural weaknesses such as fragmentation, political divisions, and weak governance, were also observed to limit collective voice and organizing capacity. At the same time, externally, unions often face hostile environments marked by restrictive laws, political repression, union-busting, employer resistance (PAK1603EUR, MMR1601MUL, MYS1601USA, GLO1755MUL, MMR1902JPN, RAB1503CHE, BGD1503MUL).

- **For Employers organizations**, various evaluations also highlight challenges regarding financial, technical and institutional capacities, which constrain their ability to provide services and to participate consistently in tripartite social dialogue. In Ethiopia for example, the evaluation observed a lack of coordination among different employers' federations and the absence of a clear mandate from their members to engage in collective or sectoral-level negotiations (ETH1502SID). Similarly in Malaysia the evaluation pointed towards the potential of strengthening links between the rubber glove association and the national employers' federation to enhance the institutional structure of social dialogue and collective bargaining in the rubber sector and at the national level (GLO2040EUR). In addition, evaluations observed the challenge of employer organizations to represent the interests of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and those in the informal sector (GLO1755MUL, GLO1859SWE). Evaluations point out that many employers, especially those in MSMEs may not be familiar with the specifics of International Labour Standards (ILS) or national labour laws (RAS1750DEU RAS1509DEU RAS1556DEU). They might see compliance as a complex, costly requirement rather than a set of principles for good business. Projects often find they need to start with basic awareness-raising to show employers what the standards are and why they matter (RAS1750DEU RAS1509DEU RAS1556DEU). In the Philippines for example, the evaluation recommended the ILO intervention to pursue a range of strategies to engage pilot enterprises in the tuna fisheries sector, for example by channeling advocacy via the industry tripartite association, identifying industry champions, and by focusing on occupational safety and health improvement as an entry point (RAS2007USA).

Employers attitude towards social dialogue

Various evaluations highlight that the effectiveness of social dialogue depends not only on their financial, technical, and institutional capacities but also on whether dialogue processes are designed in ways that are relevant to their members. Where social dialogue has demonstrated concrete benefits aligned with employer priorities, such as productivity gains, reduced disputes, or improved market access, engagement has been sustained.

In Pakistan, for example, the ILES project successfully demonstrated that occupational safety and health (OSH) improvements could increase productivity and profitability, thereby creating incentives for SMEs to continue participating in dialogue initiatives (PAK1603EUR). Similarly, in Ethiopian factories, managerial commitment translated into better knowledge uptake, improved productivity, and more stable industrial relations, reinforcing the enabling environment for dialogue (ETH1502SID). Sectoral associations such as GMAC in Cambodia (RAS1750DEU) and MARGMA in Malaysia (GLO2040EUR) illustrate how employers' organizations can be catalysts for broader dialogue by promoting standards across supply chains. Also in Bangladesh, where there was resistance among the employers to engage in social dialogue and the project facing challenges in encouraging unionized factories to participate in project activities, the SDIR project focused on promoting workplace cooperation and effective grievance handling through the establishment of factory-level Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCS) and Safety Committees (SCs). By demonstrating that dialogue could lead to fewer disputes and more stable industrial relations, the project managed to build trust with employers who were initially resistant (BGD1503MUL). Similarly, the Better Work programme's success in improving factory compliance and productivity helped build a business case for dialogue, which is crucial for gaining employer buy-in (BGD1905MUL).

Furthermore, in Algeria, the project co-produced a study on informality with the employers' confederation (CGEA). This study focused on subcontracting and formalization within the private construction sector (Building, Public Works, and Hydraulics). This partnership ensured that the research was relevant to the employers' operational realities and built a foundation of trust and shared ownership from the beginning. The project also supported the CGEA in disseminating the results through regional workshops together with government and workers organizations, which fostered tripartite dialogue (INT2002EUR). This localized, participatory approach built trust, ensured relevance to employers' realities, and led to CGEA's active support for formalization (INT2002EUR).

Social dialogue as a response mechanism in times of crisis

As observed in various evaluation reports, crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, armed conflict, and political instability have destabilized formal dialogue mechanisms in contexts as diverse as Mozambique, Myanmar, Tonga, Ukraine, and the Dominican Republic, diverting attention and resources away from structured engagement (MMR1902JPN, GLO2020MUL, RAS2053UND, UKR1901EUR, DOM1701USA). Economic hardship further compounds these effects, as seen in Iraq and Turkey, where financial constraints and deteriorating labour markets undermined the participation of workers' organizations and the effectiveness of gender-focused interventions (IRQ2003EUR, INT1703UNW).

Yet, while crises often pose severe challenges to the continuity of social dialogue, they have also highlighted its critical value and adaptability as a governance tool during disruption. Across regions, various evaluation reports observed social dialogue mechanisms that enabled rapid, coordinated responses to emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, military conflict and economic downturns.

In response to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, bipartite and tripartite social dialogue platforms played a crucial role in addressing urgent challenges related to wages, social protection, and occupational safety and health across several countries. In Nepal ([NPL1701GBR]), the ILO facilitated a groundbreaking tripartite agreement on wage compensation for workers affected by lockdowns through a series of online negotiations and maintained dialogue on key national issues such as minimum wage setting. In Indonesia (GLO2020MUL, IDN2101JPN), social dialogue supported the design and implementation of an income support scheme, fostering bipartite cooperation at the enterprise level and strengthening trade union capacity. The criteria for selecting beneficiaries for income support were jointly developed with trade union confederations, while the tripartite partners also collaborated on COVID-19 protection and OSH measures despite earlier tensions over the Omnibus Law on Employment Creation. In Ethiopia ([GLO2020MUL]), the intervention created joint OSH inspection and COVID-19 task forces that brought together government, employers, and workers' organizations, improving institutional coordination and response capacity.

Also, amidst **economic crises**, such as those caused by supply chain disruptions or changes in trade agreements, and political turnover social dialogue has been used as a tool to negotiate responses that balance enterprise viability with worker protection. In Ethiopia for example, the delisting from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) trade agreement posed a severe threat to the garment and textile sector. In this context, social dialogue, facilitated by the ONEILO SIRAYE programme, became a vital forum for constituents to discuss the impact on business and employment and to develop mitigating strategies. Bipartite worker-management committees were crucial for negotiating workplace solutions to maintain productivity and industrial relations amidst economic uncertainty (ETH1701MUL).

Similarly, in context of **environmental challenges**, including natural disasters and the impacts of climate change, some evaluation reports illustrate how social dialogue can contribute towards developing disaster response mechanisms. For example in Mozambique, the Moztrabalha project demonstrated how the tripartite project steering committee, comprising government ministries, employers' confederations (CTA), and workers' organizations (CONSILMO and OTM), provided strategic guidance for the projects' responses to natural disasters like cyclones. Such responses included support for informal sector operators in peri-urban markets and engaging unemployed people in public works programmes for reconstruction (MOZ1601SWE). Given that project steering committee was configured as a sub-commission of the Labour Advisory Committee, which is the permanent tripartite body in Mozambique under the Ministry of Labour, the evaluation concluded that the functions of the project steering committee are likely to continue after the project has ended (MOZ1601SWE). Also, in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya, following climate change assessments, community dialogue fora³ were used to engage community members, promote the

3 Unlike formal tripartite social dialogue, which involves employers, workers, and governments, these dialogue fora brought together different key groups: the community (representing the "demand" side for services), government duty bearers (the "supply" side), and civil society organizations (as facilitators and advocates).

adoption of conservation measures, and present proposals to duty bearers, leading to the inclusion of environmental preservation in community action plans (KEN1701SWE).

Even in contexts affected by **war or political collapse**, such as Ukraine and Myanmar (see Box 11), social dialogue has proven adaptable and instrumental to address urgent worker and employer needs while preserving, where possible, the foundations for longer-term reform (UKR1901EUR; MMR1902JPN).

Box 11: Adapting social dialogue in times of conflict and political crisis: lessons from Ukraine and Myanmar

In **Ukraine**, the full-scale Russian aggression created an unprecedented crisis, leading to the imposition of martial law which significantly restricted traditional labour relations and social dialogue. The project demonstrated remarkable adaptability by repurposing its social dialogue activities to address urgent war-related needs. Through close consultation with social partners, the project developed a crisis-response track focusing on psychosocial support for workers and employers and raising awareness on the heightened risks of human trafficking and forced labour for displaced populations. This crisis-driven dialogue also facilitated collaboration between Ukrainian and Moldovan labour inspectorates to protect displaced Ukrainian workers. Crucially, the project maintained a reform track, continuing its technical work on OSH and labour inspection reforms, framing them as essential for Ukraine's recovery and EU accession path, thus ensuring long-term objectives were not abandoned amidst the emergency (UKR1901EUR).

In **Myanmar**, the ILO's Safety + Health for All Workers in Myanmar project, implemented during a double crisis marked by the 2021 military coup and the COVID-19 pandemic faced severe disruption, including the collapse of formal tripartite mechanisms. In response, the project shifted its focus away from strengthening government institutions and instead engaged directly with social partners, civil society organizations, and private training institutions to address urgent worker needs, particularly in occupational safety and health (OSH). Despite the political context, the ILO maintained a presence by leveraging its normative role, and continued dialogue with worker and employer organizations. Donor funds were flexibly reallocated to support ad hoc responses, including OSH training for vulnerable groups, COVID-19 prevention activities, and regional mental health awareness sessions (MMR1902JPN).

Moreover, crises spurred formalization incentives, as seen in Turkey, where access to protection measures for formal workers encouraged employers to participate in social dialogue (TUR1801DEU). The Covid pandemic has accelerated the adoption of virtual tools for communication, assessments, and training, leading to efficiency gains and enabling continued engagement amidst restrictions. The "Better Work Programme" in Vietnam for example developed the "Gopy" application for factory-level dialogue (CMB1253USA), and the "Youth4OSH project" in Indonesia established an online portal for OSH knowledge sharing (RAS1605USC).

Overall, social dialogue responses tend to be more effective when pre-existing dialogue structures were in place, whereas in contexts where dialogue was underdeveloped or merely instrumental, responses were often fragmented or delayed. Social dialogue, when well-supported and institutionalized, thus contributes not only to immediate recovery but also to future resilience and policy coherence across labour and social protection systems (GLO2040EUR, GLO1755MUL, High-level evaluation FPRW). This finding adds to a growing body of literature that shows that countries with well-established social dialogue mechanisms are better equipped to respond to crises without overlooking the nuanced needs of various societal groups (ILO, 2021a, de Lima Vieira et al. 2020, Hermans et al. 2016).

Monitoring and evaluation of social dialogue interventions

As highlighted in section 3, robust monitoring and evaluation systems that inform learning and adaptive management are an important enabling factor for the functioning and effectiveness of social dialogue processes. However, a considerable number of the reviewed evaluation reports reveal that the monitoring and evaluation systems to track the effectiveness and impact of interventions related to social dialogue are generally weak.

- Several projects lacked an explicit theory of change or logical framework in their design documents, while others relied on overly generic ones with unclear causal logic and assumptions (NPL1701GBR, PAK1603EUR, SYR1601RBS, Thematic Evaluation Pacific Labour Law, GLO1859SWE). This limitation undermined evaluability and the ability to demonstrate progress over time, while also contributing

to the widespread absence of relevant baseline data, a recurrent challenge identified in several projects (GLO1755MUL, NPL1701GBR, BRA1750BRA, DOM1701USA, RAB1503CHE).

- ▶ Compounding these issues, many evaluations highlighted the predominance of quantitative indicators, counting meetings, trainings, or participants, over those capable of capturing the quality, institutionalization, and behavioural outcomes of social dialogue. Indicator formulation was also frequently ambiguous, with terms such as “increased involvement,” “better serve,” or “improved capacity” used without clear operational definitions or verification methods (GLO1755MUL, CMB1253USA, SAU1801SAU, GLO1445BRA, RAS1605USC).
- ▶ In several cases, indicators were positioned at an inappropriate level of the results chain (e.g., development objectives too broad for project-level attribution), making it difficult to determine the specific contribution of interventions to observed results (GLO1650MUL, RAS1904GBR).
- ▶ Moreover, a pattern of ad-hoc and largely descriptive reporting emerged across various evaluations, characterized by weak analytical follow-through and limited institutional learning (RAF1653FRA, GLO1754MUL).

Despite these recurrent challenges, several evaluation reports also highlighted emerging good practices that demonstrate gradual improvements in monitoring and evaluating social dialogue interventions.

- ▶ The SIRAYE project programme in Ethiopia for example was commended by the evaluation for implementing a baseline and endline impact report to measure the programme’s capacity to enact change and for its regular data collection about the progress towards indicators informing its adaptive management approach (ETH1701MUL).
- ▶ Technological and methodological innovations in various projects were also observed to improve data quality and consistency. The OSH flagship project developed a digital M&E framework for multi-level reporting, and Better Work Vietnam’s “Gopy” application enabled continuous monitoring of the quality of workplace dialogue (CMB1253USA).
- ▶ Participatory tools such as Participatory Appraisal helped capture qualitative evidence (RAS1706JPN), while the Vision Zero Fund harmonized national and global RBM frameworks through a participatory process, resulting in a coherent and consistent approach to data collection (GLO1650MUL).
- ▶ Various reports also highlight how internal coherence and learning has strengthened M&E practice. In the SIRAYE programme, regular programme meetings were found to ensure that lessons learned from specific factories or stakeholders could be brought to the attention of the whole team. In Brazil, a standardized procedure of action (Roteiro) for implementing local development plans ensured a consistent methodology for the systematization of knowledge and generation of good practices informing adaptive management (BRA1750BRA).

Collaboration between ILO departments

When effectively implemented, cross-departmental collaboration within the ILO has proven to be an important success factor for strengthening the quality, coherence, and impact of social dialogue interventions while also contributing towards resource efficiency and internal learning.

The Sida–ILO Partnership Programme (GLO1859SWE) exemplified this through systematic cooperation among INWORK, DIALOGUE, NORMES, FUNDAMENTALS, ACTRAV, and ACT/EMP, resulting in technically robust tools such as the Industrial Relations Toolkit and Social Dialogue Self-Assessment Methodology (SAM SDI), while also building internal capacity. Similarly, the ONEILO SIRAYE Programme in Ethiopia (ETH1701MUL) successfully coordinated multiple technical offices under one umbrella, ensuring coherent management and strong institutional support. This allowed the project to leverage internal expertise and to adapt to complex external challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, various evaluations also revealed that such collaboration is not systematic. The Decent Work and Employment Promotion Project in Egypt (EGY1102CAN) and the Better Work Programme (GLO1755MUL) showed limited engagement of relevant departments like ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, and INWORK, leading to missed opportunities and fragmented implementation. Also, the mid-term evaluation of the Governance Project in Africa (RAF1653FRA) found that backstopping from Geneva (specifically LABADMIN/OSH) posed an organizational challenge to the decentralized project team, resulting in numerous delays due to centralized validation processes, indicating a structural constraint in support modality (RAF1653FRA).

MAKING SOCIAL DIALOGUE PROCESSES MORE INCLUSIVE

The effectiveness of social dialogue processes in genuinely addressing the concerns of various target groups, including women, workers in the informal economy, youth, migrants and people with a disability, varies significantly across different regions and contexts. While there are commendable achievements and concerted efforts by the ILO to foster inclusivity, deep-seated structural, legal, and socio-cultural barriers often persist, limiting the full realization of equitable participation and impact.

Gender equality

The review of the selected evaluation reports reveals a notable commitment among various ILO-supported interventions to integrate gender equality into social dialogue processes. This integration is reflected across multiple trends linked to legal and policy reform, capacity-building, representation, and support for vulnerable women workers. The review also highlights some persistent challenges as well as several lessons learned and good practices.

How interventions integrate gender into social dialogue: Four key trends

1. A first trend relates to supporting the **development or revision of gender-sensitive labour laws and policies**, including ratification of key ILO conventions (e.g. C190, C183, C189), reforms to maternity protection, and gender-responsive labour inspection guidelines. These reforms were often developed through tripartite or multi-stakeholder consultations to ensure the inclusion of diverse gender perspectives. (RAF170FIN, RAS2007USA, High-level evaluation FPRW, IRQ2003EUR, RAS1355UKM). An illustrative example is outlined in box 12 by the Decent Work for Women (DWW) project in Tunisia.

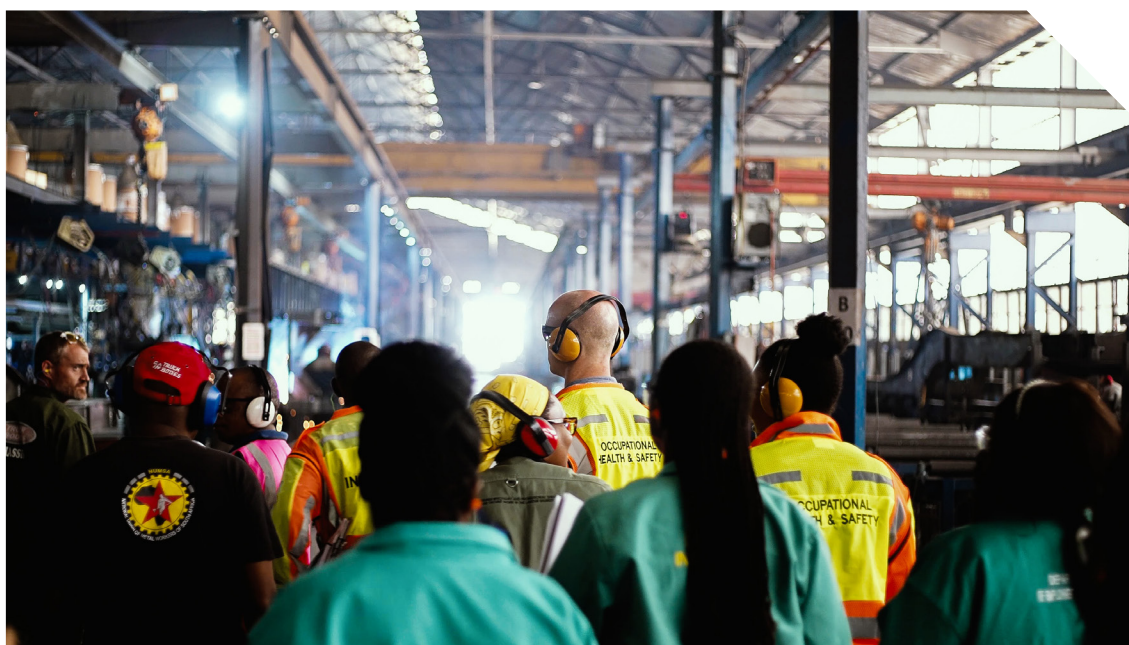
Box 12: Tripartite dialogue advancing gender equality: The case of Tunisia's Council for Social Dialogue

The Council for Social Dialogue (CSD), established in 2017 with ILO support, emerged as a key tripartite platform for advancing gender-sensitive labour reforms in Tunisia. Through the Decent Work for Women (DWW) project (RAF1705FIN), the ILO strengthened the CSD's role in facilitating high-level consultation among government, employers, and workers on the ratification of ILO Convention No. 183 on Maternity Protection (C.183). The project's technical and coordination support was instrumental in "deblocking" a previously stalled process. Social partners were highly engaged. Employers were supported to analyze the implications of ratification, while the UGTT (Union Générale de Travailleurs Tunisiens) received assistance to prepare a Position Paper on C.183 and assess gaps between national legislation and international standards. The process was recognized by stakeholders as an important step forward for gender equality in Tunisia. Beyond C.183, the CSD and related mechanisms were also mobilized to promote ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention (C.189) and the Violence and Harassment Convention (C.190), engaging actors such as the *Chambre Nationale des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises* (CNFCE). This experience illustrates how reinforcing tripartite institutions can create effective channels for policy dialogue and accelerate gender-responsive legal reform at the national level.

2. A second trend pertains **capacity building and awareness raising** as shown by a considerable number of projects seeking to enhance gender awareness and to build the capacity of social partners and government agencies on gender issues through targeted training programmes and leadership development initiatives. An example includes the GEAR (Gender equality and returns) programme (GLO1755MUL) which has shown in various Better Work country programmes to help women learn more about supervisory work,

social dialogue in the factory, and voicing one's concerns and needs. The programme has also been linked to a significant increase in the share of women supervisors (GLO1755MUL). Other examples include the HR academies, established by employer organizations in Tunisia and Egypt to conduct training for company owners, HR, and other managers on gender equality in labour relations and HR strategies (RAF1705FIN). Positive results were also reported from training of labour unions and employers in Indonesia on how to promote gender awareness through communication campaigns (RAS2007USA) and training on sexual harassment prevention and gender campaigns leading to the establishment of sexual harassment policies in various factories in Myanmar (MMR1601MUL).

3. Third, interventions have sought to **strengthen women's representation and voice** within social dialogue mechanisms and workers' organizations, through different strategies such as the organization of women workers, setting up specific social dialogue mechanisms or supporting community-level initiatives. In Asia, projects like "Improving Workers' Rights in Rural Sectors" (RAS2007USA) specifically focused on women workers and elevated gender equality on the agenda of Industry Tripartite Councils, even establishing tripartite forums with union's women's wings in Indonesia. Also, in India and Nepal, over 41,000 home-based workers, 85% of whom were women were unionized, significantly empowering them for collective negotiation and social protection coverage (RAS1706JPN). Similarly, Better Work programmes across the region created "safe spaces" for female workers to voice concerns and supported their increased activity against discrimination (GLO1838EUR). Various interventions also supported community-level initiatives such as cooperatives and collectives that serve as platforms for advocacy, self-representation, and negotiation. The establishment of the SADA Women's Cooperative (co-founded by Syrian, Turkish, and Afghan women) provides an example of community-level social dialogue fostering unity and economic empowerment (INT1703UNW).
4. Finally, across various interventions significant focus has been placed on **addressing the needs of women in vulnerable or informal forms of employment**, such as home-based workers, domestic workers, agricultural labourers, and migrant women workers. These groups face heightened barriers to participation and protection, and various interventions explicitly targeted their inclusion in social dialogue processes. In some cases, this has also resulted in concrete outcomes. One intervention in Kenya, for example, highlighted the potential contribution of social dialogue and gender mainstreaming efforts to increased enrolment of girls in traditionally male-dominated vocational training courses (KEN1701SWE).



KEY CHALLENGES

Despite progress, several challenges continue to hinder the effective integration of gender equality in social dialogue. Sociocultural norms and structural barriers, including persistent stereotypes and resistance to gender mainstreaming, limit women's participation and voice in dialogue processes (MOZ1601SWE, INT1703UNW, High-level evaluation FPRW).

Cultural and institutional resistance, often driven by traditional hierarchies, deep-seated attitudes and power dynamics continue to pose systemic barriers. In countries such as Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, entrenched gender norms, manifesting for example, in limited female leadership or capacity within social partner organizations, have undermined the genuine participation of women in social dialogue (ETH1502SID; PAK1603EUR; BGD1905MUL). Broader societal norms, such as denial of gender equality in Mozambique, conservatism in Turkey, or stigmatization of domestic work in Southeast Asia, further marginalize specific groups and limit the scope of dialogue (MOZ1601SWE, INT1703UNW, RAS1355UKM).

Furthermore, imbalances in representation persist, particularly where workers' organizations have weak capacities or limited independence (GLO1755MUL, GLO2040EUR, BRA1750BRA), and some interventions struggled to reach women in informal or vulnerable employment when focused on larger formal enterprises (MEX2005USA). Sustainability is also a concern, as gains often depend on continued external support (RAS1706JPN). In addition, measurement gaps, such as the absence of gender-specific indicators and lack of dedicated gender strategies, limit the ability to assess gender-related outcomes (High-level evaluation FPRW, INT2002EUR). Regulatory gaps remain as well, with slow progress on aligning national frameworks with international standards like ILO Convention No 177 (MOZ1601SWE, RAS1706JPN). Finally, donor-driven priorities and short project cycles can constrain the sustained integration of gender, particularly where national tripartite actors are insufficiently involved (High-level evaluation FPRW, GLO2020MUL).

Some lessons learned and good practices

The review provides some insights on lessons learned and good practices.

- ▶ A key lesson is the importance of **long-term engagement and trust-building with social partners**, which is essential for achieving meaningful and sustainable gender outcomes. In the RAF1705FIN project, trust was built through a decade of continuity with the same partners, by using the ILO's role as a neutral convener to provide safe spaces for dialogue, by co-creating activities such as timely policy papers and studies that directly responded to partners' priorities, by showing flexibility when approaches needed to change, and by framing gender equality in ways that highlighted shared benefits and business incentives. In fragile contexts, such as Myanmar post-coup, adaptability in approach, including engagement with non-state actors, has enabled continued gender inclusion despite the absence of formal tripartite dialogue (MMR1902JPN).
- ▶ Another critical insight is **the need to integrate gender considerations from the project design phase**, rather than treating them as secondary or retrospective concerns. Failure to do so risks undermining impact (GLO1859SWE, GLO1445BRA, GLO2020MUL, INT2002EUR). Projects adopting a holistic or multidimensional approach, combining gender with labour rights, OSH, social protection, or productivity, have shown to engage a broader range of stakeholders and enhance the relevance of dialogue processes (LAO2101EUR).
- ▶ Interventions have also demonstrated that **addressing socio-cultural barriers directly through multi-level advocacy** is essential for confronting deep-seated gender stereotypes (INT1703UNW, MOZ1601SWE, High-level evaluation FPRW).
- ▶ Promising approaches also include **targeted gender equality modules and leadership training** (GLO1755MUL, GLO1838EUR), **gender-sensitive labour inspection systems** (RAF1705FIN, RAS2007USA), and **support for women's collectives and migrant worker organizations as platforms for voice and advocacy** (INT1703UNW, RAS1355UKM, RAB1503CHE). Additionally, **tailoring social dialogue communications** to youth with gender-specific messaging represents an emerging area of innovation (RAS1605USC).

Workers in the informal economy

When considering the inclusiveness of social dialogue towards workers in the informal economy, it is useful to consider the distinction between regulated social dialogue and collective bargaining on the one hand and other forms of institutionalized dialogue or negotiations on the other hand. While the ILO recognises the right of all workers to engage in collective bargaining, in practice this right is not automatically extended to workers in the informal economy due to legal restrictions and concerns over weakening structured worker representation. Regulated social dialogue typically requires formal employment relationships and trade unions.⁴ Conditions often absent in the informal economy. Furthermore, the organization of workers in the informal economy, generally recognized as a key prerequisite for ensuring their voices are heard, is particularly challenging, given their heterogeneity in terms of interests, employment relationships, and workplaces. As a result, informal worker organizations are frequently excluded from regulated social dialogue, or, at best indirectly represented through affiliations with formal worker trade unions, where adequate representations may not always be ensured (Vlaminck, 2019; Alfars et al., 2022, Van Ongevalle et al. 2025). At the same time, in different parts of the world, different spaces can be identified that have provided different bargaining opportunities for workers in the informal economy, even without being recognized as formal trade unions. These range from non-statutory spaces (e.g. ad-hoc negotiations, consultations, roundtables and regular negotiations) to statutory spaces of tripartite and bipartite social dialogue (Carré et al., 2020; Schmidt et al., 2023). Some of these spaces and strategies to create access to them can be observed in some of the reviewed evaluation reports of ILO interventions that target workers from the informal sector and where social dialogue features as a vital tool for promoting formalization and extending social protection to the vast informal economy, which often includes highly vulnerable workers. These spaces are outlined in the next paragraphs.

NATIONAL WORKING GROUPS AND OTHER DIALOGUE MECHANISMS

In line with R204 (formalization) and R201 (domestic workers) various strategies are being used by interventions to develop tripartite mechanisms with participation of employers' and workers' organizations, which in some cases also involve civil society organizations or member based organizations representing workers or economic units in the informal economy.

In Nepal for example, the RAS1706JPN project was found to be effective in the formation of a national level Tripartite Technical Working Group on formalizing the informal economy, led by the Ministry of Labour and includes participation from the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, representative of employers' federation in Nepal, JTUCC (umbrella body of trade unions in Nepal) and Central Bureau of Statistics. This technical working group oversaw a national diagnostic study on informality, pushed for the inclusion of home-based workers in national surveys, and set common indicators for formalization. In addition, the project established National Working Groups in India and Nepal on Home-based and Informal Economy Workers, bringing together trade unions and employers' organizations who, in collaboration with civil society organizations, developed road maps and joint action plans to advocate the issues of home-based workers around wage determination, social security/protection, recognition of homebased work in national statistics and policy making, and ratification of C177. Furthermore also in Nepal, the NPL170GBR project supported guidelines for municipal labour desks that constitute a dialogue mechanism for addressing local industrial relations and facilitating contribution-based social security schemes for informal and self-employed workers. By the time of the evaluation one municipality had reportedly included a labour desk in its 2021/22 annual plan.

⁴ As clarified by the CEACR, what matters for ILS protection is not the nomen juris or formal recognition, but whether an organization of workers or of employers is furthering and defending the interests of workers or of employers. ([see C.87, Art. 10; CEACR Obs., 2018](#)).

Also in Latin America, ILO interventions supported the establishment of inclusive tripartite dialogue mechanisms that actively considered the participation of informal and migrant workers. In Colombia for example, the Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better (SSCBFB) project set up a regional tripartite social dialogue committee for coffee (mesa ejecutiva) within the framework of the Departmental Subcommittee for Coordination of Wage and Labour Policies while the Ministry of Labour led an International Coffee Sector Roundtable, both regularly engaging ILO constituents (GLO2040EUR).

Finally, the SOLIFEM project, operating in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, uses tripartite social dialogue as its core strategy to develop national roadmaps for formalization. By conducting sector-specific diagnostics on informality (e.g., in construction in Algeria) and validating the findings in tripartite workshops, the project brings the realities of the informal economy directly into statutory policy discussions, creating a formal space to negotiate formalization pathways (INT2002EUR).

ORGANISING WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

Supporting workers in the informal economy and micro-enterprises to organize by forming associations proved an effective strategy to facilitate their participation in structured dialogues with governments and national social partners, effectively elevating their voice in policymaking.

In Nepal and India for example, the RAS1706JPN project focused on home-based workers in various economic sectors (e.g. garment, metal handicraft, gold and silver jewelry) where it facilitated the formation of cooperatives and self-help Groups. These collectives served as economic units that could bypass intermediaries and negotiate directly with local buyers. They also functioned as dialogue platforms where workers could collectively address issues like piece rates and working conditions, demonstrating a powerful form of non-conventional bargaining with sub-contractors or local buyers outside traditional union structures (RAS1706JPN). Similarly, the Fairway project (RAB1503CHE) supported the creation of the Sandigan Kuwait Domestic Workers Association, enabling migrant domestic workers to organize and voice their concerns despite legal restrictions. Also, the Work in Freedom programme (RAS1355UKM) established safe spaces for migrant workers through assistance centres in destination countries, fostering informal dialogue and self-representation where formal avenues were absent. It also facilitated the formation of worker collectives and trade unions in countries of origin, engaging in collective bargaining to improve wages and social protection, especially for women in domestic and garment sectors.

While these projects have successfully planted the seeds for change through establishing these spaces for dialogue, the long-term effectiveness requires continued support to overcome complex challenges and ensure the institutionalization of the formalization agenda, as is also illustrated by the example of the RAS2053UND project in Box 13.

Box 13: Strengthening Policy Dialogue for the Informal Economy in the Pacific

An important achievement of the RAS2053UND project in Fiji, Palau, Tonga, and Vanuatu was the enhancement of policy dialogue between newly formed informal economy associations and governments for creating an enabling environment for the informal economy and lifting its profile at the national level. Key processes supported included the facilitation in Fiji of two high-level dialogues between newly formed informal economy associations and the government, where they presented 12 policy priorities. This engagement contributed to the lifting of the almost two-year-long curfew and is expected to inform the government's MSME Act which was under preparation. Similarly, in Tonga, the project supported the organizing of seven informal economy organizations (including three Cultural and Creative Industries and four agricultural) and their first meeting with the government, where they presented six policy priorities for consideration and inclusion in the drafting of the National Employment Policy. The evaluation noted that while the project successfully planted the seeds for change through these high-level engagements, sustained support will be essential to address persistent challenges and ensure the institutionalization of the informal economy formalization agenda.

SUPPORTING TRADITIONAL SOCIAL PARTNERS TO ENGAGE WITH WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

A recurring trend is to build the capacity of existing employers' and workers' organizations to understand the informal economy, extend their reach, and provide services to workers and enterprises in the informal economy. In Africa, the SOLIFEM project (INT2002EUR) in Egypt empowered trade unions to proactively engage informal economy workers, expanding their membership and supporting their access to social insurance systems, directly contributing to formalization and representation in social dialogue. The project also promoted social dialogue at the local level, for example in Algeria, where workshops were organized with local representatives of employers, government and workers to discuss the risks of informal work and the benefits of formalization.

Similarly, the 'GOUVERNANCE' project (RAF1653FRA) in Côte d'Ivoire supported awareness campaigns for workers in the informal economy on COVID-19 protection, the importance of organizing and engaging in social dialogue and the need for the extension of Universal Health Coverage. The project also supported a shift by the labour inspection from a 'control' culture to an "accompagnement" approach for the informal sector, opening avenues for a more trust based and dialogue oriented environment which is essential for encouraging informal units to formalize.

KEY CHALLENGES

Several recurring challenges across ILO-supported interventions will need continued attention.

- ▶ Limited engagement or weak presence of formal workers' and employers' organizations in informal sectors, which can hinder their ability to effectively represent workers in the informal economy in social dialogue (EGY1102CAN, RLA1808EURVZF, GLO1754MUL, GLO2040EUR, ETH1502SID).
- ▶ Legal and institutional barriers, such as restrictions on freedom of association, weak union independence, and the absence of enabling policy environments, further constrain the ability of workers in the informal economy to organize and participate meaningfully (RAB1503CHE, GLO1755MUL, GLO1754MUL, SAU1801SAU, RLA1808EUR).
- ▶ Limited organizational capacity of informal economy workers and their representative structures, particularly in rural areas or fragmented sectors.
- ▶ Sustainability also remains a concern, as initiatives often rely on continued external support, sometimes with limited integration into national institutions (INT2002EUR, RAS1706JPN).
- ▶ Additionally, coordination gaps, political resistance, and insufficient resources among social partners frequently hinder the translation of social dialogue outcomes into lasting policy or structural reforms (GLO2040EU, GLO1754MUL, RLA1808EUR, RAS2007USA, RAS2053UND).

Youth

In high income countries a critical concern for social dialogue includes trade unions declining membership. In this regard, youth are considered as more than a specific target group, it is also a critical factor for trade unions survival. As indicated by the 2022 ILO flagship report on social dialogue the average union density rate among those aged 16 to 25 years in 28 high-income countries halved from 21% in 1995 to 11% in 2015. In contrast, in low- and middle-income countries, the challenge is less about declining youth numbers and more about the lack of decent employment opportunities and the emigration of young people. Therefore, youth remain a key target group for social dialogue efforts in these contexts as well (ILO, 2022a). This is reflected across the reviewed evaluation reports, which highlight several interrelated trends in how interventions have promoted social dialogue targeting youth.

1. A first trend is **the recognition of youth as a distinct target group**, particularly in relation to occupational safety and health (OSH) and access to decent work. Projects such as Youth4OSH and the OSH Flagship Programme explicitly targeted youth by integrating their concerns into national OSH standards, establishing youth volunteer networks, and training young trade union leaders to act as OSH advocates. In countries like Mexico and Brazil, youth were also addressed through tailored interventions in workplace safety and inclusive learning. (BRA1750BRA, MEX2005USA, OSH Flagship, RAS1605USC).
2. A second trend is **the empowerment of youth as active participants in social dialogue**. This has involved the development of youth-led platforms, such as AYOSH in the Philippines, and proposals to institutionalize youth representation, for example through a Youth Taskforce in Indonesia's national OSH council. These initiatives aim to ensure youth are not only represented but can actively shape dialogue processes (RAS1605USC, OSH Flagship).
3. A third trend focuses on **capacity building, both for youth and for social partners**, to enable more effective engagement in social dialogue. Examples include technical knowledge, life skills and union awareness training for young workers in Ethiopia, structured partnerships with the private sector in Kenya to support youth employment, and digital platforms for knowledge sharing in the Youth4OSH project in Indonesia, Myanmar, The Philippines, and Vietnam (ETH1502SID, KEN1701SWE, RAS1605USC).

KEY CHALLENGES

Despite the targeted efforts, significant obstacles remain in fully realizing the potential of social dialogue for youth, including political barriers, representation challenges, limited institutional integration, and difficulties in reaching the most vulnerable young workers, particularly those in the informal economy. For instance, in Egypt, plans for a National Action Plan on Youth Employment were stalled due to political constraints and minimal involvement of workers' and employers' organizations. In Turkey, youth as well as women and Syrians under temporary protection, are the groups who are less represented by trade unions while it's also not easy for these groups to represent their voices due to cultural, social and legal barriers. The Youth4OSH project, implemented in Indonesia, Myanmar, The Philippines, and Vietnam, also faced limitations, as many youth champions lacked strong ties to young workers in high-risk sectors. In the MENA region, a primary obstacle to formalization for youth (and women) was often a lack of demand for formal jobs, rather than just skill development. This systemic issue made social dialogue on skills development alone less effective without concurrent demand generation. Also, in Mexico, the Vision Zero Fund's focus on large exporters limits its reach to vulnerable youth working in smaller producer groups (EGY1102CAN, TUR1801DEU, INT2002EUR, RAS1605USC, MEX2005USA).

Migrant workers

Across the evaluated interventions, social dialogue directed towards migrants and refugees reveals a dual dynamic: the emergence of innovative strategies alongside persistent structural challenges.

A key development is the growing recognition of these groups as distinct vulnerable populations requiring targeted attention within social dialogue processes, particularly on issues such as forced labour, occupational safety and health, and non-discrimination (RAS1355UKM, RAS1611USA, MEX2005USA). Projects like Work in Freedom in Jordan helped equalize minimum wages for migrant and Jordanian workers through tripartite negotiation that resulted in the first sector-wide collective bargaining agreement and subsequent agreements that included specific measures to reduce discriminatory wages and benefits practices (High level evaluation FPRW). Others such as the SEA Fisheries and Vision Zero Fund projects explicitly addressed migrant-specific vulnerabilities in sectors like fisheries and agriculture (RAS1611USA, GLO1650MUL).

Given the legal and political constraints often limiting migrant workers' rights to organize, many initiatives have adapted social dialogue mechanisms by establishing informal structures, such as Workers' Resource Centres in Jordan and Lebanon (RAS1355UKM), and supporting grassroots associations like the Sandigan Kuwait Domestic Workers Association (RAB1503CHE). Such initiatives were found to contribute to the structuring of a social and professional identity also constituting the base for the building of a common and stronger voice in negotiations about decent work issues.

Capacity building has been a consistent focus, equipping migrant workers with knowledge on rights, OSH, and social security, as seen in projects in Turkey and South Asia (INT1703UNW). However, persistent challenges, such as legal restrictions on freedom of association, limited political will, economic disincentives for formal employment, and stigma against domestic work, continue to hinder inclusive dialogue (RAS1355UKM, INT1703UNW). Additionally, some interventions, while recognizing migrants as vulnerable, remain limited in reach due to their focus on larger enterprises, thereby excluding many migrant workers in smaller or informal settings (MEX2005USA, LAO2101EUR).

Interestingly, migrant labour issues are increasingly integrated into broader supply chain and decent work initiatives, reflecting the importance of migrant workers in both global and domestic industries. For instance, programmes addressing working conditions in sectors like agriculture, construction, and garment manufacturing frequently encounter challenges related to migrant labour, whether internal or cross-border (RAS1750DEU, MYS1601USA, INT1703UNW). Addressing the root causes of decent work deficits for these workers requires robust action within the national context. This includes strengthening the enforcement of labour laws, promoting social dialogue, and improving institutional capacities to prevent and resolve disputes. An illustrative example is provided in box 14 by the MYS1601USA project in the palm oil sector in Malaysia.

Box 14: Tripartite dialogue advancing labour rights and migrant worker protection in Malaysia

In the MYS1601USA project in Malaysia, the ILO supported the government in overhauling its industrial relations system to better align with international labour standards (MYS1601USA). Social dialogue was central to this process. The project facilitated progress by providing technical inputs and creating platforms for discussion among the tripartite constituents (the Ministry of Human Resources, the Malaysian Employers Federation, and the Malaysian Trades Union Congress). This was particularly evident in the development of the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP), which reaffirmed the government's commitment to reform and established a Tripartite Steering Committee to oversee all ILO projects, ensuring a coordinated tripartite mechanism. Through this structured dialogue, a key part of the reform was proposing amendments to the Employment Act to expand coverage to domestic workers and improve protections for migrant workers in the crucial palm oil plantation sector, addressing issues like passport detention and forced labour (MYS1601USA).

At the same time, for sectors that are part of global supply chains, the country-level focus of some projects can limit their ambition to reach lead firms and other international stakeholders. Engaging these international actors is necessary for addressing systemic issues, such as the fair distribution of costs required to improve decent work conditions across the entire supply chain. In the case of the "Sustainable Supply Chains for Building Forward Better" project (GLO2040EUR), for instance, the evaluation highlighted that time and budget limitations restricted the project's outreach to lead buyers and key actors in the EU, as well as to international employers' and workers' organizations (e.g., IOE, ITUC and Global Union Federations), beyond initial consultations (GLO2040EUR). This limited international engagement can undermine a project's ability to influence issues requiring coordination and leverage from actors at the top of the supply chain.

► 5. Contribution of social dialogue to decent work outcomes

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND POLICY COHERENCE

Social dialogue emerges as a pivotal mechanism for fostering policy coherence across the interlinked domains of employment, social protection, and rights at work across diverse regions, as evidenced by various evaluation reports. This coherence is primarily achieved by bringing together tripartite constituents, along with other stakeholders, to align policies, legislation, and practices towards shared decent work objectives. This collaborative approach ensures that policies are not only aligned with national priorities and international labour standards but are also relevant, widely supported, and effectively implemented on the ground. However, its effectiveness is often tested by multifaceted challenges.

Integrating employment and social protection policies

Social dialogue has been instrumental in creating a more coordinated approach to employment strategies and social protection mechanisms, particularly benefiting vulnerable and informal economy workers. Various examples can be identified at global level, country level and local levels.

A notable example at **the Global level** is provided by the Global Business Network for Social Protection Floors and the Social Protection, Freedom and Justice for Workers Network, established under the flagship programme on social protection floors. They explicitly reflect the programme's tripartite nature and aim to strengthen constituents' capacities and deepen their engagement in developing national social protection floors. The collaborative approach, notably with UN agencies through the UN Joint SDG Fund, contributed to improving coherence among UN partners at the country level and even strengthening relationships with ministries beyond labor, such as ministries of finance (Evaluation Flagship social protection). Assessment-Based National Dialogues (ABNDs)⁵ have been a significant non-statutory dialogue modality employed by the ILO in various countries to foster social protection floors by promoting consensus on National social protection strategies (NSPS) that include provisions for formal employment recognition with social protection access. These dialogues were found to be effective in fostering participatory multi-stakeholder discussions, leading to a consensus on priorities for implementing or extending nationally defined social protection floors. Despite these positive results, the flagship programme was found to suffer from a lack of visibility and understanding among ILO staff and constituents, and the interface between the overarching FP and individual flagship projects remained shallow, limiting overall coherence and institutionalization of results.

At the country level, examples can be found in the Pacific, where countries like Samoa and Vanuatu have seen their tripartite forums directly contributing to the development of national employment policies and the expansion of social security schemes, extending coverage to thousands, including those in the informal sector (Evaluation Pacific Labour Law, RAS2053UND). Also, in Senegal, a national dialogue process involved a Technical Monitoring and Support Committee with participation from the government, social partners, and civil society, which led to an overall review and evaluation of the social protection system. This process also strengthened inter-ministerial communication among various ministries dealing with social protection, helping to harmonize actions at the national level (Evaluation flagship social protection).

5 An Assessment-Based National Dialogue (ABND) is an ILO-facilitated process that brings together national stakeholders, including line ministries, local government bodies, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society organizations, academics, and development partners, to assess existing social protection systems and identify policy options for establishing or strengthening a national social protection floor, in line with ILO Recommendation No. 202. (ILO, 2016)

Illustrative examples can also be found **at the local level**. Nepal leveraged social dialogue to create guidelines for municipality-based labour desks, linking local employment policy with social security delivery for informal economy and self-employed workers (NPL1701GBR).

Such coordination efforts to align employment policies and expand social protection coverage require policymakers and administrative actors to have the capacity to break the entrenched logic of working in silos, which is a barrier that must not be underestimated (ILO, 2023a). Yet successful examples of cross-departmental initiatives can be found. A notable example from Latin America is Paraguay, where a technical committee involving the ILO, EU, UNICEF, and significantly, the Ministry of Finance, successfully engaged a broad range of stakeholders beyond traditional labour ministries. This bridging of siloed departments was crucial for developing comprehensive and fiscally sustainable social protection systems that underpin decent work and facilitated discussions around extending cash transfers to informal economy workers and ratification of ILO Convention 102 (Flagship social protection). The example demonstrates how social dialogue can drive policy coherence at a systemic level, even incorporating fiscal considerations.

Advancing policy coherence related to rights at work

Freedom of Association and the effective recognition of the right to Collective Bargaining (FACB) are foundational to meaningful social dialogue (High-level evaluation FPRW). Evaluations observed that, when these foundational rights apply, social dialogue can significantly contribute to developing integrated policy frameworks that address multiple rights at work, including OSH, gender equality, and the elimination of child and forced labour. By fostering structured collaboration among government ministries, economic sectors, and social partners, social dialogue has been able to promote a more coherent and integrated approach to advancing these rights. This finding is consistent with insights from a recent ILO meta-evaluation of more than 200 ILO evaluation reports, which similarly highlighted the role of social dialogue in enhancing policy coherence and coordination (ILO, 2025b). A notable example of integrated programming contributing to policy coherence is the “ONEILO” approach, which systematically aligns specialized ILO programmes, such as Better Work (BW), the Vision Zero Fund (VZF), and Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE), within broader ILO country frameworks (see box 14).



Box 15: Operationalizing ONEILO: A Holistic Model for Decent Work

The ONEILO approach is implemented prominently in the SIRAYE project in Ethiopia and in Egypt and Bangladesh, where it streamlines resources and fosters collaboration across ILO's different technical expertise areas including International Labour Standards (ILS), social dialogue, and freedom of association. By combining components that would otherwise operate separately (see also section 4.2.6), ONEILO applies a holistic "ecosystem approach" to tackle complex decent work challenges at factory, sectoral, and national levels. This integration enables the cross-fertilization of expertise, such as leveraging LABADMIN/OSH expertise to develop guidelines used by the social dialogue team for unionization and collective bargaining support while strengthening policy influence related to OSH and minimum wage setting. In Ethiopia, this led to progress on national OSH guidelines and the minimum wage-setting mechanism, and in Egypt, BW's integration within the 'Strengthening Labour Relations and Institutions in Egypt' (SLARIE) project expanded its impact beyond the factory level. The centralized coordination of management, monitoring, and budgeting under ONEILO has also enhanced efficiency and coherence, aligning interventions with shared priorities in Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) (ETH1701MUL, GLO1755MUL).

Several other country level examples can be found across the evaluation reports. In the Philippines, the Strategic Compliance Planning (SCP) process, introduced through social dialogue, enabled Industry Tripartite Councils to develop sectoral compliance plans that elevated labour standards, gender equality, and OSH on their agendas (RAS2007USA). Also, Indonesia saw its Ministry of Manpower develop gender-sensitive labour inspection guidelines and a "Respectful Workplace Policy" that integrated both gender and OSH aspects and which was anticipated to have a durable impact on inspection practices (RAS2007USA). The coordinated country office approach in Indonesia and the establishment of sectoral joint project advisory committees (PACs) serving multiple projects in different sectors were specifically identified as good practices promoting coherence and synergy among individual projects (RAS2007USA).

In Africa, Mozambique's Labour Advisory Committee (CCT) actively deliberated on project-related issues, elevating the profile of employment and decent work on the political agenda and promoting coherence by combining economic performance with fundamental rights (MOZ1601SWE). In Egypt, a draft MSME and Entrepreneurship National Strategy was connected to a National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth Employment, with ongoing ILO advocacy for its endorsement, showing an integrated policy approach to fundamental rights like youth employment (EGY1102CAN).

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AS A LEVER FOR JUST TRANSITIONS IN A SHIFTING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

During the 111th session of the International Labour Conference, the critical and multifaceted role of social dialogue was emphasized as a key mechanism for ensuring a just transition towards social justice and environmentally sustainable economies. This role is particularly vital in the face of major transitions in the world of work, driven by climate change, demographic shifts, technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI), digitalization and automation, and the broader transformation of labour markets influenced by globalization and trade dynamics (ILO, 2023a).

Social dialogue as a catalyst for green transitions and environmental sustainability

Across the reviewed ILO evaluation reports, environmental sustainability features as a concern with varying degrees of integration and ranging from isolated actions to embedded policy shifts supported by social dialogue and institutional partnerships. While only a minority of reviewed projects embedded environmental objectives directly into their design with tangible results, the majority do acknowledge environmental sustainability as a growing priority and recommend its deeper integration in future programming.

Where environmental goals were actively pursued, these were often paired with occupational safety and health (OSH) measures, resource efficiency, or green skills development, and supported by multi-stakeholder dialogue. Social dialogue mechanisms in these cases not only strengthened

policy alignment but also helped anchor environmental issues in broader governance frameworks. For example, the ILES project in Pakistan (PAK1603EUR) exemplified a holistic approach by combining environmental regulation, enterprise-level practices, and social dialogue through “City-Wide Partnerships,” yielding measurable reductions in resource use and contributing to national policy reforms (See also box 15).

Box 16: Integrating labour and environmental governance – Lessons from the ILES project in Pakistan

The International Labour and Environmental Standards Application in Pakistan’s SMEs (ILES) project (PAK1603EUR) applied a “tripartite-plus” social dialogue approach to integrate environmental compliance and sustainability into labour and policy frameworks. A Tripartite Steering Committee involving government, employers (EFP), and workers (PWF) ensured high-level coordination, while City-Wide Partnerships (CWPs) in Faisalabad, Karachi, Lahore, and Sialkot brought together provincial authorities, environmental agencies, and local stakeholders to address environmental governance challenges. Through these dialogue platforms, the project facilitated policy consultations and local reforms, including the integration of Green Tannery Guidelines into Sialkot’s bylaws and the drafting of the Sindh Clean Production Policy. Dialogue processes also promoted a shift from punitive to incentive-based environmental regulation and fostered collaboration on green finance and OSH–environment linkages. Critical issues identified by the evaluation included the limited synergies between the labour and environmental components being implemented by different partners (ILO and WWF) as well as ILO constituent sensitivities on ILES cooperation with other partners. Based on various ILO personnel, ILES efforts to form partnerships with relevant industry trade union and employers’ associations as well other labour-oriented research and advocacy groups were constrained by objections from ILO’s traditional partners.

Similarly, in Namibia, inter-ministerial inspections of fishing vessels under the SSCBFB initiative signaled a shift towards institutionalized environmental-labour collaboration (GLO2040EUR). The Better Work programme, despite lacking an initial environmental focus, introduced pilots and training on chemical management and resource efficiency in Vietnam and Haiti, with social dialogue implied through recommendations for collaboration with ILO technical staff on green jobs and other UN agencies (GLO1755MUL). Elsewhere, projects like the Vision Zero Fund in Mexico (MEX2005USA), the OSH Flagship, and the Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification initiative in Ghana (GLO2026NOR) linked green jobs, OSH, and climate resilience through coordinated stakeholder engagement and capacity-building. Even when contributions to environmental sustainability were rather indirect, as in the Clean Cotton project (GLO1445BRA) or child labour interventions in South Asia (RAS1904GBR), awareness-raising efforts and improved inspection systems reflected a growing recognition of the environmental dimension of decent work. Overall, while the integration of environmental sustainability remains uneven, these initiatives illustrate an emerging trend of how social dialogue can be used not only as a tool for consensus-building but also as a lever for institutional innovation and policy coherence in support of just transitions.

By contrast, a substantial number of evaluation reports revealed that environmental sustainability, while increasingly recognized as a cross-cutting concern, was either insufficiently integrated into project design or addressed only superficially. Various evaluations noted that environmental sustainability featured as an evaluation criterion or strategic recommendation, often alongside social dialogue, but had yet to translate into concrete actions or outcomes. This reflects a transitional phase where environmental issues are acknowledged as relevant to the world of work but remain weakly operationalized. In some cases, environmental aspects were only to a limited extent integrated in project design even when operating in environmentally sensitive sectors such as agriculture (BRA1750BRA, RLA1808EUR) and mining (RAS1904GBR). A similar pattern was identified in previous meta-evaluations (ILO, 2024; ILO, 2023), which found that environmental sustainability was among the areas of underperformance.

In some cases, implementation challenges (e.g. due to over ambitious project design and limited focus of the environmental component in the theory of change) prevented planned environmental components from materializing (MOZ1601SW). This highlights the need for more systematic integration of environmental sustainability into ILO programming and a clearer articulation of how social dialogue can support just transitions in diverse contexts. At the same time, a growing body of scientific literature suggests that including environmental issues in the realm of social dialogue will not merely require an extension of its scope, but will also require mental shifts from stakeholders

to conceptually adopt this integration given that industrial relations processes, that were developed in a 'fossil capitalist' context, might contribute to new and different kinds of unfairness and inequalities within a reality of climate change (Flanagan & Goods, 2020).

Digitalization and Decent Work: challenges and emerging opportunities

Social dialogue in relation to decent work issues in the platform or 'gig' economy did not feature as an area of focus across the reviewed evaluations. Platform work is explicitly mentioned in only one report, and only in passing, as part of broader employment shifts that weaken the links between economic growth and decent work (CMB1253USA). At the same time, the growing role of digitalisation within processes of social dialogue is evident across interventions, shaping both challenges and innovations in the pursuit of decent work. Challenges can be technical, but also include limited infrastructure hindering labour inspections, resistance to change and to participate in digital compliance systems due to increased transparency and accountability, and difficulties in maintaining effective social dialogue through virtual means.

A wide range of interventions leverage digital tools to enhance labour governance support social dialogue, improve social protection access, and strengthen monitoring systems. These tools often serve as a foundation for evidence-based discussions among tripartite constituents. For example, digital labour inspection platforms like LIMA in Bangladesh provide transparent data that can inform dialogue on compliance issues (BGD1905MUL, BGD1503MUL). Similarly, public databases such as SMARTLAB in Brazil were created as multidisciplinary forums to promote transparent, evidence-based policy management and map decent work deficits, thereby serving as crucial instruments for dialogue and policy-making (BRA1750BRA).

Digitalization also facilitates direct engagement and capacity building, which are essential for effective social dialogue (see box 16). E-learning platforms and virtual capacity-building, such as the virtual reality course against sexual harassment launched by the ITCILO, have expanded access to training for constituents, strengthening their ability to participate in discussions on key issues



(GLO1859SWE). During the COVID-19 pandemic, these virtual tools became indispensable, allowing social dialogue and tripartite consultations to continue despite mobility restrictions (RAF1653FRA, BGD1503MUL). For example, online platforms enabled tripartite discussions on developing responses to the crisis, such as creating COVID-19 safety campaigns for workers (BGD1503MUL, DOM1701USA). Furthermore, digital channels for complaints and awareness-raising, such as helplines and mobile apps, provide new avenues for workers to voice concerns, which can feed into bipartite and tripartite dialogue mechanisms (LAO2101EUR, MMR1902JPN, GLO2020MUL). These examples demonstrate how digitalization is not just a technical upgrade but is fundamentally reshaping the implementation and effectiveness of social dialogue.

While concerns persist around access, quality of data, and inclusivity, the evaluations reveal that digital solutions are increasingly central to efforts promoting decent work in the evolving world of work. A key area to monitor as part of the broader digitalization agenda will be the impact of fast artificial intelligence on the world of work. Although AI was not a prominent theme in the reviewed reports, aside from a brief reference to its use in chatbot experimentation by the ICTLO to enhance access to information in the NORMLEX database (High-level evaluation FPRW), it is likely to become a key area of focus in future interventions and evaluations.

Box 17: Digital tools advancing workplace dialogue and OSH

The Better Work project in Vietnam developed and piloted the “Gopy” application, a social media-like tool that enables workers, factory representatives and Better Work Enterprise Advisors to share information and strengthen dialogue, showcasing a direct leverage of digitalization to facilitate quality conversation among workers and management personnel. It also created another channel to tackle the risk of sexual harassment in the workplace (GLO1838). In Indonesia, the ILO project promoted “E-OSH Learning” and OSH board games for vocational and university students, aimed at promoting better knowledge and understanding about OSH while also emphasizing the importance of social dialogue in increasing OSH in the workplace⁶. These tools allowed for a considerable extension of the project’s reach to almost 10,000 students and 12,000 participants from 12,000 companies (IDN2101JPN).

Social dialogue as a strategic enabler of decent work in supply chains

Social dialogue is positioned not merely as a participatory tool but as a strategic mechanism for advancing decent work in supply chains. Across diverse contexts, evaluation evidence confirms that dialogue processes, often supported by the ILO’s convening authority, have been instrumental in driving both corporate accountability and state-led labour reforms. This shift reflects growing anticipation of regulatory developments such as the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), with evaluations of interventions in Brazil and Malaysia and countries involved in the Better Work programme highlighting how social dialogue has catalyzed national debates on compliance and ethical sourcing, while in some cases also fostering engagement between multinational enterprises and domestic stakeholders (GLO2040EUR, BRA1750BRA, GLO1755MUL) (see Box 17). This is in line with ILO’s Strategy on Decent Work in Supply Chains which identifies social dialogue both as a goal and guiding principle.

⁶ See also [Empowering youth by promoting OSH preventative culture through digital learning tools and educational games | International Labour Organization](https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/empowering-youth-promoting-osh-preventative-culture-through-digital): <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/empowering-youth-promoting-osh-preventative-culture-through-digital>

Box 18: Case examples of social dialogue as a lever for decent work in supply chains

In Brazil, the 'Promotion and Enforcement of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work project' explicitly uses an approach based on social dialogue and the dissemination of decent work concepts, corporate social responsibility, and human rights due diligence. This project has established various working groups and dialogue tables within specific production chains (e.g., cocoa, gypsum, palm oil, Brazil nut) to address fundamental principles and rights at work. Notably, the ILO collaborates with the UN Global Compact to enhance results in supply chains, and the Global Compact actively participates in these dialogue sessions, aiding in the mobilization of companies. This joint effort brings in "large private sector companies" to be part of the social dialogue, fostering long-term, structural transformation (BRA1750BRA).

In Malaysia, the Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers Association (MARGMA) and the Malaysian Rubber Council (MRC), with ILO support, are developing a Code of Conduct for their memberships, reflecting a commitment to improvements aligned with the National Action Plan on Forced Labour (NAPFL) (GLO2040EUR). The engagement with brands through social dialogue also helped to highlight the precarious conditions of migrant and home-based workers, helping to reframe corporate responsibility in ways that include so-called "invisible workers" (GLO2040EUR). This observation is significant, as international brands, as was highlighted by one evaluation report (RAS1706JPN), are often reluctant to acknowledge the presence of home-based workers in their global supply chains, viewing them as outside the scope of compliance mechanisms. Ethical guidelines are typically developed at headquarters, limiting the ability of local teams to formulate country-specific policies and highlighting the need for global-level advocacy by the ILO (RAS1706JPN).

A salient trend is the deployment of social dialogue to build cross-sector coalitions and manage crises, especially where complex decent work and HRDD related challenges demand multi-stakeholder alignment. The ILO's convening power has been pivotal in this regard, enabling trust-based coordination among state and non-state actors. For example, the Vision Zero Fund facilitated joint OSH planning in Mexico's agribusiness sector, including protocols for biological risk management (RLA1808EUR, MEX2005USA), while in Nepal and Indonesia, dialogue allowed for agile crisis response during COVID-19, including emergency wage agreements and workforce retention strategies (NPL1701GBR, GLO1755MUL).

Yet despite these advances, the evaluations also expose persistent challenges that constrain the transformative potential of social dialogue towards decent work improvements in domestic and global value chains. Weak organizational capacities of workers' organizations in conjunction with limited willingness from the employers side, especially at enterprise and sector levels, often undermine balanced negotiations (GLO2040EUR), and some stakeholders noted insufficient ILO support to enhance their technical engagement in complex processes such as HRDD. Structural constraints remain particularly pronounced in relation to cost-sharing as many lead firms resist absorbing the financial implications of improved working conditions and instead transfer them to suppliers, a dynamic that social dialogue alone has struggled to redress (GLO2040EUR). Additionally, some reports indicated that limited stakeholder involvement in project design and poor documentation practices weakened opportunities for institutional learning and replication (GLO1755MUL, RAF1653FRA).

Shaping labour governance and public policy through social dialogue

Across diverse regional contexts, the ILO promotes social dialogue not merely as a procedural instrument but as a strategic governance mechanism to drive reforms in labour law, administration, dispute resolution, and public policy. By embedding dialogue within project design and national institutions, it aims to institutionalize participatory labour governance aligned with international labour standards. While various evaluation reports confirm that this approach has enabled important policy gains and institutional innovations, its transformative potential remains uneven, constrained by persistent structural, political, and capacity-related limitations.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE'S ROLE IN LABOUR LAW AND ADMINISTRATION REFORM

A notable trend across the reviewed interventions is ILO's effort to position social dialogue as a normative and procedural anchor for labour law and administration reform. In contexts like Georgia and Malaysia for example, social dialogue has been deliberately used not only to build consensus around legal texts but to teach and institutionalize the practice of tripartism itself (GEO1302USA, MYS1601USA). Furthermore, ILO's convening of tripartite bodies to guide amendments, such as on OSH laws in Ukraine (UKR1901EUR) or union registration in Bangladesh (BGD1503MUL), has led to greater legal coherence with ILS and, at times, the ratification of conventions such as C144 (tripartite consultation) in Georgia.

However, such institutional successes are fragile and context dependent. Where political instability or exclusionary policy processes exist, the legitimacy of dialogue is undermined. In Malaysia, for example, exclusion of social partners during early legislative drafting prompted tensions around ownership (MYS1601USA). In Myanmar, the military coup effectively dismantled formal dialogue spaces (MMR1902JPN), while in Ethiopia and Kenya, frequent leadership changes within government offices and social partners hindered continuity (ETH1502SID, KEN1701SWE). These challenges highlight the limits of dialogue when institutional memory is weak and political will is inconsistent.

Moreover, capacity gaps, within workers and employers organizations, often restrict the substantive participation of social partners. Limited financial resources, reliance on volunteers, and unequal power relations have constrained meaningful engagement in complex legal debates (Thematic evaluation Pacific Labour Law, GLO2040EUR, GEO1302USA, GLO1754MUL, BGD1503MUL). While ILO technical assistance is often valued, it is not always matched by sustainable investment in national capacities to carry forward reform processes without external facilitation.

DIALOGUE AS A MECHANISM FOR DISPUTE PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION

Social dialogue and other forms of institutionalized dialogue have also been leveraged by various interventions to improve labour dispute prevention and access to justice. Strategies encompass both preventive dialogue at the workplace and direct resolution mechanisms at enterprise, sectoral, and national levels. One strategy focuses on preventive dialogue through bipartite committees for workplace cooperation, such as Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCs) or OSH Committees (GLO1755MUL, GLO1650MUL, ETH1502SID). These committees provide a structured forum for workers and management to discuss working conditions, productivity, and safety. While their main purpose is collaboration rather than formal dispute resolution, they enhance communication and build trust, helping to resolve issues proactively before they escalate into formal disputes (GLO1755MUL, ETH1502SID, CMB1253USA). Similarly, collective bargaining is promoted as a fundamental bipartite mechanism for establishing fair terms and preventing conflict, though its uptake in some sectors remains a challenge (BGD1503MUL, High-level evaluation FPRW 2023, GLO2040EUR). For direct dispute resolution, interventions have supported various formal and informal mechanisms. An exemplary localized model is Bangladesh's Workers Resource Centre (WRC), where trained paralegals successfully resolved thousands of factory-level disputes over issues like illegal suspension and non-payment of wages (see Box 18). Interventions also strengthened formal state mechanisms by training government conciliators and mediators in Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic (BGD1503MUL, DOM1701USA), and supporting national bodies like the tripartite Labour Mediation and Arbitration Commission (COMAL) in Mozambique (MOZ1601SWE). Furthermore, direct grievance channels such as worker helplines in Bangladesh and Indonesia have proven effective, with one helpline resolving 98% of over 2,100 complaints received in an eight-month period (BGD1503MUL, GLO2020MUL).

Box 19: A local platform for dispute resolution in Bangladesh

The Workers' Resource Centre (WRC), described as a "brain child" of the SDIR Project (BGD1503MUL), was established in 2017 in cooperation with the National Coordination Committee for Workers Education (NCCWE) and IndustriALL Bangladesh Council (IBC). It serves as a single platform for trade unions. A key achievement of the project through the WRC is its support to Paralegals, who have helped resolve many disputes at the enterprise or factory level. Out of 6,018 cases, 49% were resolved quickly, preventing escalation to the Labour Court, which has a backlog of over 20,000 cases. Reported cases include illegal suspension, forced resignation, maternity issues, and non-payment of wages and benefits. The WRC demonstrates a localized, preventive model by settling grievances at the ground level, promoting social dialogue and harmonious industrial relations in the RMG industry. Factory managers considered the Paralegal teams beneficial, as resolving disputes at the factory level "saves time." The WRC also brought together NCCWE and IBC, two organizations that "earlier did not talk to each other", into a single platform for dialogue.

Yet, these models often face limitations in reach, enforceability and sustainability. In Georgia, despite ILO support, the national mediation mechanism remained largely ineffective due to a shortage of mediators and weak legal enforcement provisions (GEO1302USA). In Bangladesh, collective bargaining mechanisms had limited uptake and arbitration structures were not functional at the national level (BGD1503MUL, BGD1905/MUL), reflecting broader deficits in dispute resolution infrastructure. Where laws allow only minimal space for worker representation, such as for migrant workers in Lebanon and Jordan (RAB1503CHE), dialogue initiatives have taken the form of service delivery (e.g. legal clinics) rather than negotiating for structural reform.



SOCIAL DIALOGUE AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE PUBLIC POLICY

In public policy domains, the ILO seeks to elevate social dialogue from a tripartite norm to a multi-level policy tool that shapes national development priorities. This involves establishing and supporting tripartite and multi-stakeholder platforms, providing technical assistance and capacity building, promoting evidence-informed policymaking, and facilitating legislative reforms.

National councils such as the National Tripartite Social and Economic Council (NTSEC) in Ukraine and the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission (TSPC) in Georgia have become institutional vehicles for dialogue on broader labour market policies, including pensions and minimum wages (UKR1901EUR, GEO1302USA) (see also box 19).

Box 20: Revitalizing tripartite dialogue as a driver of inclusive labour policy in Georgia

The Improved Compliance with Labour Laws in Georgia (ICLLG) project (GEO1302USA) played a pivotal role in revitalizing the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission (TSPC) after a period of inactivity. The ILO supported the creation of the Commission's Secretariat and working groups, facilitated the adoption of strategic plans, and provided training to members to enhance their technical and negotiation skills. The project's most significant achievement was helping the Government of Georgia fulfill its international obligations through the ratification of ILO Convention No. 144 (Tripartite Consultation), following a consensus reached at an ILO-supported strategic retreat. With technical input from LABADMIN/OSH, ACTRAV, and ACT/EMP, the TSPC became a forum for engagement on key issues such as OSH reform and labour law alignment. However, its influence on politically sensitive topics, such as pensions and minimum wages, remained limited, and meetings were held irregularly due to divergent stakeholder interests.

In Bangladesh, tripartite councils expanded their focus to emerging policy areas such as unemployment insurance (BGD1503MUL), while in India and Paraguay, dialogue supported the formulation of inclusive policies for informal economy workers and social protection (RAS1706JPN, Flagship social protection). Also, in fragile states such as Syria for example, social dialogue has been aligned with the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus to support institutional recovery (SYR1601RBS). Furthermore, the development and application of tools like the SAM-SDI and IRLex (GLO1859SWE) also illustrate ILO's efforts toward supporting evidence-informed dialogue, enabling greater policy relevance and coherence.

However, this expansion also exposes social dialogue to new political and institutional risks. In Egypt, for instance, a National Action Plan on Youth Employment was not endorsed due to political sensitivities (EGY1102CAN), while in Turkey, the inactivity of the Project Steering Committee undermined the very structure intended to guide tripartite policy engagement (TUR1801DEU). The ILO's influence in such cases is limited and depends heavily on national political economies and the willingness of key actors (particularly governments and employers) to engage on fundamental right issues like Freedom of Association or gender equality, where government and employer buy-in is not assured (High-level evaluation FPRW).

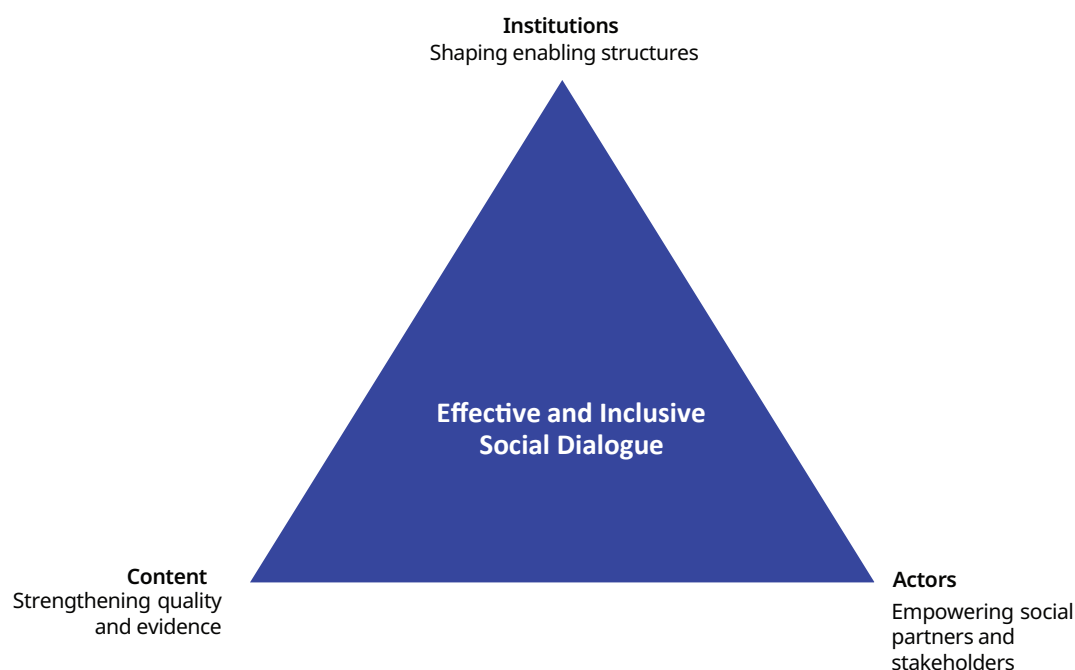


6. Lessons learned and good practices

Across the evaluation reports, the review surfaced a set of **recurring lessons learned and good practices** for interventions that seek to promote and strengthen effective and inclusive social dialogue. These practices relate to the ILO's convening power and technical knowhow and span participatory design, institutional anchoring, capacity strengthening, inclusivity, evidence-informed action, and adaptability. Together, these recurring lessons learned and good practices bring essential conditions for **effective and inclusive social dialogue**. This framework of conditions can be structured as a triangle, **illustrating three interdependent categories: institutions, content and actors**. Guardiancich & Molina (2021) identify the interplay between these categories as critical in the policy effectiveness of social dialogue.

1. **Institutions:** The first corner of the triangle focuses on the institutional foundations that make social dialogue possible. It focuses on the institutional foundations that make social dialogue possible. This category brings together recurring practices, grounded in legal frameworks that safeguard freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and that contribute to shaping enabling structures for social dialogue. This includes the ILO's impartial convening role and technical credibility, which helps establish trust and neutrality among social partners. It also encompasses programmatic continuity and building on previous successes to help anchor dialogue in long-term institutional memory, preventing fragmentation and loss of hard-won progress. Finally, it highlights the importance of adaptability, flexibility, and strategic partnerships, which enable dialogue to adjust to changing contexts and mobilize expertise and resources when needed. Together, these practices ensure that dialogue is not ad hoc or symbolic, but embedded in legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms, and ongoing processes that encourage genuine participation.
2. **Content:** The second corner highlights the quality and substance of what is discussed. Strong institutions alone are not sufficient if dialogue is not informed by evidence and robust analysis. This category includes strengthening inclusive and evidence-informed dialogue through knowledge tools, as well as data systems and infrastructures that generate reliable labour market information. By grounding social dialogue in credible data and informed analysis, parties can engage in more constructive negotiations, develop realistic policy solutions, and monitor progress effectively.
3. **Actors:** Empowering social partners and stakeholders. The third corner recognizes that institutions and evidence only work if capable actors are in place to use them. This category encompasses practices that invest in capacity building for social partners, but also local leadership and networks, cultivating champions and facilitators of social dialogue at all levels. It also includes the consistent involvement and ownership of social partners, ensuring that workers' and employers' organizations actively shape and sustain dialogue processes. Social partners must have the capacity, confidence, and legitimacy to speak for their constituents and to build coalitions that sustain social dialogue beyond project cycles or single policy moments.

Figure 2: Triangle of enabling conditions for effective and inclusive social dialogue



The triangle underscores that these three dimensions are **mutually reinforcing**. Strong institutions rely on capable actors to run them and relevant content to discuss. High-quality evidence and data require empowered social partners to use them effectively. Local leaders and networks help maintain institutional memory and strengthen ownership.

When these elements work in synergy, they create the conditions for **trust-based, resilient, and inclusive social dialogue** that adapts to changing labour markets and contexts and is equipped to deliver fair outcomes for all.

INSTITUTIONS: SHAPING ENABLING STRUCTURES

International Labour Standards as Cornerstones of Social Dialogue. A cornerstone of the institutional foundations for social dialogue is the ILO's body of International Labour Standards (ILS) and its supervisory mechanisms (High-level evaluation FPRW). The reviewed reports consistently show that ILO interventions are grounded in its normative mandate, using ILS as the primary reference for legal and policy reform (GEO1302USA, GLO1754MUL, BGD1503MUL). Fundamental conventions, particularly those on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining (C87 & C98), provide both the impetus and the technical blueprint for developing national legislation and institutional frameworks (High-level evaluation FPRW, BGD1503MUL, GLO1838EUR). However, the link between the normative framework and its practical application through social dialogue was found to be neither automatic nor consistently maximized (High-level evaluation FPRW). While the ILO's supervisory bodies, such as the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), play a critical role by identifying gaps between national practice and ratified conventions, the translation of these findings into large-scale, holistic development cooperation responses remains the exception rather than the rule (High-level evaluation FPRW, GLO2040EUR). More often, the political urgency and entry points for significant technical cooperation are catalyzed by external pressures where national and donor interests align, such as the conditionality of trade agreements like the EU GSP+ or the need to resolve formal complaints (GEO1302USA, High-level evaluation FPRW, BGD1905MUL). For example, a

project in Georgia was initiated in response to a US GSP petition concerning workers' rights, and in Bangladesh, a formal complaint regarding C87 and C98 led to an ILO Governing Body "roadmap" that directly shaped project activities (GEO1302USA, BGD1503MUL). Nevertheless, while these drivers are external, they create the political will to address the very compliance gaps with ILS that the supervisory bodies often highlight.

Leveraging ILO's impartial convening role and neutrality. Across the various evaluation reports, the ILO's convening power and neutrality have consistently served as pivotal enablers in strengthening and institutionalizing social dialogue across diverse national and regional contexts. Its unique mandate, rooted in international labour standards, and its long-standing relationships with governments, employers, and workers' organizations position it as a trusted and impartial actor, capable of bridging divides and fostering inclusive engagement. Across the evaluated interventions, the ILO's ability to convene diverse stakeholders and cultivate trust was repeatedly identified as a key facilitating factor (GLO2040EUR, CMB1253USA, KEN1701SWE, ETH1502SID, RAF1653FRA, MOZ1601SWE). Notably in Brazil, the ILO acted as a "catalyst" by bringing together historically divided actors for constructive policy dialogue (BRA1750BRA). Its neutral status was also observed to facilitate the ILO's engagement on politically sensitive issues through entry points such as OSH and child labour, as seen in Syria where these themes facilitated renewed tripartite interaction in a fragile context (SYR1601RBS).

Moreover, the ILO's **normative mandate** (based on International Labour Standards) and **technical expertise** confer additional legitimacy, enabling it to drive labour law reforms as was for example the case in Georgia (GEO1302USA). Furthermore, its existing infrastructure and trusted relationships allow for rapid and effective responses to crises. During the COVID-19 pandemic, ILO programmes leveraged established social dialogue mechanisms to facilitate swift policy adjustments and resource mobilization (GLO2020MUL). In Ukraine, the ILO's long-standing credibility and adaptable approach enabled continued engagement and social dialogue even amidst ongoing war and martial law (UKR1901EUR). Similarly, its status as a normative UN agency allowed it to maintain presence and continue work on workers' rights even in challenging political contexts like post-coup Myanmar (MMR1902JPN).

Programmatic continuity and building on previous successes also emerged as an important good practice. Projects that strategically build upon earlier relationships, institutional frameworks, and ILO's country program approaches are better positioned to secure long-term impact. In Asia, for instance, the 'Improving Workers' Rights in Rural Sectors project' in the Philippines leveraged pre-existing relationships and strategies developed in earlier interventions, offering a solid foundation for strengthening and consolidating social dialogue (RAS2007USA). Also, the integration of social dialogue initiatives as part of the Better Work programme into broader ILO country programmes (i.e. ONEILO approach) as was observed in countries like Ethiopia and Egypt, ensured that such tested activities are sustained as part of holistic support to the country rather than as standalone programmes. This integration was seen as reinforcing sustainability by aligning efforts and streamlining resources across complementary areas (GLO1755MUL, ETH1701MUL). Another example comes from the Decent Work for Women (DWW) project in Egypt and Tunisia, where the evaluation identified the long-standing trust and close working relationships developed over more than eight years as a key enabling factor. This continuity allowed results to mature over time and proved vital for sustaining effective social dialogue (RAF1705FIN).

Programmatic adaptability and flexibility in function of shifting local contexts and needs were identified as crucial for ILO interventions to navigate complex contexts, ensuring relevance, and achieving sustainable impact. This was demonstrated in various projects allowing for rapid reallocation of resources, continuation of dialogue and design of targeted crisis responses as well as for incorporating emerging national priorities (GLO2020MUL, UKR1901EUR, SAU1801SAU, BRA1750BRA). Yet, several challenges persist. External shocks like conflict or prolonged pandemics can still overwhelm even well-designed interventions. Bureaucratic hurdles, digital divides, and rushed design phases can limit the potential of flexible mechanisms.

CONTENT: STRENGTHENING QUALITY AND EVIDENCE

Tools and data systems for strengthening evidence informed social dialogue. Several evaluation reports highlighted the potential of evidence-based approaches for strengthening social dialogue. Monitoring tools and data systems like Brazil's SMARTLAB (BRA1750BRA) and the MONITORA 8.7 platform in Paraguay and Peru (GLO1445BRA). In Asia, sectoral bulletins and online platforms enriched wage negotiations and knowledge sharing (RAS1750DEU, RAS1605USC), while the development of a digital publicly accessible database on registered trade unions and unfair labour practices in Bangladesh helped to increase transparency and supports social dialogue by providing clearer information on labour market dynamics and union status (BGD1503MUL). Also ILO's databases like IRLex⁷ and IRData⁸ were reported to support social dialogue and informed policymaking. These databases include labour law provisions related to ILO standards on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining. They feature comments made by the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) which also provide data for SDG 8.8.2 which measures the level of national compliance with labour rights. The added value of feedback from ILO's supervisory bodies is illustrated by ILO's engagement in labour law reform in Fiji which was set against the background of a complaint to the Committee on Freedom of Association (Case No.2723) (Thematic evaluation Pacific Labour Law). At the same time, as noted by the high-level evaluation on fundamental principles and rights at work, while supervisory body observations are sometimes used to inform ILO programs, they are mostly followed up through short-term technical assistance and rarely serve as the main driver of long-term development cooperation.

Using M&E to strengthen evidence informed Social Dialogue. A strong link also emerges between robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices and strategies to strengthen the quality and evidence base for social dialogue. Evaluation findings show that M&E is not limited to accountability but can serve as a mechanism for generating, validating, and institutionalizing the knowledge needed for effective dialogue. First, M&E frameworks can drive evidence-based design, ensuring that interventions and the social dialogue processes they support respond to contextual realities. Projects such as GLO1754MUL and GLO1859SWE emphasized the importance of systemic analysis, while participatory diagnostics in VZF projects in Mexico and Honduras informed locally grounded dialogue models (RLA1808EURVZF). Similarly, BRA1750BRA and RAS1706JPN demonstrated how mapping and participatory appraisal tools helped align strategies with partner priorities. Second, M&E systems can enhance dialogue quality and credibility by tracking qualitative changes rather than only activity counts. The Fairway Project (RAB1503CHE) and GLO2040EUR developed tools to measure dialogue frequency, quality, and behavioural change among participants. Finally, M&E plays an institutional role in learning and knowledge sharing, as seen in Brazil, Cambodia, and Ethiopia, where monitoring mechanisms fostered transparency and continuous improvement (BRA1750BRA; CMB1253USA, ETH1701MUL).

ACTORS: EMPOWERING SOCIAL PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Strengthening inclusive and evidence-informed dialogue through capacity building and knowledge tools. A good practice underpinning the effectiveness and inclusiveness of ILO-supported social dialogue interventions has been the systematic strengthening of capacity, the broadening of representation, and the use of evidence-based tools to inform practice. A fundamental lesson in this regard is the critical need to equip all tripartite partners, especially workers' and employers' organizations, with enhanced knowledge, skills, and resources for meaningful social dialogue. Across various contexts and sectors capacity-building initiatives, including targeted training programs, the use of toolkits such as the Industrial Relations Toolkit (GLO1859SWE), and training-of-trainers models, have enhanced the technical and institutional

7 IRLex is an existing ILO database containing Industrial Relations provisions for labour laws of selected countries. (GLO1859SWE, p.20)

8 IRData includes data on trade union membership, on the coverage of Collective Bargaining and on strikes and lockouts. This provides governments and Social Partners with information enabling them to better understand the evolution of trends in Industrial Relations (GLO1859SWE, p. 11).

capabilities of social partners. Complementing these efforts, peer-to-peer learning (e.g. study visits and South-South exchanges) emerged as an effective modality for knowledge exchange and institutional innovation (SYR1601RBS, SAU1801SAU, INT2002EUR, Thematic Evaluation Pacific Labour Law). Also, joint capacity-building activities for both unions and employers' organizations are instrumental to foster active participation, effective negotiation, and the application of agreements, thereby increasing their voice and influence. The Industrial Relations Lab in Myanmar and ILO's SCORE programme provide notable examples of this (MMR1601MUL, GLO1754MUL).

At the same, several evaluations caution against viewing capacity development as a one-off intervention. A key lesson is the critical importance of follow-up and support the actual application of acquired skills. In some cases, a lack of structured follow-up led participants to revert to previous practices, undermining the long-term effectiveness of the training (Pacific Labour Law; BGD1503MUL, SAU1801SAU, IDN2101JPN). Consequently, several evaluations recommended long-term presence and consistent engagement of project personnel with partners. Good practices to that effect include maintaining a continuous and embedded presence, such as positioning ILO experts within national ministries or ensuring in-country project coordinators who can offer day-to-day technical guidance and responsiveness (RAS1750DEU, IRQ2003EUR, SAU1801SAU, SYR1601RBS). Other strategies involve anchoring training methodologies in national institutions and formal dialogue platforms to ensure sustained ownership, and building institutional capacity for dialogue structures such as tripartite councils or sectoral committees. The institutionalization of training content, for example through national TVET systems or integration into employer organizations' services, enhances long-term relevance and sustainability (MMR1601MUL). Developing clear strategies for the institutional and economic sustainability of project-supported initiatives, including an assessment and a timeframe for the eventual phasing out of external support, is also highlighted as a good practice. This also involves building the capacity of partners to manage and market programs (e.g., SCORE) post-project, ensuring their continued availability as income-generating services (GLO1754MUL, RAF1705FIN). In addition, adaptive project management practices, such as regular communication with stakeholders, joint planning and review exercises, and transition strategies to bridge project phases, can help consolidate achievements and sustain engagement (IDN2101JPN, RAS2007USA, RAS1355UKM).

Consistent involvement and ownership of Social Partners. Genuine ownership by government actors, workers' and employers' organizations, fostered through their active and consistent involvement in all stages of project design and implementation, was identified by different evaluation reports as a powerful driver for sustainability. This has also been consistently observed as a good practice across various meta-analysis reports (ILO, 2024d; ILO, 2023d). In Mozambique for example, the strong involvement of social partners in project design was observed to have led to greater acceptance and sustainability of reforms in social protection programs (MOZ1601SWE). Also in Egypt, the clear vision for partners and stakeholders to take ownership, with gradual handover strategies, as demonstrated in Egypt's DJEP project, was deemed a "very good practice" for sustainability (EGY1102CAN). Similarly, in Iraq, the project's inclusive approach to developing national labor inspection and OSH policies, involving full consultation and validation with social partners, led to their official endorsement and national ownership (IRQ2003EUR). Examples of good practices from Latin America in this regard include the participatory design of OSH intervention models in the coffee value chain (RLA1808EURVZF). Ownership and consistent involvement also create continuous incentives for social partners to engage in social dialogue (Grimshaw et al. 2024). A significant challenge however is the over-reliance on the ILO's presence, with national stakeholders sometimes lacking the capacity or ownership to embed project activities into national systems, hindering long-term sustainability (GLO1755MUL). Also previous meta-analysis reports have pointed towards missed opportunities and reduced stakeholder ownership in cases of inconsistent involvement of constituents during project design and implementation (ILO, 2024d; ILO, 2023d).

Investment in Local Leadership and Networks. Another important lever for enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of social dialogue processes lies in investing in local leadership and grassroots networks. Strengthening leadership capacity at the community level fosters long-term ownership, promotes local-level problem solving, and ensures that social dialogue is not only top-down but grounded in workers' lived realities. This aligns with the ILO's tripartite model, which emphasizes the embeddedness of social partners in local contexts as a means of grounding interventions at the grassroots level and ensuring the sustainability and legitimacy of dialogue processes. In Asia, for example, the project Towards Fair and Sustainable Global Supply Chains emphasized the development of local leadership among home-based workers in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. This grassroots approach helped build strong rapport and facilitated practical, community-based dialogue mechanisms that are essential for sustainable implementation and worker engagement over time (RAS1706JPN). In Bangladesh, the Workers' Resource Centre (WRC), established under the SIDR project, emerged as a self-sustaining platform enabling unions to organize and advocate more effectively (BGD1905MUL). However, the sustainability of such local-level engagement often depends on continued support. The same South Asia project noted that while initial capacity building had positive effects, many worker collectives were in nascent stages and would require ongoing external assistance to consolidate their role in social dialogue processes. Also, a lack of systematic follow-up after trainings was shown by some reports to hinder sustained improvement in social dialogue practices. Furthermore, the over-reliance on external support from projects can limit the potential for national institutions to fully take over these functions and build sustainable systems upon project exit. Finally, short project durations and overly ambitious objectives can significantly limit the ability to build lasting capacity and embed sustainable social dialogue mechanisms (TE Pacific Labour Law, PAK1603EUR, RAS1706JPN, GLO1838EUR). To help local stakeholders and social partners representatives to build sustainable social dialogue practices, investing in their legal, representative and administrative capacities seems crucial (Grimshaw et al. 2024).

The formation of **diverse strategic partnerships**, while involving stakeholders beyond the traditional tripartite model, was seen to be critical for pooling resources, sharing expertise, fostering broader engagement and strengthening collective impact (ETH15/02SID, KEN1701SWE, OSH Flagship, RAS1605USC, GLO2040EUR, MOZ1601SWE). However, as flagged by Grimshaw et al. (2024), it is important to ensure a manageable structure for other forms of institutionalized dialogue by avoiding excessive fragmentation of represented interests. There may also be resistance from traditional trade unions towards extended forms of negotiations, out of fear that including non-traditional tripartite constituents might weaken their influence in collective bargaining (Alfers et al., 2022). Furthermore, strategic partnerships are sometimes constrained by some of the hindering factors mentioned earlier such as weak tripartite capacity, high turnover of government officials, or employer resistance to union engagement. Projects also risk short-termism or over-reliance on ILO facilitation if national actors are not adequately prepared for institutional take-up (MMR1902JPN, RAS2053UND, GLO1445BRA, GLO2020MUL ETH1502SID, BGD1905MUL, GLO2040EUR, RAB1503CHE, GLO1755MUL).

Drawing from the interdependent categories discussed above, the Table 2 synthesizes recurring good practices identified across the evaluation reports. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the table presents a structured overview of good practices linked to institutions, content, and actors, highlighting their observed effects and results, associated ILO instruments or tools, and key limitations or challenges.

Table 2: Overview of good practices, effects and results, related ILO instruments, limitations and challenges

Good practices	Effects / results	Limitations / challenges
Institutions		
ILO's impartial convening role and neutrality	Builds trust, bridges divides, between tripartite constituents, enables dialogue on politically sensitive topics, fosters inclusive engagement	Political and legal constraints limiting access to social dialogue (e.g., lack of freedom of association); over-reliance on ILO convening
Mobilising ILO's normative mandate & inhouse technical expertise	Legitimizes reforms; supports crisis response; ensures continuity during shocks (e.g., in post-coup contexts)	Political upheaval may block progress; limited reach without national capacity
Programmatic continuity & building on successes	Sustains long-term impacts; strengthens institutional memory and trust by building upon earlier established relationships and institutional frameworks	Fragmented funding; dependency on donors; fragile ownership
Adaptability & flexibility	Enables crisis response; ensures relevance to shifting contexts and needs	External shocks can overwhelm; bureaucratic barriers; rushed design phases
Content		
Tools & data systems for evidence-informed dialogue	Supports informed policy; increases transparency; strengthens negotiation quality	Data gaps; digital divides; limited uptake without local technical capacity
Capacity building & knowledge tools	Strengthens technical/institutional capacity; broadens representation; fosters active participation and effective negotiation	One-off trainings; limited follow-up; weak institutional take-up
Actors		
Consistent involvement & ownership of social partners	Drives sustainability; ensures relevance; fosters national ownership	Over-reliance on ILO; weak systems embedding; capacity gaps
Investment in local leadership & networks	Enables bottom-up problem solving; grounds dialogue in local realities; empowers grassroots	Short project durations; overambitious project design, lack of systematic follow-up; nascent collectives need continued support
Strategic partnerships & alliances	Pools resources; broadens engagement beyond tripartism; mobilizes expertise	High turnover; employer resistance; weakening of trade union's influence, weak tripartite capacity; over-dependence on ILO facilitation

References

- Alfers, L., Chen, M. A., & Plagerson, S. (2022). *Social Contracts and Informal Workers in the Global South*. Edward Elgar Publishing Cheltenham, UK.
- Carré, F., Horn, P., & Bonner, C. (2020). Collective bargaining by informal workers in the Global South: Where and how it takes place. In *Research handbook on development and the informal economy* (pp. 285–316). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- de Lima Vieira, Anna Carolina, Rubén Vicente Andrés, and Denise Monteiro. (2020). *Reaching the Most Vulnerable in the Social Protection Response to the COVID-19 Crises in Mozambique: Opportunities and Challenges*. Maputo, Mozambique: ILO.
- Flanagan, F., & Goods, C. (2022). Climate change and industrial relations: Reflections on an emerging field. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 64(4), 479-498.
- Guardiancich, I., & Molina, O. (2021). From gradual erosion to revitalization: National Social Dialogue Institutions and policy effectiveness. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 28(1), 85-103.
- GRIMSHAW, D., BRANDL, B., BERTRANOU, F. and GONTERO, S. (2024), Tracing the potential benefits and complex contingencies of multilevel collective bargaining. *International Labour Review*, 163: 657-675.
- Hermans, M., Huyse, H., Van Ongevalle, J. (2016). *Social dialogue as a driver and governance instrument for sustainable development*. ILO-ITUC Issue Paper (Brussels).
- ILO. (2013). *Social dialogue interventions: What works and why? Lessons learned from synthesis review, 2002–2012*. ILO, Geneva.
- ILO. (2016). *Social protection assessment-based national dialogue: A global guide* (p. 294). Geneva: International Labour Organization (ILO). ([link](#))
- ILO. (2017). *Social dialogue interventions: What works and why? Lessons learned from synthesis review, 2013–2016*. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).
- ILO (2021a). *Building the future of social protection for a human-centred world of work*. International Labour Conference, 109th Session. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).
- ILO. (2021b) *World Social Protection Report 2020–22*. ILO, Geneva.
- ILO (2022a). *Collective bargaining for an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery*. Flagship report on social dialogue. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).
- ILO (2022b). *Responding to the crisis and fostering inclusive and sustainable development with a new generation of comprehensive employment policies*. 110th Session, 2022. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).
- ILO (2023a). [Achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#). International Labour Conference. 111th Session. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).
- ILO (2023b). *Leaving no one behind: Building inclusive labour protection in an evolving world of work*. International Labour Conference. 111th Session. ILO, Geneva.
- ILO (2023c). *ILO strategy on decent work in supply chains*. Governing Body, 347th Session, Geneva, 13–23 March 2023 ([link](#)).

ILO (2023d). Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2022. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

ILO (2024a). Peak-level social dialogue for economic development and social progress. Flagship report on social dialogue. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

ILO (2024b). Decent work and the care economy. International Labour Conference, 112th Session. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

ILO (2024c). Fundamental principles and rights at work at a critical crossroads. International Labour Conference, 112th Session. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

ILO (2024d). Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2023. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

ILO (2025a). How has the ILO performed in promoting international labour standards through development cooperation projects? Insights from a synthesis of 200 evaluation reports (2019–23). i-eval: Insights from evidence, No.1. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

ILO (2025b). Driving change through social dialogue. i-eval: Insights from evidence, No.2. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

Molina Romo, O. (2022). The role of tripartite social dialogue in facilitating a just transition. Experiences from selected countries. ILO, Geneva ([link](#)).

Schmidt, V., Webster, E., Mhlana, S., & Forrest, K. (2023). Negotiations by workers in the informal economy (Issue 86). ILO Working Paper.

Van Ongevalle, J., Huyse, H., Helsen, L. (2025). Representation, negotiation and social dialogue in the informal economy. Synthesis paper SPRING project. HIVA-KU Leuven.

Vlaminck, Z. (2019). Social dialogue and informal workers: What we can learn from 8 success cases ([link](#)).

► Annex 1. Synthesis review questions

The synthesis review questions outlined in the Terms of Reference were reorganized into two overarching categories to bring greater conceptual clarity and analytical structure to the synthesis. The first set of questions focuses on the effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue, while the second set examines the contribution of social dialogue to decent work outcomes. This categorization also informs the overall structure of the report and guides the synthesis review around these two core areas of inquiry. Table A.1 below presents an overview of the synthesis review questions, as outlined in the Terms of Reference, alongside the corresponding chapters in the report that most directly address each question

Table A.1: Overview of the synthesis review questions

Synthesis review question	Chapter in the report that addresses the question
Effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue	
How effective have social dialogue interventions been in promoting tripartism and strengthening labour market governance?	6.1. Effectiveness of ILO interventions in strengthening social dialogue
What factors contribute to the sustainability and institutionalization of social dialogue processes?	6.2. Enabling conditions and barriers for social dialogue
What are the key external and contextual factors influencing the success or failure of social dialogue interventions?	
What are the enabling conditions and barriers for effective bipartite and tripartite social dialogue at different levels (national, sectoral, enterprise)?	6.3. How inclusive are social dialogue processes?
How inclusive are social dialogue processes in addressing gender equality and the concerns of vulnerable groups, including youth, informal workers, and migrants?	
How do social dialogue mechanisms vary across national and regional contexts, and what factors explain why different countries or regions adopt specific mechanisms?	6.4. Interacting conditions shaping social dialogue mechanisms
What good practices can be identified?	8. Lessons learned and good practices
What have been the major trends and best practices in ILO social dialogue interventions since 2019?	Chapters 5 to 8
Contribution of social dialogue to decent work outcomes	
How has social dialogue contributed to policy coherence in employment, social protection, and fundamental rights at work?	7.1. Social Dialogue and Policy Coherence
How has social dialogue contributed to addressing just transitions in the context of climate change, demographic shifts, digitalization and automation, and evolving labour markets in light of the challenges posed by globalization and trade dynamics?	7.2. Social dialogue as a lever for just transitions in a shifting global landscape

Synthesis review question	Chapter in the report that addresses the question
What role has social dialogue played in responding to global crises (e.g., COVID-19, economic downturns and cost-of-living crises, geopolitical/armed conflicts)?	6.2. Enabling conditions and barriers for social dialogue
How does the ILO strengthen the role of social dialogue in shaping labour law and labour administration reforms, labour dispute prevention and resolution (i.e. access to labour justice) and public policy development?	7.3. Shaping labour governance and public policy through social dialogue
What lessons can be drawn from previous interventions to enhance the impact and reach of social dialogue mechanisms?	8. Lessons learned and good practices
What good practices can be identified?	

► Annex 2. Methodology

The core research material of this synthesis review consists of 53 evaluation reports of ILO interventions that were implemented between 2019 and 2025 stored on the [i-eval discovery](#) platform. In addition, other ILO publications related to social dialogue and its links with the other pillars of the Decent Work Agenda — including reports from ILC recurrent and general discussions, reports, and relevant papers from academic and grey literature — were also taken into consideration.

The selection of the evaluation reports involved a three-step process. As a first step, the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) conducted a preliminary screening of 873 interventions from the period 2019–2025. This process identified 77 evaluation reports, comprising 57 final evaluations and 20 midterm evaluations, linked to 74 interventions. These were selected based on the presence of keywords⁹ that either explicitly referenced social dialogue or implicitly suggested it as a potential area of focus within the intervention.

In a second step, the research team refined the sample by applying additional exclusion criteria. Interventions were excluded if only internal evaluation reports were available, if no quality assessment (QA) from the ILO's EVAL Office was available (except for thematic evaluations), or if the median QA score was below 4.25 for either the item or the component aggregation. However, reports with one median score of 4 were retained if the other score was at least 4.25. This process resulted in a final sample of 53 interventions.

In a next step, a rapid scan of all 53 evaluation reports was conducted, using NotebookLM to support keyword identification and thematic extraction¹⁰. This automated step was followed by a manual review of each report to verify and complement the findings. The validated information related to social dialogue was then recorded in an Excel database. From this sample, one evaluation report from Ukraine (UKR1603EUR) was removed, as another evaluation report from Ukraine also focusing on social dialogue was already included. In its place, a midterm evaluation of the SOLIFEM project (Social Dialogue for Formalization and Employability in the Southern Neighbourhood Region – INT2002EUR) was added due to its specific relevance to the topic of the synthesis review. It had not been identified in the preliminary selection because of limited overlap with the key search terms used. In addition, the ETH1701MUL project 'Advancing Decent Work and Inclusive Industrialisation in Ethiopia-SIRAYE) had also been added to the sample as it contained information rich information on the implementation of the ONEILO approach. Hence, the final sample included 53 evaluation reports, comprising 39 final evaluations and 13 midterm evaluations.

The review of the selected evaluation reports involved several steps. First, using NotebookLM, each report was summarized with attention to its theory of change; findings on how and to what extent the intervention contributed to strengthening social dialogue and to achieving decent work outcomes; identified good practices and recommendations; and an overview of the social dialogue mechanisms described in the report. These summaries were then clustered by geographical region. In a second step, each regional cluster was further analysed in relation to the review questions, beginning with those focused on the strengthening of social dialogue mechanisms,

9 Keywords used: Social dialogue, Tripartism, Collective bargaining, Freedom of association, Work governance, Institutional capacities/capacity, Labour law reform, Workplace cooperation, Industrial relations, Labour dispute resolution, Grievance handling, Labour dispute mechanisms, Social justice, Just transition, Worker's right, Formalization, Informal economy, Working conditions, Health and safety at work, Occupational safety, Occupational health, Labour inspection, Risk prevention, Job security, Wage/s, Employment policy, COVID.

10 The rapid scan involved systematically summarizing information across a set of predefined analytical dimensions, including: 1) the intervention's focus on social dialogue, 2) types of social dialogue mechanisms observed and the levels at which they operated, 3) the main sector(s) addressed, 4) target groups, including any identified vulnerable groups, 5) Geographical focus (countries and regions), 6) main decent work-related topics covered, 7) availability of good practices, lessons learned, and recommendations concerning social dialogue, 8) availability of information on the evaluation methodology, including data collection, analysis, and triangulation.

followed by those examining the contribution of social dialogue to decent work outcomes. Specific findings were again cross-checked against the original reports to ensure accuracy and to deepen the contextual interpretation of the evidence. Also, a cross-cutting analysis was conducted across all summary reports to identify overall trends in relation to the review questions, drawing primarily on the evaluation material, with selective triangulation from ILO meta studies, ILO recurrent discussions and other ILO publications as well as academic or grey literature where relevant.

For the analysis of the evaluation reports and the development of the content of the synthesis report, we deliberately limited the use of AI to Notebook LM as this allowed us to check the original source of each piece of analysis continuously. We did some tests with more advanced AI types of analysis, but we concluded that they were not sufficiently reliable. More specifically, we used Notebook LM for thematic extraction from individual evaluation reports in relation to the review questions, each time followed by a manual review of each report to verify and complement the findings.

Also, findings from previous ILO meta-analyses were reviewed and used to triangulate the evidence emerging from this synthesis. The meta-analysis results served mainly as a comparative reference to confirm or nuance emerging patterns, ensuring consistency of interpretation across different evaluation periods and contexts.

LIMITATIONS

A limitation of the synthesis review stems from the potential risk of missing relevant reports due to key word bias during the preliminary selection of evaluation reports. This was to some extent mitigated by having this preliminary list cross checked by the LABGOV team which allowed for the identification of one key report that had been missed and was included in the final sample. Another limitation stems from inherent variability in the methodologies, scope, and data quality of the reviewed evaluation reports and the level of ambition in the intervention's design. The team took steps to mitigate this limitation by applying exclusion criteria informed by the quality assessment database from the ILO's EVAL Office in order to ensure sufficient data quality and relevant information related to the research questions.

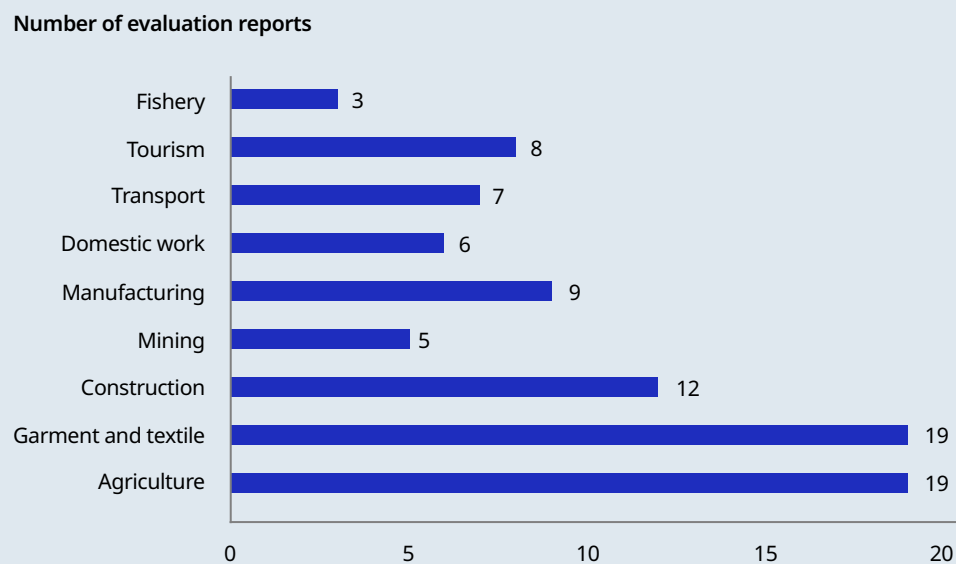
► Annex 3. Overview of evaluation reports selected for the synthesis review

Of the 53 evaluation reports selected, a majority addressed multiple thematic areas simultaneously, reflecting the integrated nature of the Decent Work Agenda. While social dialogue featured in all the reports, it was a key thematic focus in 15 reports. Social protection was addressed as one of the key themes in 20 reports, with 18 of these also focusing on occupational safety and health (OSH). Rights at work were a central theme in 29 reports. Employment creation, including issues such as skills development and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), featured as a thematic focus area in 8 reports. In addition, labour administration was a thematic focus in 6 reports, the informal economy in 4 reports, and gender equality was highlighted as a specific thematic focus in 3 reports.

The geographic and sectoral coverage of the selected evaluation reports is shown respectively in Table A.2 and Figure A.1. That's useful for showing patterns within specific themes, sectors or regions, but it also creates a limitation. Indeed, not every theme, sector or region is equally covered, so the weight of evidence can differ, limiting comparability and generalizability. To mitigate this, the study applied a qualitative representation approach, focusing on drawing insights about what works in particular contexts. Table A.3, provides an overview of all the selected reports including some project specific information.

Table A.2: Geographical repartition of the reviewed ILO interventions

Region/continent	Number of interventions by countries/regions/continent (note: inclusion of multi-country interventions explain that the number of countries exceeds the number of evaluation report)
Africa	20 countries Cabo Verde (1), Cameroon (1), Malawi (2), Niger (1), Senegal (2), Togo (2), Zambia (1), Ghana (1), Tanzania (1), Ethiopia (7), Madagascar (5), Kenya (1), Mozambique (3), Ivory Coast (2), Morocco (1), Namibia (1), Mali (1) Egypt (4), Algeria (2), Tunisia (3)
Latin America	13 countries Brazil (1), Dominican Republic (1), El Salvador (1), Honduras (3), Paraguay (2), Peru (3), Mexico (3), Colombia (4), Bolivia (1), Nicaragua (1), Guatemala (2), Argentina (1), Uruguay (1)
Asia	15 countries Vietnam (10), Philippines (3), Indonesia (11), Bangladesh (8), Cambodia (7), India (5), Myanmar (9), Nepal (5), Pakistan (4), Sri Lanka (4), Thailand (2), Lao PDR (6), Malaysia (2), China (1), Timor-Leste (1)
Pacific	5 countries Fiji (2), Palau (1), Tonga (1), Samoa (1), Vanuatu (2)
Europe and Central Asia	5 countries Kyrgyzstan (1), Georgia (2), Turkey (2), Kosovo (1), Ukraine (1), Uzbekistan (1)
Arab States	9 countries Occupied Palestinian territory (2), Jordan (4), Lebanon (4), Iraq (2), Qatar (1), Kuwait (1), Bahrain (1), Syria (1), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1),

Figure A.1: Coverage of economic sectors by the selected evaluation reports¹¹

¹¹ Table 2 does not provide an exhaustive overview of all economic sectors featuring across the evaluation reports; Only the more recurrent economic sectors are shown.

Table A.3. List of selected evaluation reports

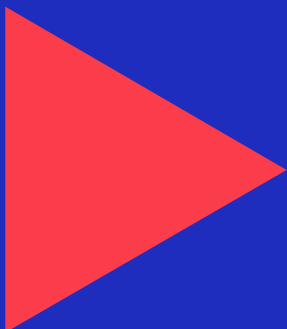
Project ID	Evaluation title	Regions	Countries	Timing	Performance assessment SD*
BGD1503MUL	Promoting social dialogue and harmonious industrial relations in Bangladesh ready-made garment industry - Final Evaluation	Asia	Bangladesh	Final	4
BGD1905MUL	Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-Made Garment Sector Programme Phase 2 (RMGP II) and Building Responsible Value Chains in Asia through the Promotion of Decent Work in Business Operations – Bangladesh country component	Asia	Bangladesh	Final	2
BRA1750BRA	Promocion y cumplimiento de los Principos y Derechos Fundamentales en el trabajo en Brasil - Midterm evaluation	Americas	Brazil	Midterm	4
CMB1253USA	Better Factories Cambodia, Better Work Indonesia, and Better Work Vietnam Programmes - Midterm cluster evaluation	Asia	Asia - Regional	Midterm	4
DOM1701USA	Support efforts to combat child labor and improve working conditions in agriculture in Dominican Republic - Midterm evaluation	Americas	Dominican Republic	Midterm	2
EGY1102CAN	Decent employment for youth project in Egypt - Final Evaluation	Africa	Egypt	Final	1
ETH1502SID	Improving industrial relations for decent work and sustainable development of textile and garment industries in Ethiopia - Final Cluster Evaluation	Africa	Ethiopia	Final	3
ETH1701MUL	Advancing Decent Work and Inclusive Industrialisation in Ethiopia (ONEILO-SIRAYE Programme)	Africa	Ethiopia	Final	4
Flagship Social Prot. floors	Independent evaluation of the first phase of the ILO global flagship programme on building social protection floors for all (2016 – 2020)	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	3
GEO1302USA	Improved compliance with labour laws in the Republic of Georgia - Final evaluation	Europe and Central Asia	Georgia	Final	3
GLO1445BRA	Cooperación Sur-Sur para la Promoción del Trabajo Decente en los Países Productores de Algodón de África y América Latina - Evaluación Medio Término	Americas	Brazil	Midterm	4
GLO1650MUL	Vision Zero Fund – Collective Action for Safe and Healthy Supply Chains - Cluster midterm evaluation	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Midterm	4
GLO1754MUL	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, Phase III - Final evaluation	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	2
GLO1755MUL	Better Work Global – Phase IV - Final cluster evaluation	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	3
GLO1838EUR	Final Independent Evaluation of EU-funded Better Work Programmes in Sri Lanka and Madagascar (Phase I)	Asia	Bangladesh	Final	4
GLO1859SWE	Promoting safe work and workplace compliance including in global supply chains	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	3

GLO2020MUL	Protecting garment sector workers: occupational safety and health and income support in response to the COVID-19 pandemic - Final evaluation	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	2
GLO2026NOR	THE ILO-NORWAY PROGRAMME COOPERATION AGREEMENTS ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (2016-2023)	Global	Global	Final	2
GLO2040EUR	Sustainable supply chains to build forward better: Decent work in five global supply chains of key importance to the European Union	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	4
High-level evaluation FPRW	Independent high-level evaluation of the ILO's strategies and actions to promote fundamental principles and rights at work, 2018-23	Global	Global	Final	4
IDN2101JPN	Enhancing COVID-19 Prevention at and through Workplaces - Final evaluation	Asia	Indonesia	Final	3
INT1703UNW	EU-UNW-ILO Strengthening the resilience of Syrian women and girls in host communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey - Midterm Evaluation	Europe and Central Asia	Türkiye	Midterm	3
IRQ2003EUR	Enhancing Labour Governance, Inspection and Working Conditions In Response to COVID-19 Phase I in Iraq - Final evaluation	Arab States	Iraq	Final	3
KEN1701SWE	Inclusive Growth through Decent Work in the Great Rift Valley - Midterm Evaluation	Africa	Kenya	Midterm	3
KHM1701JPN	Enhancing Occupational Safety and Health Standards in the Construction Sector in Cambodia - Final evaluation	Asia	Cambodia	Final	3
LA02101EUR	Reducing vulnerability in Lao PDR: Advancing social protection and labour rights and entitlements in the coffee and tea sectors of Lao PDR	Asia	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Final	3
MEX2005USA	Improving workers' occupational safety and health in the chili pepper and tomato supply chains, with a focus in Jalisco – A Vision Zero Fund Project	Americas	Mexico	Midterm	3
MMR1601MUL	Improving labour relations for decent work and sustainable development in the Myanmar garment industry - Final evaluation	Asia	Myanmar	Final	3
MMR1651MUL	Vision Zero Fund - Myanmar - Midterm evaluation	Asia	Myanmar	Midterm	3
MMR1902JPN	Safety + Health for All Workers in Myanmar - Final evaluation	Asia	Myanmar	Final	3
MOZ16001SWE	Decent work for sustainable and inclusive economic transformation in Mozambique - Final Evaluation	Africa	Mozambique	Final	4
MYS1601USA	Improving labour laws and labour administration for new industrial relations framework in full respect of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work - Final evaluation	Asia	Malaysia	Final	4
NPL1701GBR	ILO Technical Assistance Component – Skills for Employment Program (FCDO-SEP Project) - Final evaluation	Asia and the Pacific	Nepal	Final	3

OSH Flagship evaluation	ILO's Safety + Health for All Flagship Programme - Final thematic evaluation	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	4
PAK1603EUR	International labour and environmental standards application in Pakistan's SMEs (ILES) - Midterm Evaluation	Asia	Pakistan	Midterm	3
RAB1503CHE	Fair migration in the Middle East (FAIRWAY) - Final Evaluation	Arab States	Arab States - regional	Final	3
RAF1653FRA	Améliorer la gouvernance du travail dans les TPE/PME et aider à la sortie de l'économie informelle en Afrique - Final evaluation	Africa	Africa - regional	Final	2
RAF1705FIN	The Way Forward after the Revolution: Decent Work for Women in Egypt and Tunisia (DWW) - Phase II - Midterm evaluation	Africa	Egypt	Midterm	3
RAS1355UKM	Fair recruitment and decent work for women migrant workers in South Asia and the Middle East - Regional Component - Final Evaluation	Arab States	Jordan	Final	3
RAS1605USC	OSH for young workers and employers in global supply chains: Building a culture of prevention - Final Independent Evaluation	Asia	Asia - regional	Final	3
RAS1611USA	Sea Fisheries: Strengthened Coordination to Combat Labour Exploitation and Trafficking in Fisheries in Southeast Asia - Final evaluation	Asia	Asia regional	Final	3
RAS1706JPN	Towards fair and sustainable global supply chains: Promoting formalization and decent work for invisible workers in South Asia - Final evaluation	Asia	Asia - regional	Final	4
RAS1750DEU	Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains – Programme of Action for Asia and the Garment Sector	Asia	Asia - regional	Final	3
RAS1904GBR	Asia Regional Child Labour Programme - Final evaluation	Asia	Asia - regional	Final	3
RAS2007USA	Improving Workers Rights in Rural Sectors of the Indo-Pacific with a focus on Women - Midterm evaluation	Asia	Asia - regional	Midterm	4
RAS2053UND	Inclusive Economic Recovery through Sustainable Enterprises in the Informal Economies of Fiji, Palau, Tonga, and Vanuatu - Final joint evaluation	Pacific	Fiji	Final	3
RLA1808EUR	Independent Clustered Evaluation of Vision Zero Fund projects in the global coffee supply chain	Inter-Regional	Inter-Regional	Final	3
SAU1801SAU	Supporting Ministry of Labour and Social Development in analysis, policy and capacity development - Final evaluation	Arab States	Saudi Arabia	Final	3
SYR1601RBS	Enhanced capacity of government and social partners to reduce child labour and improve occupational safety and health in Syria	Arab States	Syria	Final	3

Pacific labour law Thematic Evaluation	ILO's Technical Assistance on Labour Law Reform in Pacific Island Countries (2012-2018) - Thematic independent evaluation	Pacific	Pacific - regional	Final	3
TUR1801DEU	Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens - Midterm evaluation	Europe and Central Asia	Türkiye	Midterm	2
UKR1901EUR	Towards safe, healthy and declared work in Ukraine - Final evaluation	Europe and Central Asia	Ukraine	Final	3
INT2002EUR	Social dialogue for formalization and employability in the Southern Neighbourhood Region (SOLIFEM) - Midterm evaluation	Arab States	Arab States - Regional	Midterm	3

(* Performance assessment in relation to embeddedness of social dialogue in project design: (1) unsuccessful, (2) partly successful, (3) Successful, (4) highly successful)



Learn more



www.ilo.org/eval



eval@ilo.org



ILO_EVAL



ILO_EVALUATION