CONTRIBUTES OF THE HUNGARIAN PROJECT - SWITCHING TO LOCAL

Methodology

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Content

CONTEXT

Berwin Clothes Factory Ltd (clothing manufacturing company), situated in the Vásárosnamény region, closed, leaving 540 workers unemployed, mostly women. Approximately 35.000 people live in the city where the company was situated, the town is located in the junction of the rivers, Tisza, Szamos and Kraszna, 60 kilometres from Nyíregyháza and 20 kilometres from the Ukrainian border, in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, in the Great Planes of Northern Hungary. This is one of the poorest regions in the country. In the last couple of years, the population living in this region has suffered from unemployment, furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has worsen the situation. In April of 2021, in the city of Vásárosnamény, 8% of the active population was unemployed. The closure of Berwin Clothes Factory Ltd left its workers unemployed and to be absorbed by other micro and small companies that are a part of different sectors and located in nearby towns.

With the closure of the company, the activities of its Union disappeared and as the former workers move to other micro and small companies, this Union struggled to keep contact with them. In the current context, the challenge facing the Union and Local Union Leaders is "How can the Union maintain communication and follow-up with these workers" in a context of constant changes in which workers are easily confronted with a situation of change in their professional life, they are forced to change companies, change their professional activities and even change cities. How should Unions act so that workers, when confronted with these situations, are informed of their rights and be collectively organized and, even more, do not lose the close support of the Union.

The methodology proposal presented here is intended to be a reflection on 4 essential themes to support the Union and its leaders in the development of their activity, namely in terms of Social Dialogue and Negotiation, Communication and Guidance of their associates in a situation of unemployment or potential unemployment:

1. **PRACTICE OF ASSESSMENT, PREPOSITION, SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND BIPARTITE NEGOTIATION WITH COMPANIES OR TRIPARTITE WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS;**
2. **COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND MONITORING OF ASSOCIATES AND POTENTIAL ASSOCIATES;**
3. **GUIDANCE, TRAINING AND INSERTION IN UNEMPLOYED SITUATION OF WORKERS.**

1. PRACTICE OF ASSESSMENT, PREPOSITION, SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND BIPARTITE NEGOTIATION WITH COMPANIES OR TRIPARTITE WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

The ways of acting and intervening on a daily basis by Unions must be, simultaneously, proponent and claimant with determining factors for the defence of the interests and rights of workers, a valuable contribution to the development processes of societies, but also capable of informing and mobilizing workers to fight for their interests.

The proponent action of Unions is the most important, not only because of the credibility it gives, but also for the influence that it exerts again public and private powers.

It is in the context of intervention of unionized action that Social Dialogue is conceived, as well as Social Partnerships and Negotiation. Social Dialogue and Partnerships cannot be interpreted as a synonym of peace and labour harmony.

They involve, firstly, the recognition of the different social interests of workers and employers; secondly, in a reciprocal acceptance and in fact of encouragement of the collective representation of these interests; thirdly, the aspiration that the organization can provide an effective basis for the regulation of employment relations and the labor market.

A Union is not an end of itself. The Union can only justify itself is it contributes to the betterment of the economic, social and labour conditions of its workers, while impeding at the same time social regression and an increase in inequality.

An effective participation of Unions implies an intervention that allows bipartite or tripartite negotiation, allow the timely submission of proposals and their defence and negotiation, in order to be able to influence employment relationships and policies. An effective institutional participation demands that Union autonomy, independence and responsibility, characteristics that are only possible with strong Union Organization who are influential among the workers.

2. COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND MONITORING OF ASSOCIATES AND POTENTIAL ASSOCIATES

Similar to big corporations, who are constantly innovation in the way they communication and link their consumers to their products, and to their brand, Unions must also keep changing and adapting.

What companies currently do to maintain their communications channels open with their costumers is that they allow them to be the ones to pick what platform best suits their costumers, be it locally through a store, at a distance through an internet website and/or social media, through an applications installed on their smart phone and/or through a phone call. Through this, companies eliminate factors that might function as an obstacle in maintaining their costumers linked to them.

Union activities in big companions, normally, are less complex for the Unions because they can easily (even if conditions are not guaranteed within the company, they can do it at the company's door) a press release or other informational material to a large number of workers; they can also hide a large number of workers because they are all concentrated in one space.

As such, it is more profitable for Union communication because they only need to go to a single place and it is more practical for the workers because the Union goes to them and if necessary, and if necessary, they can schedule a new contact again at the company or another public or private space or at the union premises.

If we evaluate the current situation where 540 workers stopped being concentrated in a single place and are geographically disperse through smaller companies and in different regions, it becomes impractical to keep utilizing the same communication method with the workers because it implies the transportation of the Union to an abstract 540, or more, places to keep in touch with the same 540 workers.

This way, the Union needs, without devaluing its physical interaction, various communication platforms available to workers that allows each individual to choose the platform that best suits them best to keep communication with the union open.

2.1. HOW TO COMMUNCATE

New technologies have improved the way people communicate, and it is important for Unions to utilize these tools so that they can also direct their communication through the channels that today's workers.

It is extremely important that workers feel the presence of the Union through a message, an e-mail, an announcement, or a different type of document. This close proximity creates a trust in the support that the Union can provide at any moment to workers and, more importantly, it allows these workers to pass the informal message to other workers of the work developed by the Union.

Managing a constant presence is important, but it needs to be kept in mind that when the communication is exaggerated, abusive and forgoes the themes that the worker identifies the Union with, it can lead to the end of these channels of communication with the Union or the worker leaving the Union entirely.

Workers are bombarded daily with information and propaganda, be it through informative pamphlets in their mail box, advertisements in e-mail, phone applications, social media messages, among others. The availability and attention worker in the face of so much information received is not much and that is why they increasingly select the shortest messages to direct their attention to. As such, it is of the utmost importance that the messages received by workers must be objective, short and concise.

An important factor is that the Union communication must always have an adjacent goal. This goal will orientated the organization in defining the means and tools necessary for the implementation of this communication strategy, not neglecting the focus of communication and the use of concise and simple language.

2.2. PHYSICAL COMMUNICATION

It is necessary the existence of a physical space to welcome workers and that during the interaction the workers obtain with rigor, clarity and confidence answers to the questions and problems raised. The existence of a physical space communicates safety and confidence to the workers utilizing it, since it allows them to community directly, and face-to-face, with someone. To many people the visual reference of a face can lead to a correlation to the organization, this is very important in providing them with feelings of security and safety in the institution.

It is crucial that this space has the necessary means to receive people and, at the same time, guarantees a timely response. It is necessary to transmit confidence to workers in need of help and if the worker made the effort to go to the to the union premises, it is very important that the message given corresponds to their expectations, that the issues raised by the worker are fully explained, so that they feel confident, motivated and share with other workers the way in which the Union received them and dealt with their questions, thus promoting their loyalty and motivating other workers through the sharing of information of the unionization.

2.3. REMOTE COMMUNICATION – New communication technologies: new behaviours

New technologies have altered the way we communication and behave. With the accessibility of the internet and of mobile devices, such as a cell phone or a tablet, communication travels at an impressive speed. The use of these tools is of extreme importance to Unions, so that they can direct their communication through channels used by today's workers.

It is imperative to ensure that Unions have a strong presence in this type of communication. It is important to have a web page, updated and with simple communication elements, where the goal and ends of the Union can be easily transmitted and absorbed by the worker while at the same time making it so it is easy to spread this information by the workers, whether it is through their contacts or have it be posted on social media.

In this way, the worker is also working as an active agent for disseminating the Union's image, and communication, to its entire network of contacts. Furthermore, this tool allows workers that may not have the means to visit the Union premises to still have access to the Union, and if they are happy with the information they have received, they can easily spread it further.

These tools are only effective if they're kept up-to-date. If the information that is present in these platforms is not updated, workers quickly lose any faith in the platform, stop accessing and trusting it. This leads to the image, and confidence, placed on the Union to be diminished, as well as spread misinformation, for example, about their labour rights and duties, thus directly harming them.

Relative to the on-line presence of the Union, it is necessary that the web page's design is responsive and capable of adapting to the different devices (like computers, tablets, or smart phones) and that it has the capability to harbour dynamic content that allows interaction with the user. The page should also allow for graphics, documents, videos, digital documents, newsletters, and a section for frequently asked questions.

The web page should also have a part that is dedicated to publicity, which is destined to the general audience, and that it incorporates translation tools for multiple languages, namely English, and a private part, that focuses on the Union associates, giving them access to privileged information.

All the topics defined in this document should be available in any of the selected channels by the associates or potential associates. However, there are topics that are exclusive. However, there are topics that are exclusively accessible by the members and other topics of a more general scope that are likely to be accessed by the members and the potential members.

Topics for Communication between the Union and its Associates and Potential Associates:

- The advantages of being unionized;
- Rights and duties of Associates;
- Schedule of Union public activities;
- Information about the companies and the sector;
- Appreciation of the results achieved by union intervention;
- Information and critical assessment of economic, social, environmental and other measures of interest to the organs of power.

Topics for Communication between the Union and its Associates

- Union Schedule of activities that associates can participate;
- Quotation information (monthly fees, payment, methods of payment);
- Results of Collective Bargaining, sector and company;
- Rights and duties of workers by sector;
- Labour rights emanating from General Law and Instruments of Collective Labour Regulation (ICLR);
- Social rights in the area of social security, health, education and labour taxes;

- Parenting rights;
- Rights for workplace accidents and occupational diseases;
- Information and legal support about work law suits, work accidents and occupational diseases;
- Information to support active job search (how to elaborate a CV, or a presentation letter, how to find job offers, tools of orientation, training and insertion, etc);
- Continuous professional training and professional retraining;
- Job offers;
- Information and support about State obligations (e.g. IRS);
- Helpful links to public, or private, organizations related to work;
- Partnership with service providers (insurance, health, culture, leisure, tourism, among others).

This presence should also be ensured by linking the page to social media, through the use of hash tags (which allow the tag of content by themes) and that will make it possible to disseminate the image of the Union, communication and updates regarding the Union activities that are being carried out, negotiated labor and social rights, giving greater visibility to the work carried out by the Union.

Examples of tools that can be utilized:
The union can use social media, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Linkedin to be closer to the associate and/or potential associate, or through a Youtube channel that in addition to including videos promoted by the Union, allows to attend live meetings and other Union initiatives, with the participation of workers, as well as other on-line guests.

Not any less important, in the case the Union has the these means, it should implement a mobile application that allow to concentrate these contents in order to guarantee an interaction with the recipients of the communication, in a simple way that easily reaches the mobile phones of all those who have the application installed.

2.4. COMMUNICATION ANYWHERE

In the communication model we have highlighted, there are only two ways, a direct, one with an immediate response, through a telephone contact in which the worker or the

Union communicate directly with each other, or an indirect way, through a message from the worker or the Union that may or may not need a response.

In the first case, communication via a phone call occurs within a pre-determined time interval, normally during Union business hours or outside Union business hours, through a Union representative available, when one of the sides needs an immediate answer. On the part of the worker, when they need to make an appointment, raise a problem that occurred at the company, request information regarding their employment contract, or by the Union if they need information from the worker to follow up on any process that is in progress.

In these situations, it is necessary to guarantee availability to receive the phone call and, if it is not possible to answer at the moment, ensure that the call is returned. In case the telephone does not have voice mail, one with this feature should be adopted to ensure the worker whose phone call was left unanswered can be contacted later on behalf of the Union. It is important, once again, to reinforce the image of trust and responsiveness that the worker creates about the Union.

Examples of tools that can be utilized:
The Union can create an organizational contact through the WhatsApp application and incorporate it into their web page. The Whatsapp application allows for an instant communication of users, associates or potential associates, and has a significant impact over traditional channels, like e-mail or telephone number.

In the second case, the communication does not demand an automatic response and there may not even be a need for one. This communication could happen outside of business hours of the Union and it is normally through a message. In the case of the worker who, outside the business hours of the Union, sent a message asking for information that does not require a response at that time, might expect to have a response the next day. Or when the worker sent a message to the Union to confirm some information requested by the Union and is not expecting to get a response by the said Union. In this situations, and once the workers are familiarized with the use of smart phone, it is important that they have access to a communication channel that allows them to share messages with the organization at any moment of the day.

Communication can also be assured through a mobile application that workers can download from the Union page and install on their smart phones, or through an e-mail account.

In the current context, the use of a mobile application can be more interesting for the Union because it can use it to also spread to workers helpful information, new wages, or participation in the Union struggle, and that easily makes a notification appear on the workers' mobile phone screen and thus gives more visibility to the information that is being shared. In the case of the existence of a mobile application, the e-mail should not be discarded. Both tools can, and should coexist, thus giving workers the ability to choose which communication method they prefer.

In this case it is important to ensure that all forms of communication received by the Union, be it through e-mail, telephone, messages, or others, are all answered to and that some feedback is given to the sender of the message so that they can feel that the Union is always presented and that their questions are properly answered.

3. ORIENTATION, TRAINING AND INSERTION IN SITUATION OF WORKER UNEMPLOYMENT

The solution that we present in this methodology is the systematization of a set of tried and illustrated "guidelines," under the SAPE project, financed by the Equal Community Initiative (Iniciativa Comunitária Equal) (nº 2004/EQUAL/A2/EM/037), of an Orientation, Formation and Insertion (Orientação, Formação e Inserção – OFI) route centred in empowerment, that is, centred in the acknowledgement and development of the capabilities of the recipients and in providing them with the means to get involved and participate, in a qualified manner, in the decision-making process and action on their professional and life paths. The concept of empower is approach at different levels (individual, social and collectively) and from different perspectives (psychological, organizational, social, ethic, collectively and politically).

The concept of empowerment is transversal to all measures and intervention areas of its projects and it can be definite as a collective of strategies that lead to taking charge of decisions and action by the recipients of a given intervention. It is directly relation to responsibility (increases the responsibility of beneficiaries and participants in a given action), sharing (implies the delegation of decision-making powers to all those who are influenced by it) and active and comprehensive participation (implies the direct involvement of recipients at all stages of a given intervention – from need recognition, to design, development and evaluation).

Intervention phases:
1. **Reception of the final beneficiaries –** Integration of the beneficiaries, through the practice of Coaching in the project. This phase should be developed by the team that supports the Professional and Social Reinsertion Processes engaging the beneficiaries.
2. **Adhesion of the final beneficiaries –** Moment to fill in the Registration Form and sign the Adhesion Agreement, which is assumed as a commitment between the project and the beneficiary.
3. **Group Sessions and Individual Session -** Presentation in a collective session of the contents of the balance of competences and scheduling with each beneficiary of the individual sessions.
4. **Training and Personal and Social Development (PSD) –** Considering the characteristics of the beneficiaries (low level of education, repetitive activities, repetitive and without any autonomy and without any knowledge of any

Information and Communication Technology), this beneficiaries should be organized by groups, and supported by the ICT, should acquire notions of citizenship, communication and interpersonal relationships, job search techniques and motivation, in a way that by the end a solid psychological structure is created that induces an active, decisive and confident attitude towards the challenges of professional reintegration.

5. **Conciliation of work and family life –** the goal of this stage is a reflection and sharing of situation and experiences, stimulating individual and group participation about the conciliation of work and family life, the goal is to promote equal rights at work and in the family, the balanced distribution of tasks, the appreciation of others and the promotion of personal and family well-being.

6. **Life Project and Departures (insertion on behalf of others or creation of own job)** - The goal of this stage is to give the beneficiaries, according to their life, personal, professional and social experience, their wish for the future and the skills acquired in this project. In other words, with technical support, the beneficiaries search and analyze available resources and possible solutions, through their (re)insertion into the labor market through obtaining a job for others or through the creation of their own job or through the increase of skills, be it through professional training, education or an internship.

These phases should be operated according to the following flowchart:

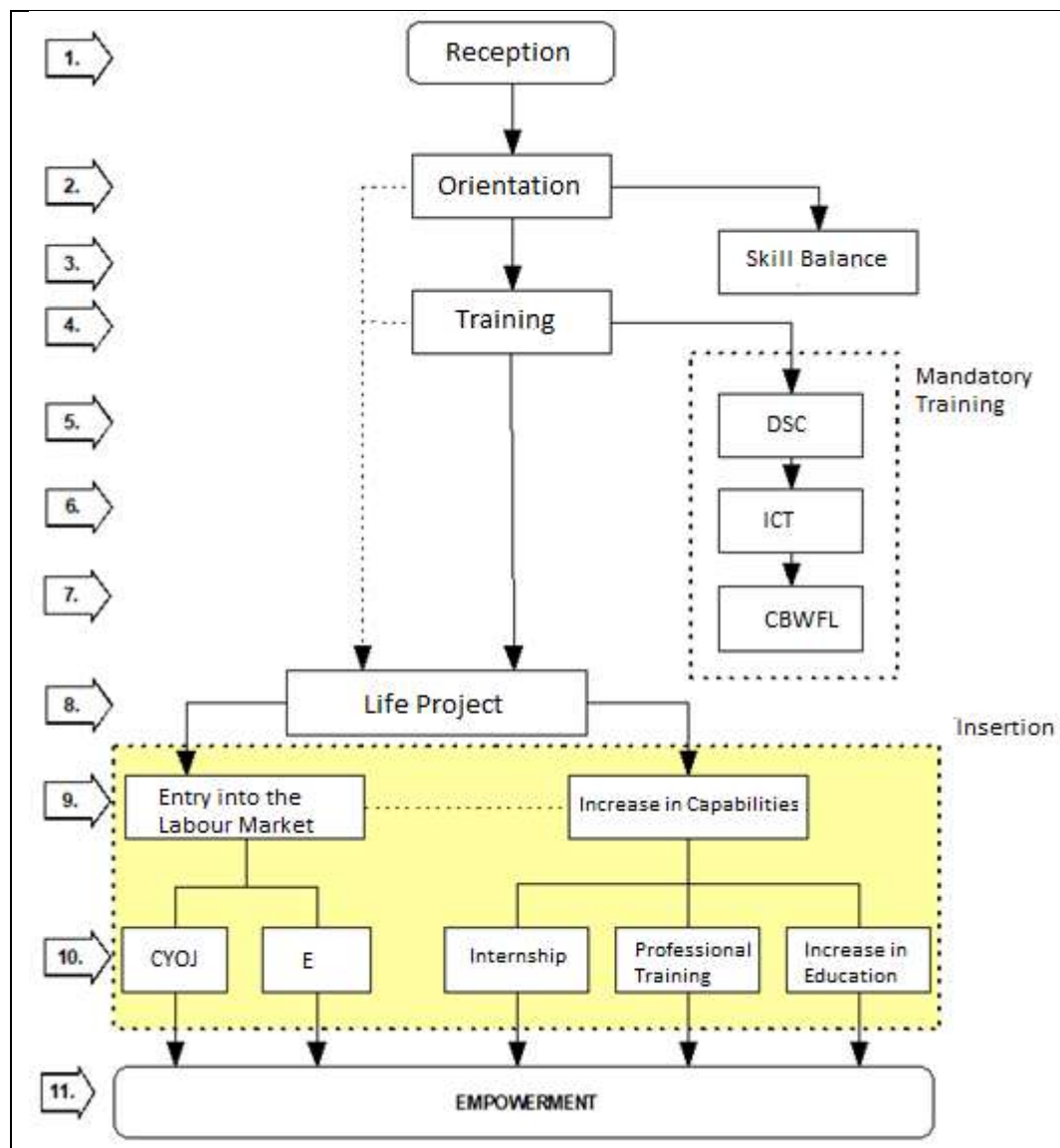| FLUXOGRAMA	Description
	1. During reception, it should be explained to the beneficiaries that the project's final objective is to promote the Empowerment of the unemployed, giving them the opportunity to actively participate in building their own life project.
	2. Design and structuring of solutions to support the realization of the life project of the final beneficiaries.
	3. The Skills Balance is carried out in 12 stages supported by instruments for exploring the balance sheet itself.
	4. Acquisition and mastery of competencies related to Social and Personal Development (SPD), Information and Communication Technology (ICT); conciliation between work and family life (CBWFL).
	5. With the duration of 28 hours, this training has the objective to develop social capabilities (DSC) of citizenship, communication and interpersonal relationship.
	6. With the duration of 12 hours, it focuses greatly in the use of new technologies, with particular attention to the use of the internet. ICT - Information and Communication Technology
	7. The sessions are orientated towards reflection, alongside their spouses, about the conciliation between work and family life (CBWFL)
	8. With this document, the final beneficiary defines their goal in life and gains better understanding of the path they will have to follow to achieve their own goals.
	9. The defined path goes through different mechanisms of insertion and always focuses on a Balance of Competencies.

	10. The exits presented allow the same final beneficiaries to define their life project, with a single or multiple possibilities, for example, the attendance of training actions for the creation of one's own job.
	CYOJ – Creation Your Own Job
	E - Employee

1. — Reception

2. — Orientation — Skill Balance

3.

4. — Training

5. — Mandatory Training — DSC

6. — ICT

7. — CBWFL

8. — Life Project

9. — Entry into the Labour Market / Increase in Capabilities — Insertion

10. — CYOJ / E / Internship / Professional Training / Increase in Education

11. — EMPOWERMENT

11. The entire road of the final beneficiaries in this project is based on the principles of Empowerment. In fact, Empowerment is not only a defined goal, but also a philosophy of personal actualization a way of interacting with the surroundings, a way of overcoming the difficulties that arise. In the development of the project the goal is not to treat empower in itself, but to use independently the factores that structures it and are underlie it.

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