Regional research study on EO's capacity to develop and adapt member services and promote evidence-based policy recommendation

Vanessa Phala
Senior Specialist, Employers’ Activities
International Labour Organisation
IOE Sub-Regional Meeting: Promoting youth employability and skills development in the Caribbean
14 November 2019, Aruba
Objectives of the Study

- Assess the capacity of EOs to develop and adapt services that adequately respond to members needs;
- Identify key services offers to assess common services, and potential for EO/EO collaboration;
- Assess EOs analytical capacity to better understand and anticipate changing business realities and to promote more evidence-based policies and regulations;
- Identify employment and labour issues of interest and concern for the EOs in the region.
Background & Scope

Survey administered by Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business, UWI, St Augustine
Data collection commenced in October 2019

The scope of the research covers 13 Employers Organisations from the ILO Members States as follows:

- Antigua and Barbuda Employers’ Federation
- Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers’ Confederation
- Barbados Employers’ Confederation
- Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Dominica Employers’ Federation
- Employers’ Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Grenada Employers’ Federation
- Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry
- Jamaica Employers’ Federation
- St Lucia Employers’ Federation
- St Kitts-Nevis Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- St Vincent Employers’ Federation
- Suriname Trade and Industry Association
Purpose of Collecting Data

• Deeper understanding of EO’s capacity and constraints
• Inform the development of the 2020/2021 Work Plan for the sub-region
• Design and Implement a responsive technical assistance to EO’s
• Inform future research on key labour and employment issues to support EOs policy advocacy initiatives.
Survey Results
Average number of Employees among Regional Employer Organizations

- Greater than 15
- 11 to 15
- 6 to 10
- 0 to 5

No of Employees
Membership

http://www.ilo.org
Membership Type

Manufacturing, Consumer Goods and Services, Financial Services, Food and Beverage

Information Communication Technology and telecommunication
Agriculture, Maritime, Transportation and Logistics
Construction
Media printing and publishing
Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology
Membership Type %

Percentage

- Food and Beverage
- Financial Services
- Consumer goods
- Manufacturing
- ICT
- Agriculture
- Transportation and Logistics
- Maritime
- Security
- Pharmaceuticals and biotechnology
- Media, publishing
- Construction
- Public Sector
- Other

http://www.ilo.org
Membership Growth
Service Offering

Services Offered

- Training
- Representation
- Technical and Advisory services
- Consultancy services
- Advocacy
Types of Training

- HRM, Industrial Relations
- Labour Law, Finance, Auditing
- Inventory Management, Customer services
- Business and Management Related Training
- Mediation, leadership, motivation, Business advisory
- OSHA
- Business plan writing
Lobbying and Advocacy

- Revised legislation, liberalization of statutory restrictions and employment rights acts
- Sustainable enterprises
  Occupational Safety and Health Management
- Government partnership and national stakeholders

Revision of the Employment Relations Act

National minimum wage, Child Labour
Labour Hazardous List, Women and Work
Workplace Diversity

Industrial Act, Retrenchment and Severance Benefits Act
Current Projects

- Launch of EOSH training
- Register as a CVQ Centre and delivering qualifications
- Building Climate Resilient Structures
- Skills Gap Analysis in specific sectors
- Strategic Planning
- Women in Business Survey
Project Implementation

- **Outsource**: 6 (60%)
- **In House Staff**: 8 (80%)
- **Jointly branded with other organizations**: 6 (60%)
## Emerging Policy Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Labour</td>
<td>Future of work in respective countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modernization of Labour Legislation</td>
<td>National Minimum wage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Diversity</td>
<td>Changing retirement age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health in the workplace</td>
<td>Traffic congestion/decent work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Constraints</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preliminary Findings

• **Internal challenges and obstacles** are not peculiar to the Caribbean, other regions experience the same challenges
  – Human Resources
  – Financial sustainability
  – Attracting new membership
  – Staff retention

• **External Challenges**
  – Evolving Labour Relations Environment (modernization of labour laws)
  – Social dialogue Mechanism
  – Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (Ease of doing business)
  – Productivity improvements
Preliminary Findings

- Membership
  - Reflective of sectoral representation in country
  - No substantial growth in membership despite opportunities to increase membership size
  - Some organization have experienced a slight decline in membership
  - Linked to overall economic climate
  - Significant competition for members by other sectoral chambers and employers’ associations.
  - Need to improve marketing and disseminate work done – A clear distinction of services offered could possibly contribute to increased membership growth as potential members will be aware of what they can gain through these associations.
  - Cost of membership
  - Maitaining value proposition
Preliminary Findings

Training

– The training that is offered changes to meet the demands of trending labour and employment features or to meet the demands of the local employment and labour climate.

– The training provided is reflective of changing global labour trends, but more specifically fit the needs of the respective local economies.

– Training is one area that is responsive to the changing needs and emerging national issues.

– International capacity is evident

– Still largely traditional thematic areas for training i.e. leadership, customer service, OSH, industrial relations, mediation, business plan writing,

– More need to be done to invest and build capacity to offer training in other areas (disaster management.)
Preliminary Findings

- **Financial Sustainability**
  - Membership fees and training main contributors to the overall budget
  - Need to explore other sources of funding (Commission research, salary surveys, space rental)

- **Human Resources Capacity**
  - Technical capacity exists
  - Board members contribution (internal committees, tripartite committees)
Preliminary Findings

• EO to EO collaboration (Sub-regional Collaboration)
  – EOs share information on pertinent issues (legislation, social dialogue mechanisms)
  – There is potential for collaboration between EOs in service offering in order to transfer skills and build internal capacity particularly in areas such as OSH, Skills Gap Analysis, Disaster Preparedness and Management
  – Is this kind of collaboration possible?
  – What can facilitate such collaboration?
Preliminary Findings

- **Advocacy & Lobbying**
  - Labour and Employment legislation
  - Tripartite representation
  - Some evidence of research being done to support advocacy initiatives
  - Emerging good practices (skills gap, membership surveys, compensation surveys)
  - Need to improve and increase dissemination efforts (press release, publications, usage of social media platforms, collaborate with research institutions and building synergy with organisations sharing similar concerns, utilise key board members as advocates on certain issues)
Preliminary Findings

• Advocacy & Lobbying
  – Need to build internal capacity to lobby on economic and environmental issues in addition to traditional mandate in social policy and in social dialogue issues
Preliminary Findings

• Emergent Policy Issues
  – Labour migration
  – Workplace diversity
  – Mental health in the workplace
  – Future of work

• Other key policy issues??

• Need to identify key policy areas for in-depth research to build Employer’s policy positions
FURTHER COMMENTS?