

2.3 How can we help companies in broader fields such as risk management ?

In many countries, the employers' organisations have not a lot of capacity in advising or accompanying company members in the business development as such, ranging from general strategy development, to specific managerial functions such as finance, marketing, production, quality and ITC.

Traditionally, the core competencies were rather situated in "collective" services (services for a group of companies) and in labour law and social dialogue, as being the core competencies. Later on this was extended in a number of employers' organisations to the neighboring field of Human Resources management.

Having said so, the markets develop and more and more member companies need such services. The service consultancy offer is wide and descends from the Big Four consultancy firms, to many smaller companies specializing in general or specific business advice.

If employers' organisations have not been involved before in such types of business advice, it is in our opinion too late to develop this types of services now, even if the markets would need them strongly, and even if the market would not always need top level services (at top notch prices). It is too late because the development of such services needs quite some time. And because a certain quality needs to be guaranteed in order to avoid bad reputation and deception with members.

However, some limited options to respond to the needs of some members are available.

1) Analysis tool for risk assessment

The ILO published recently, and especially at the occasion of the COVID-19 crisis, a tool which can be distributed via employers' organisations. It enables companies, and especially SME's, to do a rather simple risk assessment exercise to map the effects and possible issues linked with the pandemic.

It is a tool which invites companies, and especially SMEs to map better the risks they may incur with COVID19 in the management of the company. It maps risks in supply, demand, staff, finances and so on.

The employers' organisation can market this tool, or organize a webinar around these tools. This can be very useful, also for the lobbying staff, to have concrete input on the issues which are felt by the companies concretely.

The danger is of course existing that the risk management exercise may also incite companies to expect the employers' organisation to help with the solutions of identified risks.

[Explore the publications of ILO ACTEMP on risk management](#)

2) Partnerships

If the employers' organisation does not feel comfortable with venturing in management advice, it can refer to, or partner itself with advisory firms in that field. By negotiating collectively, it may also try to get a discount for its members.

Partnerships with PUM, the Dutch initiative to send senior retired experts to emerging countries, (see <https://www.pum.nl/en>) can be a way to offer expert advice.