

Typology of unions

This paper is an attempt based on our work at HID Forum with all the large systems like unions. Our understanding and experience and regular conversations around this and the push from our board has helped us to put this in the form of a paper for wider circulation.

Our understanding is also drawn from reading few union strengthening initiatives across globe that we have borrowed some of it and duly given credit.

1	<p>Ideology and Relevance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle to Understand the need for the union • Aimed only at power dynamic at workplace and the exploitation related to it. • Based on systemic change vs confined to working condition • Focus on rights, violations. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on union vision and purpose • A distinct leadership is emerging • Small work victories- based on collective bargaining- union beginning to explore collective bargaining at this stage to its advantage. • Energy levels increasing and risk taking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well know stabilized leadership exists • Second line leadership on the brim • Increased confidence • A sense of security • Increased network connects and collaborations • Multiple identities. • Adaptable to its environment and is relevant. • Working conditions and bargaining becomes central. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural death due to lack of second line leadership and a hold of the vision of the union. • If the union moves away from its purpose or the activities not in sync with its vision, • If needs of members are not met,
2	<p>Membersh ip</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept of union new for members- naïve consciousness- single issue struggle. • An Executive committee (EC) is formed that is unsure of their roles and responsibilities and the time commitment. • Role of Executive committee (EC)/Promoting Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained increase in membership plus retention. • Increased consciousness amongst members-take initiative in mobilizing and organizing meetings • The EC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is stable and recognized by all members of the union. • Second line leadership-emerging and gaining confidence. • Bringing in the diverse elements of the union-gender, caste, religion and migrant workers. • Comprehension of social injustice and its roots. Increased Critical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline: lack of second line leadership active member either join other unions or sometimes are absorbed by the management that was supportive to union work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ While others are cynical and are stop attending union for it to die a natural slow death • If membership has no space to voice their concern,

- (PA) critical at this stage
- Ec and members still understanding their roles and union is still struggling to themselves as an entity.
- Increasing membership with clear message- of need of union
- undergoes changes- now that they realise the investment- and set of leaders emerges.
- Labour laws pertaining to their industry common Knowledge to large number of members
- Gender, migrant workers and child labour part of the conversation
- Group dynamics developed- cliques- counter cliques formed- around leadership styles and popularity.
- consciousness.
- Going beyond workplace residential areas where workers live and larger societal issues
- Organising labour from another related sector
- Different perspective discussed but also resistance to take forward.
- Leadership struggles: Active / enthusiastic ones may falter- go back to general membership or leave union- while giving an opportunity to others who are strategically awaiting their turn.
- If cliques formed are not held with larger purpose,

<p>3</p> <p>Functions and Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the union membership- pitching union benefits. Discussing law and accessing schemes and entitlements for workers. Meetings at worksite. Familiarize with the concerned department and build a contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worksite local committee/ active members committee formed. a structure is developing- in communications and action. Successful and regular negotiations led to management realize the strength of the union. Easy access to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities are now standardized Membership recruitment coming down. Renewal ongoing. Active members and leader have a good grasp of labour movement, Efforts to educate new members are on- second line leadership has emerged and it's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decline: Lack of taking forward the vision of the union and holding the organization together.
---	---	--	--	--

	<p>person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map other unions in the field and their impact. • Enable and build Executive Committee and active leaders potential. • Some unions begin organizing workers by addressing residential issues and organise around workplace exploitation. • Other move to this domain when workplace concerns are dealt with. 	<p>schemes and entitlements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study circles- labour movement / unions etc. • Strengthening the union- identifying second line leadership and exploring training and political education for the members. • Ability to discern learning from activities carried out and makes required changes, to better suit the context and in tandem with organizations purpose. • Shift to exploring issues at their dwellings- from housing to access to transportation, safety, education etc, 	<p>developing its potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The union at this stage may explore the political space, where it makes the most prominent leaders of the union stand for local elections. • Ability to analyze the political scenario has strengthened with an understanding of local issues and the connections built.
--	--	--	--

<p>4 Building and strengthening relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EC attempts to have regular meeting to increase membership, build trust and maintain them but hasn't yet realised the value of it. • Members need to see 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cohesive decentralized network developed for communication as well as resolving worksite concerns. • For promoting agency: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union is asked for opinions on issues and their analysis on labour issues but not limited to it. • -Membership is stable ongoing, retention is almost 90%- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline: Methods and efforts to sustain relationships and negotiations are minimalist. • Relationships become procedural- rigidity due to procedures.
--	---	---	---	--

- who else is in the union and how they can relate with one another.
- Active members are identified-area/worksite
- A GBM, a protest and a celebration/ unique initiative can help bring the members and EC come together.
- Regular EC and active member trainings for team building to better understand each other and build collective agendas for union.
- Success of schemes and entitlements contribute to trust and solidarity building for the union.
- Mapping of other labour initiative and building solidarity across gives confidence within and in relation to others.
- Building of relationships of members are largely based on the charisma of the leader .
- strengthening and supporting the EC first and helping them develop strategy for increasing membership/ renewals.
- PA role of advisory - but in regular consultation.
- Tools such as demonstrations, marches and Strike to put pressure on the management and in increasing solidarity amongst the workers.
- Clique have been formed, struggles for leadership at different levels emerge along with their followings.
- -Different styles of leaderships have emerged at the ground-solidarity amongst members grows based on that as well.
- Some major victories take place for the workers that strengthen the union membership with the union.

5	Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the membership increases the leaders set up culture they wish to develop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity and new perspectives are considered but the union is in the process of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this phase the culture within trade union is exercised from the ground upwards, and is established through the following 	Decline: Culture might be stagnating not revitalized with new conversations and exploration of shifts with the groups.
---	----------------	--	--	---	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the members and the leader interaction culture of the union is determined • With the incoming of newer members across gender, caste, religion and grade levels the culture of the union evolves, and changes provided the union leadership is interested in its diverse constituency and is based on democratic values. 	<p>solidifying its identity- some are absorbed while other expelled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal and informal roles have been assumed well and are carried out. • Norms are developed based on differences and leadership struggle. 	<p>procedures and practices: a culture of participation, general meetings, elected leadership - especially from within membership and accountability downwards [CITATION Int12 \n \l 1033]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture is now rigid enough and may not accept new diversity, if at all it may need to question the set norms and behaviors of the group and work really hard to bring about the change.
---	---	---

- 6 Systems**
- Grappling with how to operate and establish systems of communication, decision making increasing membership, retention and finances.
 - Practicing and learning democratic behaviour and upholding transparency and accountability-
 - Only managing
 - Systems are getting firmed up and all members of the EC are well versed with their roles and responsibilities. Efficient ways of function have been established.
 - Members working to be effective through these systems.
 - Finances are still being explored - union undergoing ethical concerns
 - Mechanisms in place for members to voices and articulate their opinions on critical concern.
 - The union has established a system of mandates and report-backs.
 - With regards to policy issues and decisions, the members would mandate its local leadership with a certain set of instructions that were expected to be carried out/ forward.
 - Decline: Systems might be functioning, but members may not necessarily be giving life to it. Systems take precedence over people making it rigid to work.

membership finances- on the lookout for some sort of funding and exploring strategy for fundraising and maximizing work with give limited funds.

- over where and how to take funds from.
- Planning and executing abilities are high with successes giving rise to some systems becoming stronger.

[CITATION Int12 \n \l 1033]

7	Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaware of the importance of a structure for the union. EC tries to educate itself or via a promoting agency to ensure all tasks are defined. • Infrastructure - office space not owned- dependent on supporting / promoting organisation for space for meetings and keeping register/ files. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realising the need for structure. • Trial and error given rise to the best form for the union. • With clear and well defined roles and responsibilities, the union EC , active members and the general membership are aware and following/ fulfilling their duties. • Infrastructure for the union - an office, place for meetings, to store documents etc are recognised and pursued. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong structure and a physical space reflected in membership, culture, systems, activities, and functions of the union. • Leadership and most of the membership is convinced that they have reached the best possible set up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline: the structure may only exist on paper- similar to the nascent phase, whatever little work is going on is now dependent on a handful who either want to revive the union or are looking for better opportunities.
---	------------------	--	---	---	---

8	Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members, employers, government machinery, other sector unions and related stakeholders may not yet know of the union yet. Mapping and Identifying other local networks and stakeholders might be the first step to build relations with stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been noticed and accepted to some extent by peers and different stakeholders. By participating in network and alliances building, in showing solidarity with other organizations and labour related victories with the management and department. Their name is known and carries weight The union is being accepted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally accepted and is inching towards a role model- different spaces consider it as a hub of learning. All negotiations are done with the specific union leaders by stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decline: due to the lack leadership and its relevance and/ also due to embezzlement and being unpopular amongst the members.
---	---------------------	--	---	--	--

References

1. Adizes, I. Organisational Lifecycles.
2. Intelloconn. (2012, October 8th). Retrieved from intelliconn.wordpress.com: <https://intelliconn.wordpress.com/2012/10/08/internal-trade-union-democracy-a-contrast-between-pre-and-post-1994-south-africa/>
3. Mondiaal, F. (2007, 2007). Organisation Strenthening of Trade Unions. Amsterdam: FNV Mondia