

BUYERS WORKSHOP REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The RESPECT project aims to develop innovative methodologies and tools to help key stakeholders create change in the way purchasing practices are made in supply chains. RESPECT put special emphasis on the increasing role of suppliers to empower them through capacity building.

In the scope of the RESPECT project, various surveys were conducted amongst key supply chain actors:

- a preliminary online survey questioning a panel of buyers and suppliers in order to validate the usefulness of the RESPECT approach;
- a qualitative survey with suppliers to get an overview of the existing good practices among suppliers as well as the issues they face;
- a consumer survey - driven by a brand, Patagonia – to question consumers' interest in supporting more responsible practices through a collaborative approach.

Once the situation and stakeholders' needs were clarified, RESPECT developed a training module for suppliers to build their capacity in the purchasing practice process. The first day of training focuses on issue identification, root cause analysis and problem solving within the framework of the purchasing process. The objective is to have suppliers identify bottlenecks, understand root causes, and analyze which causes lie in their sphere of influence (internal factors) and which lie outside (external factors). Regarding internal factors, suppliers are trained on how to solve issues through action plan building and skills mapping. On the second day, the training focuses on external communication and negotiation skills in order to help suppliers better communicate with external stakeholders such as buyers and consumers. The supplier training was pilot tested in Bulgaria (Kardjali) and Turkey (Istanbul) in April 2013.

In the last phase of RESPECT, the buyer stakeholder group was targeted in order to present and validate the approach and project's results and discuss next steps.

Buyers' Workshop Objectives:

- Present RESPECT Project and its results;
- Validate usefulness of the approach and tools;
- Share good purchasing practices;
- Develop ideas about how to further improve collaboration with suppliers;
- Discuss next steps and buyers' needs to further improve the practices.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

In terms of preparation for the Buyers' workshop, a "training" package (including the informative presentation for buyers), program of the day and evaluation survey for the training in Turkish language were prepared (translation, reproduction, binding).

Kadir Has University in Istanbul was selected as a venue for conducting the training according to the following criteria of selection:

- suitable location/easy access for all the participants, as all of the Buyers are from Istanbul and the Cibali Campus is in the centre of Istanbul;
- CSR Turkey's office is located there, so all materials are easy accessible if there is any emergency – also lower room rents than other locations;
- satisfactory facilities for training – materials like projector, boards, markers etc. were accessible, enough room for 20 participants with the opportunity to separate groups for class-work.

The training was attended by observers from the partners' of RESPECT project. The participation rate and the level of the trainees were satisfying. There were 7 participants in total from the companies M&S, Boyner Holding, Nike and H&M. They were high levels basically from CSR, Sustainability departments of the companies.

All the attendees were highly motivated to participate in the training. The participants were very receptive and particularly liked the outcomes of the RESPECT training for suppliers. They were pleased meet with the RESPECT project partners.

One trainer from CSR Turkey led the training while the whole project team handled the preparation of the training packages, organizing the logistical support of the workshops (reproduction, catering, copying during the workshops, preparation of badges, etc.)

At the end of the workshop, the participants assessed the issues orally related to the training content and what should be done for the future steps of the project. The results were mainly that more people in related area should learn the outcomes of RESPECT Project. The partners should therefore publish the results and make them more visible and reachable. They have mentioned that the results should also be shared with the other departments from Buyer Companies (especially purchasing staff), such as the top management. The partners also decided to do an online evaluation after the training with Buyers. The results of it will be shared at the latest.

3. MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- The training brought together CSR and Sustainability departments from different companies, and observers from the all project partners' organisations.

- The participants experienced new information about suppliers and situation analysis of the project. This aided their active participation.
- We recognized that the buyers are looking for alternative ways to communicate with suppliers and to understand them better. We observed that the outputs of RESPECT project was very beneficial for them which made it a success.
- We recognized that people from other departments such as purchasing department and top management should also attend to the trainings since the outputs are tangible and convincing to the some changes in the way of thinking of the others. The participants supported that by saying it is also important to discuss these issues all together.
- Some of the buyers want to get in touch in the near future and talk about a possible partnership with the project partners. They were keen on having their suppliers take the RESPECT training.
- The participants were pleased to get new information about consumers and suppliers based on RESPECT surveys and workshops with they suppliers.
- The participants were presented various CSR/Purchasing practices issues and how the buyers/suppliers can contribute to the improvement of these issues.
 - The companies said, other than small projects, there should be deeper collaborations, long term relationships, between suppliers and buyers, this will be new trend and they want to focus on it.
 - Buyers mentioned that, CSR should be integrated to their companies' values and cultures. Top management should be more involved in CSR, and include it to its daily operations. So the social and business benefit of CSR should be well defined and convince them. So one suggestion was, to invite them to one of the future RESPECT trainings.
 - One of the participant companies, Nike, mentioned that they gather all their suppliers monthly and make them share the CSR experiences between them. Since it is a new approach, other companies showed interest in this good practice.
 - One of the participant companies, Marks & Spencer, mentioned an example in US where purchasing manager and CSR manager of a company are the same which combines two different perspectives and could be a good way to fill the gap between the departments.
 - All of the companies mentioned that the results and outputs of RESPECT are very important and have to be shared after the project ends. All the companies did say that, they want to be in contact with the project partners for possible collaborations in near future. H&M, said that they want their suppliers to take the training of RESPECT, which will be talked after.

4. COMMENTS ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

The focus is on giving information about the outputs of RESPECT and create a brainstorm how to improve it from now on. This report is not designed to cover all aspects of the workshops for future activities and implementation.

APPENDIX I

THE PROGRAMME

Introduction

We started about 15minutes late, but during the morning we caught this delay up.

Self introductions

The participants introduced themselves and everyone shared his or her expectations. The expectations seemed a little bit vague.

Context

New Slides were added after having it discussed in Partnership Meeting such as more examples on consumers and outputs of the suppliers training module. The participants were very active and seemed interested.

Outputs of Respect project

Went according to plan.

We had no significant time changes, everything went well and we finished at 13:00.



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