

2021

# Year Review

Issue 2021 | Highlights and insights



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International  
Labour  
Organization





### Dear Partners

The year 2021 has been a difficult year with new experiences requiring rapid adaptation skills and dynamic responsiveness to the new demands of the world of work.

The spread of COVID-19 fortunately did not reach predictions in Haiti. This is partly thanks to the awareness-raising efforts of the authorities and several other actors for the application of individual barrier gestures and preventive measures in institutions and in the workplace. All textile factories registered with the Better Work Haiti (BWH) programme have adopted preventive measures and implemented hygienic and sanitary infrastructures and practices in their work environment to prevent and limit the spreading of COVID-19.

Given the restrictions imposed by the pandemic in 2020, BWH has worked more closely with the Directorate of Labor of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MAST). This collaboration was strengthened in 2021 with a hybrid approach in conducting joint in-factory advisory and assessments, which strengthens the in-factory presence and the capacities of MAST labor inspectors with respect to the BWH service model.

The recent socio-political crises and insecurity concerns have considerably affected the socio-economic activities of the country as well as the level and quality of living conditions of workers. The conclusions of the two researches published by BWH, on the economic impact and well-being of workers show the economic difficulties and the concerns of employers and workers, but also their voices and expectations in terms of hoped-for improvements.

The BWH program strategies for 2022 and beyond include focusing on improving and strengthening the partnership with key stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of our actions and to promote improved working conditions and competitiveness in the Haitian clothing industry.

Thanks for your continued collaboration and interest in our progress. Here's to working together in 2022.

### BWH Team



**Better partnerships**  
**Better working conditions**  
**Better lives**  
**For all.**

*Funding is provided by the United States Department of Labor under cooperative agreement number IL-21187-10-75-K for a total of 1.3 million dollars*



## Garment sector at a glance

Quick overview of the apparel industry in numbers



**7**  
Government partners



**39**  
factories in the programme



**53,410**  
workers  
(63% women)



**11**  
Active trade unions



**1,011mi**  
apparel exports in usd millions  
(83% of national exports)



**8**  
2 public industrial parks and private industrial parks and free zones



**26**  
international brands and retailers



**10**  
international buyers



**23**  
compliance reports



**2**  
research briefs in 2021



**13**  
years of operation in Haiti



**14**  
Better Work Haiti staff

### Contributing to industry improvements

Better Work Haiti (BWH) strives to create a garment industry that provides decent work to a projected 65,000 workers, lifting their families and communities out of poverty, empowering women, boosting national income and improving social stability.

The programme builds on the strong partnerships developed with the government, global brands, employers and unions to play a central role in realizing the full potential of the HOPE II Act - a preferential trade program with the US. Ongoing top priorities include convening diverse stakeholders to tackle shared challenges and supporting institutions' efforts to monitor and safeguard factory compliance with international labor standards.

### Key national constituents

- ◆ Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MAST)
- ◆ Office of the Labour Ombudsman (BMST)
- ◆ National Insurance and Pensions Office(ONA)
- ◆ Office for Employment Injury, Illness and Maternity (OFTMA)
- ◆ Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI)
- ◆ Office of the State Secretary for the
- ◆ Integration of People with Disabilities (BSEIPH)
- ◆ Association of Haitian Industries (ADIH)
- ◆ Economic Forum
- ◆ All Trade unions active in the garment sector
- ◆ 18 brand and retail partners



# COVID-19 Breakout and Stakeholders Responses

Quick overview of the apparel industry in numbers

## LATEST FIGURES

<b>26,807</b> confirmed cases	<b>780</b> death counted
<b>52,1%</b> cases in men	<b>47,9%</b> cases in women
<b>89%</b> recovered cases	<b>2,91%</b> fatality rate cases
<b>93,809</b> fully vaccinated	Visit the Haitian Ministry of Health website



## REDUCE THE RISK OF COVID-19 INFECTION

Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub for at least 20secs.

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.

Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with tissue or flexed elbow and avoid spitting in public.

Avoid close contact with anyone with cold, fever or flu-like symptoms.

Thoroughly cook meat and eggs.

Seek for medical care if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing.

Disinfect equipment and working area at least once a day.



## Impact of COVID-19 on the garment sector

In December 2019, the world woke up to a new epidemic, and concern grew throughout the West as the global impact of COVID-19 became clearer in early 2020. The outbreak and rapid spread of the pandemic threatens the Haitian garment industry much as it does across the globe, and it highlights gaps in national social protection systems. It took until March 2020 to detect the first cases of infection on Haitian territory; since then its impact has hit the garment industry in Haiti with force, reducing the number of workers from 57,000 to 37,000 in April 2020. Garment exports to the US market fell by 11.8% in value and 8.2% in volume for the period from May 2020 to April 2021, compared to the same period of the previous year.

The initial impact of the pandemic on the Haitian garment sector was severe. Most factories were closed

for one month. Three companies closed in covid time: Elansia (Juillet. 2020), H&H (Aout 2020), Interamerican Woven(Novembre 2020) and Val d’Or closed during this calendar year.

The government initially allowed some factories to work at 30% capacity to manufacture personal protective equipment (PPE). Later, factories were allowed to operate at 50% capacity. Initially, the sector lost approximately 20,000 jobs, and four companies closed their doors permanently. The government stepped in to support the workers by covering one quarter of their salary for one month, but financial stress remains a primary concern among workers (*see survey results*). Towards the end of the third quarter of 2020, the sector started to recover some lost jobs, both through rehiring workers and creating new positions.



## COUNTRY KEY UPDATES

- **July 2021:** Haiti receives the first batch of 500,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines donated by Haiti the U.S government through COVAX.
- **Aug. 2021:** International media reports that has accepted the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine reconsidering the preference of the Ministry of Health for a single-dose injectable vaccine.
- All the 35 factories registered with Better Work continue to operate with COVID-19 prevention measures. Four factories have closed doors indefinitely.
- **Sept. 2021 :** Important efforts have been undertaken by the government of Haiti through the Ministry of Health and Population (MSPP) to provide free vaccinations. The MSPP releases a list of 149 vaccination sites (56 in the West, 11 in the North-East and 13 in the North departments).
- **Nov. 2021 :** 39 participating factories are now back operating. The insecure situation with gangs, shootings, and kidnapping remains a safety issue for workers’ journey to work. The National Police deploy efforts to protect industrial park areas.
- **Dec. 2021 :** The Ministry of Health approves the interchangeability of vaccines used against COVID-19 in Haiti. Indeed, the WHO recommends vaccination with the same vaccine as an ideal, but in the event of unavailability, interchangeability between the PFIZER, MODERNA, and JANSSEN (Johnson and Johnson) vaccines is accepted to complete the vaccination schedule.

## BETTER WORK UPDATES

### Guide for Better Response to COVID-19

In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MAST), Better Work published a comprehensive “Guide for Better Response to COVID-19 for participating factories.

### Better Work core services continuity

In-person assessments have resumed, alongside MAST inspectors. Advisory and training are delivered virtually until further notice. Advisory services are delivered virtually with a continuous focus on supporting factories to tackle critical and recurring issues related to COVID-19 to all factories

### COVID-19 Prevention at the workplace

Better Work joined with ILO/AIDS and The World Health Organization (WHO) to provide specific COVID 19 prevention and infection control training to forty-eight (48) factory medical personnel in Port-au-Prince and the Northeast, including (34) women.

### Call to Action signed by stakeholders

Better Work brought together National working group in Haiti to sign the “Call to Action” joint statement outlining priorities for the garment sector. This statement includes the role of both unions and employers and lays out the financial impacts and immediate needs of both workers and employers of the pandemic.

### Special focus on social security

Better Work is bringing stakeholders’ attention on the need to provide effective social security services to workers considering the importance and the impact of social benefits for workers in the context of COVID-19.

### Awareness on COVID-19 vaccination

Better Work is supporting factories to increase awareness efforts to educate workers on COVID-19 vaccines and encouraging workers to get vaccinated.



**“Although COVID-19 and security restrictions prevented physical visit from Better Work Haiti, the tools and guidelines as well the virtual assistance provided by Better Work Haiti were very useful in helping Hansae to address labor issues during these difficult times.”**

**Michel Hwang,**  
General Manager at Hansae, a South Korean fashion brand and manufacturer in Haiti

## Garment industry updates

Latest trends and highlights on sectoral initiatives and development opportunities



### Haiti among the top apparel sourcing countries in the coming years

Thanks to the HOPE II law, Haiti accelerated its production of clothing and reintroduced the cultivation of cotton to reduce costs and support vertical integration. Haiti is currently the thirteenth leading source of apparel in the US market, accounting for 1.42% of imports by volume (420.778/29470.972). The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act of 1983 and amendments thereto by the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA), the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunities Act through the Encouragement of Partnership (HOPE) and the Haitian Economic Assistance Program (HELP) Act have played a key role in the country’s growth as a supply partner.

### Haiti’s garment sector gets a boost from two initiatives

Through a recently launched advisory project to Create Investment Opportunities (CIO) in the Apparel Sector in Haiti, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group, one of Better Work’s founding partners, has recently pledged to support the garment sector in Haiti by bringing together the key players in the public and private sectors through a new public private dialogue scheme - Technical Secretariat - seeking opportunities and means to expand apparel production to meet a shifting global demand by helping the sector develop a new value proposition for

the industry to improve their competitiveness taking advantage of near shoring with US market, improve government aftercare services with existing companies in the industry, and attract investors by doing outreach activities. This project aims to develop a new value proposition that takes advantage of nearshoring and mobilizing investments to attract new investors and provide aftercare to the existing ones in Haiti.

Fortunately, the renewal of key legislation will aid Haiti’s garment industry in responding to the circumstances of an

unprecedented year. The Caribbean Basin Economic Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA) was renewed on September 20, 2020 and will extend for another 10 years. The trade pact will support around 30% of Haiti’s exports to the U.S., which will keep providing textile and apparel trade preferences to Caribbean countries through September 2030. Key industry players in Haiti agree that there is still work to be done to achieve the necessary level of stability in the country to drive business opportunities to their maximum.



### Haiti will invest in productive infrastructure in the Caracacol with IDB’s support

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has approved non-repayable financing of \$65 million to contribute to the sustainable economic development of northern Haiti by promoting the conditions necessary for the establishment and expansion of businesses in the Industrial Park of Caracol (PIC), in the north of

the country. The funds will be disbursed over a five-year period, starting in 2022.

Once the disbursements for this Bank operation are completed, the CIP will be the largest self-sustaining industrial park in Haiti, employing approximately 22,000 workers.



### New trainees begin sewing classes at PIC for job readiness

“Thousands of jobs in the textile sector.” This is the promising prediction of the new director of SONAPI, Mr. Petriks Justin, who made this announcement during his 1st visit to the SONAPI industrial park on December 7, 2021, one week after installation.

This is an optimistic outlook at a time unemployment is at its peak in the country. Through this initiative, Mr. Justin inquired about challenges and opportunities for

SONAPI to accomplish its mission to creating jobs and wealth across the country. Mr. Justin says he also intends to rehabilitate certain spaces that have been closed for several years, which will make it possible to achieve this objective. He says discussions are underway with potential investors to reassure them and convince them to invest in the country. According to the general manager of SONAPI, the site is open for business.



### The new SONAPI director announced the creation of thousand new jobs

October 1, 2021 marks the start of sewing classes for 100 young people at the Caracol Industrial Park. Indeed, after a long period of hiatus, the Clothing Technology Training Center (CFTV) has resumed its activities at the PIC, always with the objective of serving

companies in the North in terms of qualified human resources.

These young people are already in the sights of the S&H Global Company, which intends to integrate them into an immediate hiring process.

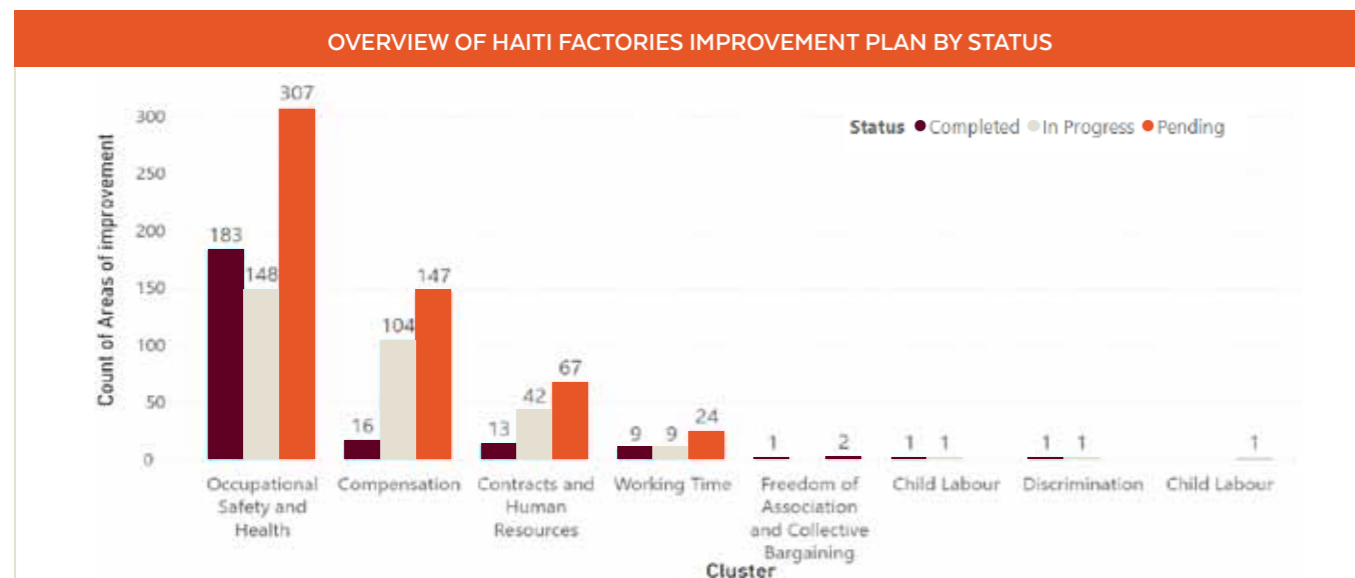
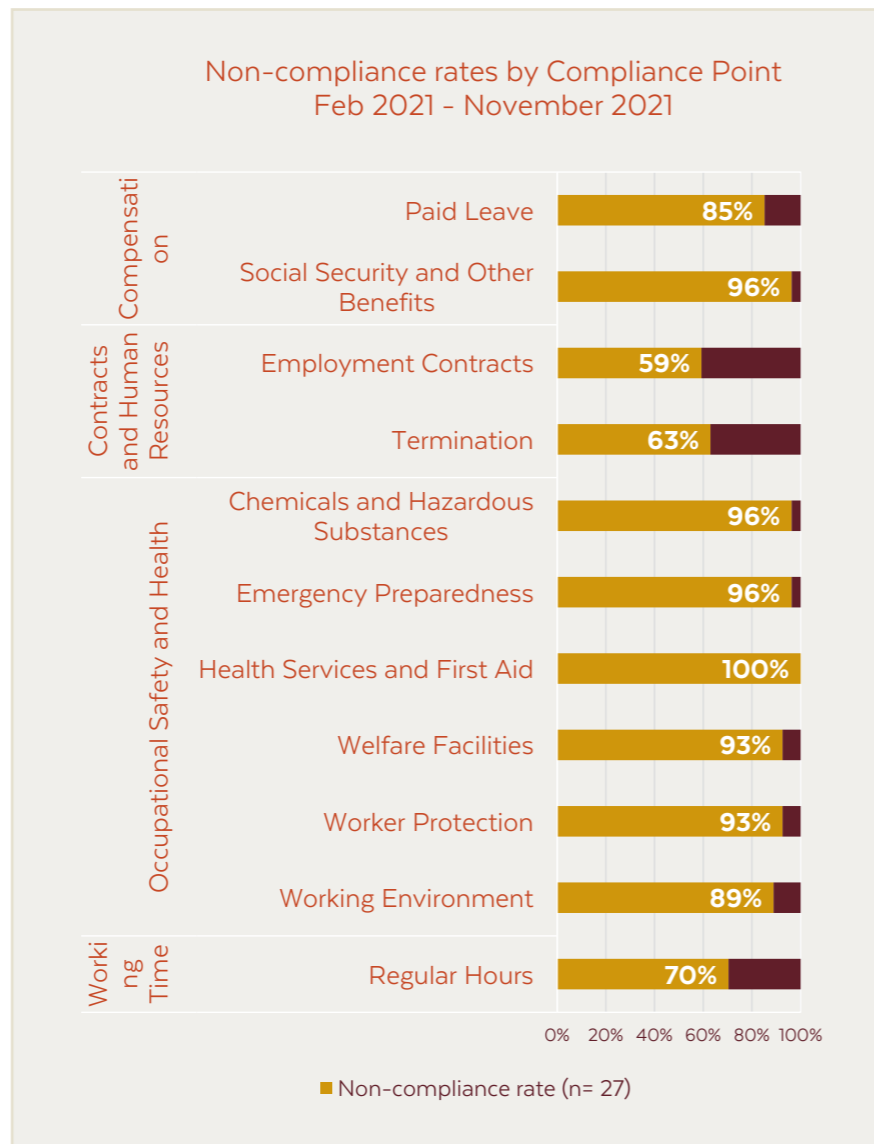


## The overall trend of non-compliances in the Haitian garment industry

These figures present an overview of the non-compliance findings in 27 participating factories, which were assessed at least twice before November 2021. Better Work Haiti conducted hybrid assessments and hybrid advisories during this period with the support of inspectors from the Ministry of Labor.

During this reporting period, Better Work Haiti noted two new allegations on core labor standards violations during assessments. One FOA case falls in the interference and discrimination compliance point. The second case relates to six union leaders who were dismissed for failure to wear a mask during work hours.

The overall rate of non-compliance continues to be high in the Occupational Safety and Health cluster, particularly emergency preparedness and management of chemicals and hazardous substances. The data reveals that factories have made a greater effort to train workers in the use, maintenance and storage of chemical substances.



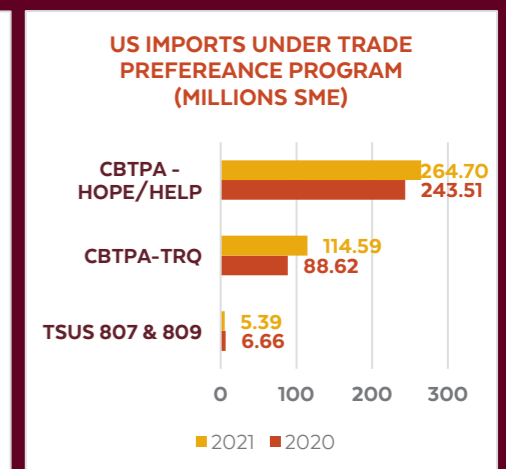
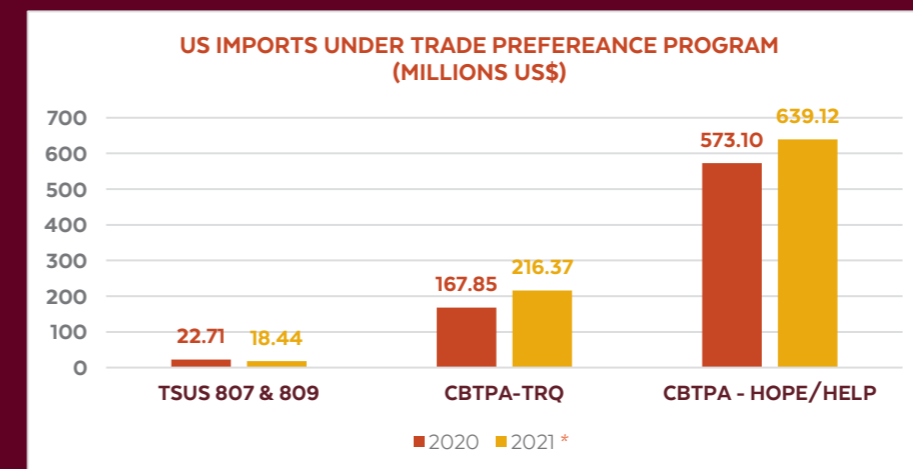
## Overview of trade preferences in the Haitian apparel industry.

After approximately two years of negotiations, the United States Congress renewed the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA), which was originally scheduled to expire at the end of September 2020 for Haiti and other Caribbean countries. The renewed trade agreement guarantees protections for Haitian/US trading partners for the next ten years.

Despite the severe impact of the

COVID-19 pandemic on business, exports are recovering with 14% of the increase in 2021 (USD 988mi) compared to 2020 (USD 849mi), and the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE) HOPE/HELP and CBTPA continue to be the two key Trade Preference programs. The HOPE/HELP trade preference program concentrates 75% of Haiti's clothing exports to the United States. In addition

to the shocks that Haiti faces chronically and which affect the daily operations of the sector, the clothing sector must now meet the challenges of the COVID -19 pandemic, which has transformed the global value chain. The Haitian garment sector must position itself to highlight its competitive advantages in a context of diversification of supply sources and market rapprochement (the nearshoring strategy) by buyers.



Data for the first 10 months of 2021 - Source: otexa.trade.gov

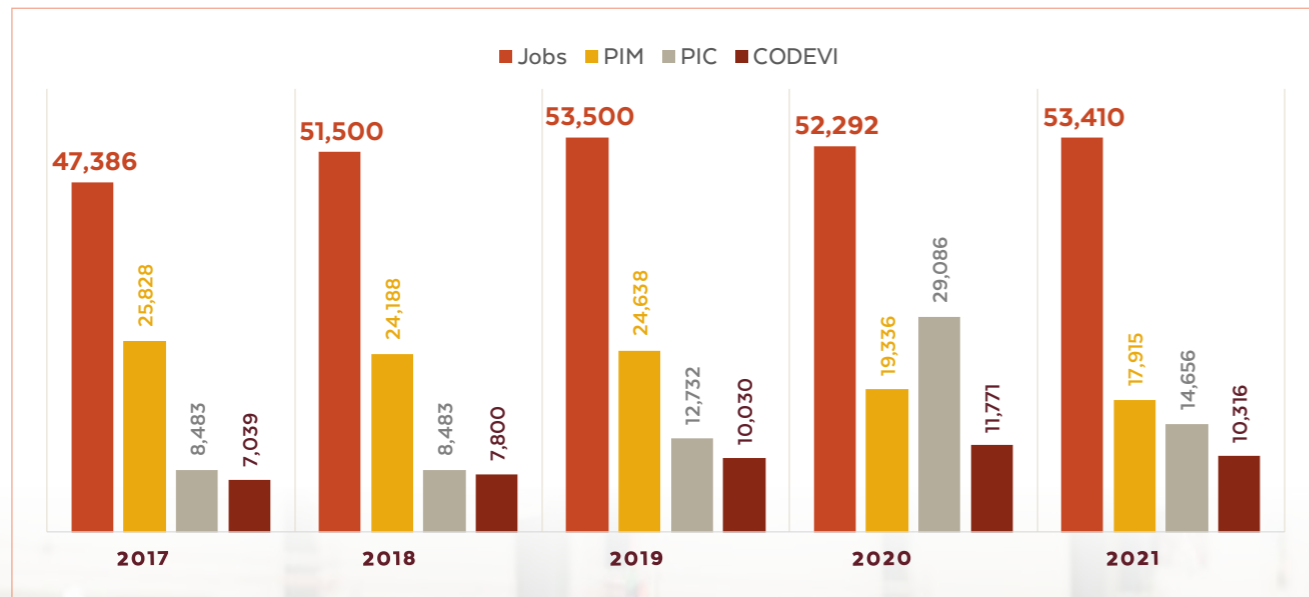


## Haitian apparel industry employment summary

On the eve of the COVID-19 breakout in Haiti (March 2020), textile factories in Haiti were employing more than 65,000 workers, and its impact had very heavy consequences on them as well as on their families, due to the dysfunction of certain factories and the significant reduction in

the number of workers across the sector. However, towards the end of July, when the factories were allowed to operate fully, they began to recover workers, allowing the factories to resume their lives, with over 50,000 active workers currently.

The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBTPA) and the HOPEII/HELP Act are giving the sector the much-needed boost to reach its full potential. The chart below provides an overview of employment growth during the last five years.



## BWH Partnerships

Collaboration with constituents to strengthen social dialogue, tackle issues and challenges, and promote decent work

### ILO/AIDS, ONUSIDA team up with BWH to support 48 doctors to prevent COVID-19 in the garment sector



In 2017, Djerry Princivil join the factory Superior Sourcing, located in CODEVI (Ouanaminthe), to provide medical care to its employees. In those three years, Djerry would not have imagined that he would soon be dealing with the threat of a dangerous virus in a worldwide pandemic. To support Princivil and 47 other doctors and nurses in participating factories, Better Work Haiti partnered with a number of organizations, including the ILO and WHO, to develop specific trainings specially targeted to doctors providing services to factories,

to help them better manage the COVID-19 crisis internally.

The four-day in-person training provides information and tools to recognize the disease symptoms, treat and manage confirmed cases, and implement measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among garment workers. After attending the training, Princivil felt that he was equipped to tackle the pandemic's new challenges. He has regained his self-confidence with this preparation and can now recognize and manage COVID-19 symptoms and the resulting situations.

### Management Guidance for RMG factories in response to COVID-19

In Haiti, the first COVID-19 case was reported in March of 2020 and, as expected, the number of new cases continues to increase daily. In response to this crisis, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs collaborated with BWH to develop comprehensive management guidelines on COVID-19 to help employers, worker representatives and respective committee members, so they can help protect workers and answer some of the OSH-related questions that factories are facing. This guidance is not a standard or regulation, and it creates no new legal obligations. It contains recommendations as well as descriptions of mandatory safety and health Standards; it is

intended for planning purposes.


Employers and workers in ready-made garment (RMG) and plastic factories should use this planning guide to help identify risk levels in the workplace and to determine appropriate control measures to mitigate those risks. In 2021, BWH strengthened its collaboration with MAST by conducting joint activities in the field (including advisory visits and assessments), with a particular focus on overseeing and guiding factories to continue implementing COVID-19 preventives measures. Additionally, the two agencies worked together to disseminate COVID-19-related resources to factories.





[Download the guide to read more.](#)



## New pilot prioritizes pregnancy health services for pregnant workers

- 

**292**  
pregnant women received prenatal services
- 

**48**  
doctors and nurses trained on the prevention of COVID-19
- 

**18,000**  
workers received HIV and COVID-19 prevention awareness



**Delmas, Haiti** – Dieunese, a textile factory worker, is on maternity leave for her third child since joining the factory as a worker when it opened four years ago. She shares her experience that the pandemic is detrimental to women workers, in particular pregnant women. “I saw other pregnant women lose their jobs because of the closing of their modules, and others were put in the rotation due to lack of production demand.”

Dieunese’s job has been spared during the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, but job security is scarce. According to ADIH (Association of Industries of Haiti), the garment sector accounts for around 57,000 jobs in Haiti and 90% of the country’s exports. In a COVID-19 economic impact survey conducted by Better Work Haiti at the end of 2020, among 3,330 workers (64% women) in

38 factories, pregnant women, an already vulnerable group, reported experiencing financial disruption in their income and difficulty paying expenses to cover their cost of living.

In this crisis context, the ILO, through the Better Work Haiti programme, has collaborated with UNICEF to initiate a pilot project for the benefit of women workers in the apparel sector, which includes sensitivity training on issues of pregnancy and contraception prenatal consultation, access to reproductive health services, and health care for pregnant women who test positive for HIV/AIDS. This project has been implemented by Profamil at the factory level, and it was extended from December 2020 into 2021, to continue to meet the demand for these crucial services. This initiative provides immediate assistance to pregnant

women in the sector who, due to the drastic slowdown in economic activities, can no longer afford certain health services. Through this initiative, 18,853 workers were reached, either through healthcare kiosks or other centers throughout the SONAPI Industrial Park. “Accessibility to health care in relation to its availability remains a challenge, despite the many health institution partners affiliated with these factories,” says Gianni DeCastro, the Executive Director of PROFAMIL. “This is especially true in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.”

Kelonis, another female worker that is two months pregnant, has found the pilot programme to be a lifeline. “Without this activity within the factory,” she says, “I would have had to find the time and money for the exams in a private hospital, where the services are expensive.”

This is Kelonis’ second child, and she has benefited from several services offered by the project. “I was able to have several examinations performed, including urine and blood tests, an initial pregnancy test, pap smear, and an HIV test. It is through this service that my pregnancy was confirmed.”

Despite pandemic conditions, the pilot has been able to reach a high volume of women: prenatal care services were offered to 282 pregnant women in the factories, who benefited from two prenatal consultations, including 276 who benefited from ultrasound and 232 who benefited from routine examinations and prenatal follow-up visits. During her pregnancy, Dieunese used the bus as her primary transportation and was often late to her regular visits to the doctor. “Thanks to the services provided by Profamil, I felt reassured that I would receive medical consultation and an ultrasound examination, which reassured me about the state of my pregnancy. The services were quick and easy. I felt that there was a kind of special attention to pregnant women in the factory.”

Dieunese was happy to have confirmed that she has a healthy pregnancy and would be giving birth to a boy. According to Dieunese, these Better Work-UNICEF services provided through Profamil have eased some of the common worries of pregnant women who are also working. “I know a lot of other pregnant women like me who have been able to have ultrasound exams to check on

their babies. I used the result and the certificate that was provided to me at the factory’s HR department to secure my maternity leave. Otherwise, we would have rushed to find the money to pay a private doctor for the paperwork that we instead got for free, and immediately, through this programme.” With the unique demands of working in the textile sector, where activities in factories during operating hours can have an impact on the production chain, Better Work has engaged with employers and Profamil to find practical, healthy solutions to mitigate negative impacts on pregnant workers.

“The strategy of offering local and mobile services has been an innovative strategy and very much suited to the context.” says DeCastro.

According to Better Work Haiti’s latest compliance report, 67% of monitored workplaces in 2020 do not have medical facilities and onsite staff, and 84% have continuing social security and benefits issues that affect workers. The initial conclusions on this pilot project demonstrate the immediate need for access to health care for a considerable portion of the 65% of women workers in Haiti’s textile sector. These women are at the forefront of providing a boost to the Haitian economy, and Better Work Haiti aims to support access to better health services livelihoods leading to a better quality of their lives.

[Read more](#)

## Key figures of the Project Performance



<b>66%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Percentage of workers reporting job satisfaction	Average non-compliance rate with publicly reported issues
<b>65%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Percentage of factories that have effective HR Management systems	Percentage of factories where Bipartite committee address real worker concerns
<b>177</b>	<b>8</b>
Advisory visits in the reporting period	Training sessions that promote gender equality
<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>
Evidence based briefs published	Evidence based briefs published
<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>
Tools and guidelines to address persistent non-compliance	MAST labor directorate personnel, including judicial officers trained

The programme has emphasized its engagement and collaboration with key stallholders to reinforce their technical capacities to play their role more efficiently resulting in a stronger and more sustainable impact.

## Annual Report 2020

Better Work Haiti's latest annual report highlights factories' assessment results, improvement efforts, and key initiatives from 2020 and outlook for the way forward.

In 10 years of operation in Haiti, we highlight improvements in social dialogue, collective agreements and internal work rules, as well as factory compliance with contracts that adhere to the national labor code.

Key actions includes :

- ◆ MAST inspectors join forces to tackle sexual harassment.
- ◆ Social dialogue that yields powerful results by strengthening platforms for participation in social dialogue within factories
- ◆ Partnerships to safeguard the health of workers on raising awareness of factories on the importance of investing in on-site medical facilities and staff.

The garment sector in Haiti has been impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our COVID-19 impact researches, factory managers cite

**57%**

operational issues

**80%**

of workers have spent personal savings

**81%**

lower demand

**63%**

negative financial impact

Better Work play a key role in supporting constituents on best practices in social protection systems to help address the gaps and meet worker needs. BWH ground strategy for 2021 aims to implement actions to tackle issues and challenges identified



## Strengthening social dialogue in conflict resolution



Martine facilitate a dialogue between the factory management and workers' representatives to negotiation demands fairly to avoid the deterioration of relations.

Working relationships in mass employment environments are not always easy. Conflicts, claims, complaints, and disciplinary measures, among other issues, often create situations of tension between parties, which require mediation. Martine Joseph, one of the representatives from the Office of the Labour Ombudsperson, conducted her first in-person visit to a factory in the northeast of the country to help mediate a dispute, which she describes as a success.

Her intervention and mediation work made it possible to successfully reintegrate 79 workers laid off without pay for a period of 30 days, following a strike to satisfy demands on working hours. According to Mrs. Joseph, the Office has received more than a dozen major complaints from factory workers in the north regarding issues including contract disputes, working hours, payment to the social security system and maternity leave payments. This situation attracted the attention of the Office the Ombudsperson

which in early September 2021, which then carried out its first face-to-face visit to this region with technical and logistical support from Better Work Haiti.

This visit was an opportunity for representatives from the Office to promote the importance of dialogue in conflict resolution and to strengthen the presence of the Ombudsperson's office in the Northeast of the country, which contains about 46% of the textile sector's labour force. During this visit, the representative held several meetings to address specific complaints from workers from the three factories in the Caracol Industrial Park. The Office Ombudsperson does not have a physical presence in the Northeast, and according to Mrs. Joseph, it was not easy to manage outreach to the region due to budgetary constraints. Mrs. Joseph and her colleagues use information from Better Work Haiti advisory services during the meetings, to align her work with the methods used by BWH, to which the factories are already accustomed.

Mrs. Joseph thinks that many actors in the sector do not clearly understand the mission of her office and that in this sense, a regular presence of the office is desirable and that it is essential to strengthen the presence and communication with the stakeholders. Better Work Haiti (BWH) supports the government to carry out more effective inspections in accordance with labor standards to guarantee a climate of stable relations in the sector.

Better Work Haiti collaborates with Ministry of Social Affairs and

Labor (MAST) and the Office of the Ombudsperson (BMST) to build their capacities and support their initiatives so that they acquire the appropriate skills and resources to handle complaints and conflict resolution. Mrs. Joseph said, "This mission made it possible to raise awareness of the importance of social dialogue and mediation in conflict resolution and also to strengthen our presence with the actors who expect greater support from the Office of the Ombudsperson (BMST)".

## Sustainability and outlook for the Haitian garment sector - Virtual Business Forum

On 2 December 2021, stakeholders and investors came together to discuss plans and posit solutions to the myriad challenges the Haitian garment sector has faced in the past year. The Virtual Business Forum was organized by the Better Work Haiti programme, a collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), under the theme "Sustainability and Outlook for the Haitian Garment Sector." This event brought together the main players in the textile sector around a discussion of successful initiatives, including maintaining collaborative factory visits between MAST (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) and Better Work during the past year.

Amid sociopolitical difficulties and

the COVID-19 pandemic, which has negatively impacted livelihoods and well-being of the population, the Haitian garment sector has shown strong resilience to maintain its operations and contribute to employment. The IFC's continued engagement seeks to help the industry navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and work to identify and improve regulatory frameworks that can boost the development of a new value proposition for the garment sector in Haiti. Sectoral sustainability, business continuity and business

## Engage and Spread the message

BWH is sharing with you a series of key content that you may use to help spread out the message to the Elimination of Violence against Women during the awareness campaign of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence.

[Download resources](#)



investment opportunities were also debated, as well as opportunities to address challenges. Claudine Francois, Chief Technical Officer of the Better Work Haiti programme, closed the session with a call for collective action. "COVID-19 and socioeconomic instability have made collective action more crucial than ever. Global brands, governments, factories and workers' organizations acting responsibly and collaboratively is key to Haiti's recovery."





## Inside Better Work Haiti

### Better Work Haiti COVID-19 economic impact survey findings



Better Work Haiti has been engaging with sector stakeholders, including the government of Haiti, to aid in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic's effects. Better Work also plays a role in generating data and insights into working conditions in the sector through its regular compliance assessments, twice yearly reporting of results and implementing surveys among workers to generate insights for the industry. In mid-2020, among 3,330 workers surveyed across 38 factories enrolled, over two-

thirds of workers say they have experienced some sort of work disruption. Yet, over 60 per cent of respondents reported "financial stress" as a concern and few workers wish to see themselves in the medium-term future in the sector. This brief provides insight into the key issues and concerns workers have expressed related to their employment, financial distress and the external environment affects the safety and well-being.

[Download the brief to read more.](#)

### Better Work Haiti 2021 Workers survey results overview



Since the first summary of COVID-19 economic impact surveys among garment workers in Haiti in March 2021, the country has witnessed political turmoil, compounded by natural disasters and security concerns. These economic and social disruptions have compromised the livelihoods and well-being of millions of workers employed in the garment sector globally. This brief provides

an update from worker surveys conducted in Haiti seven months after the initial outreach in November 2020. The results show that while there are some areas of improvement related to more consistent working hours and pay, most workers continue to face significant hardships, including economic and food insecurity.

[Download the brief to read more.](#)

### Better Work Haiti: 23rd Biannual Compliance Synthesis Report

Long before COVID-19, Haiti faced enormous economic hardship. Growth forecasts for 2020 were around -0.4% after a drop of 1.2% recorded during the year 2019. The recent series of socio-political crises and associated instability in

the country has exacerbated the already fragile Haitian economy. Despite all difficulties and challenges, the garment sector showed strong resilience and the ability to adapt to the changing environment to continue operating.

This report presents an overview of the non-compliance findings in 27 participating factories, which were assessed at least twice before November 2021 in collaboration with the support of inspectors from the Ministry of Labor. [Read more.](#)



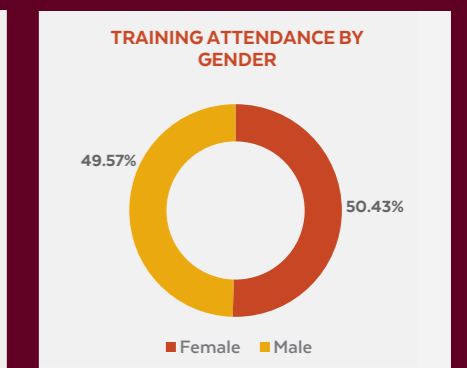
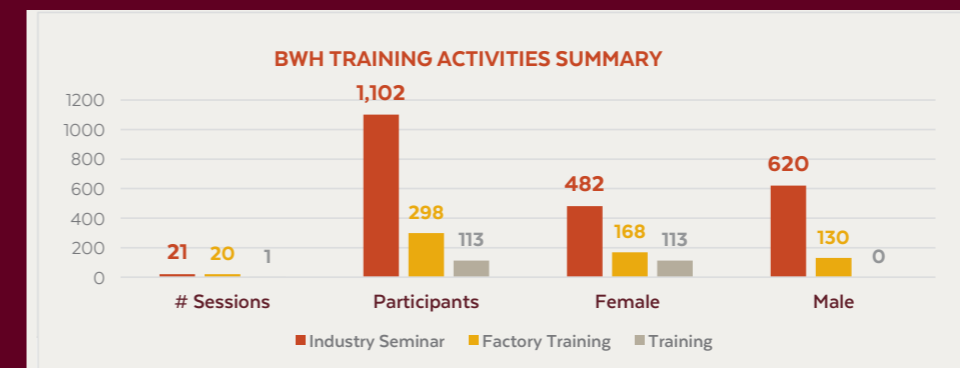
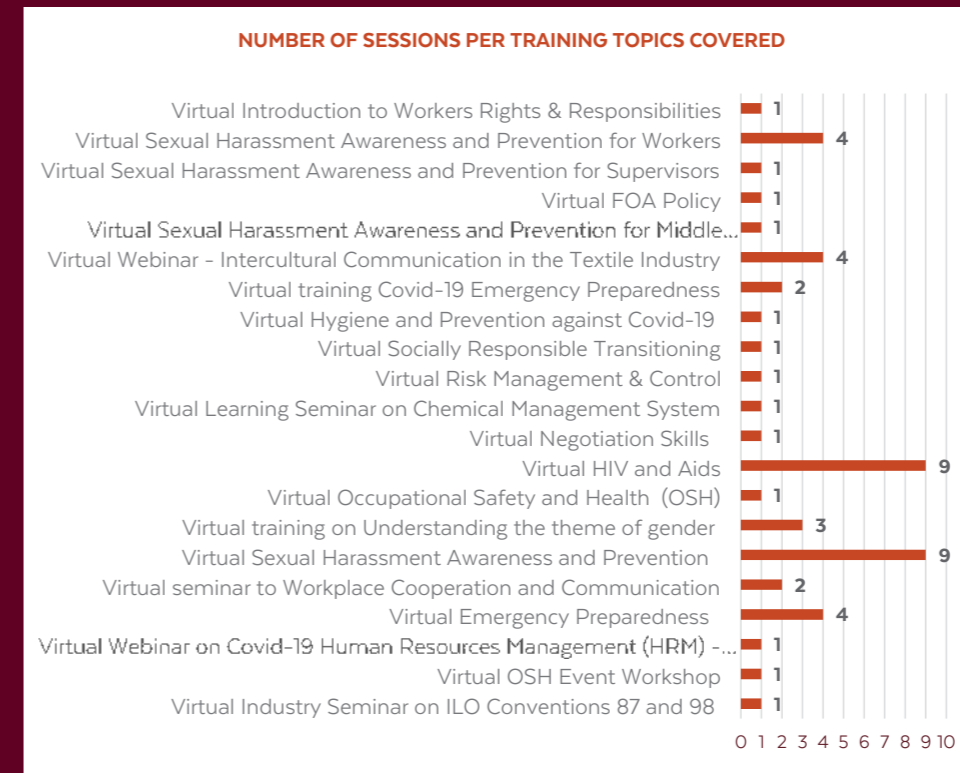
## In-factory capacity building activities

Better Work Haiti training focuses on building the capacity of the factories' management representatives and workers to have the appropriate knowledge to address compliance and workplace issues. Most of the

training is in relation to addressing issues uncovered by assessment findings and following through with recommendations by BWH Enterprise Advisory.

During the reporting period, 50

training sessions were offered to factories in Port-au-Prince, Caracol and Ouanaminthe. In an overview, the following charts provide a summary of the trainings offered by Better Work Haiti during 2021.



“The material support and logistical support provided by Better Work Haiti to the Confederation of Haitian Workers (CTH) and Confederation of Public and Private Sector Workers (CTSP) was instrumental in helping the unions in the fight to prevent the spread of COVID 19 among textile workers.”

Mr. Yvel Admettre,  
General Secretary of Confederation of Public and Private



## Key Stakeholder Webinars in 2021

Expanding capacity building activities to other key constituents



### OSH Day 2021 : Invest Now in Resilient Occupational Safety and Health Systems.

April 28th

The 2021 World Day for Safety and Health at Work focused on strategies to strengthen national OSH systems to build resilience, in order to face crises now and in the future, drawing on lessons learned from the world of work.

Better Work gathered stakeholders and key actors of the garment industry to discuss key measures, actions and issues to protect the safety and health of workers, particularly in the textile sector, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### The Law 3/8 and its implications for working conditions

September 28th

Most questions on the relationship between employees and employers find an answer in Haiti's Labor Code. However, the law on the organization and regulation of work over the 24-hour period divided into three eight-hour blocks, called Law 3/8, published in September of 2017, changes certain data on the way data on working schedule/hours and related topics such as break time, wages, overtime understood and calculated but also the opinion of some stakeholders.

Better Work Haiti held a seminar to strengthen stakeholders' understanding of the national legislation on working hours, including Law 3/8.



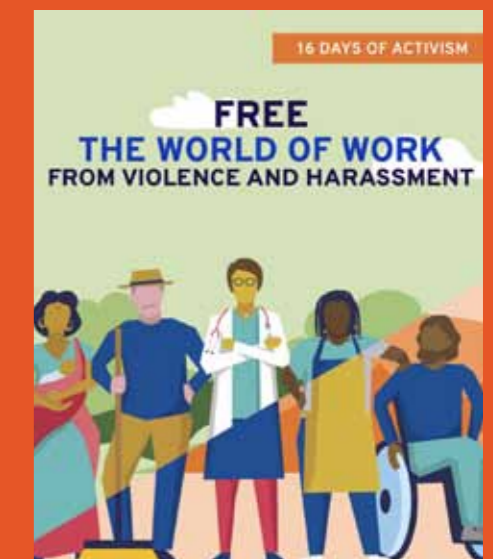
## Introduction to the Convention No. 190 and Recommendation No.206

December 9th

On December 9th, 2021, 28 participants among the tripartite constituents were introduced to the ILO Convention 190/R206 by a webinar session presented by Better Work Haiti in collaboration with a specialist from ILO-NORMS Costa-Rica. The ILO Convention 190 is the first international treaty to recognize the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. The Convention was adopted in June 2019 by the International Labor Conference

of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and entered into force on 25 June 2021.

This webinar was part of the activities of the awareness campaign against gender-based violence. It contributed to the ILO's effort in the global campaign to support the discussion towards the purpose of the ratification of this C190/R206 with the government and local political decision-makers.



### More content are available to lean more:

- **IFC to support Haiti in revamping the garment sector**
- **Haiti will invest in productive infrastructure with IDB's support**
- **US increases annual limit for duty-free apparel from Haiti**
- **Better Work makes positive strides despite pandemic**
- **Better Work Haiti Annual Report 2020: An Industry and Compliance Review**
- **Better Work and COVID-19**
- **Création d'opportunités d'investissement dans le secteur textile haïtien**



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## ABOUT BETTER WORK

Better Work – a collaboration between the United Nation’s International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group – brings together all levels of the garment industry to improve working conditions and boost the competitiveness of apparel businesses.

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