



BETTER WORK
Jordan

Newsletter

A Year in Review - 2015

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Message From Better Work Jordan



Dear Friends,

I take this occasion to greet and thank you all for your great job and support throughout the year. It is with great pleasure that ILO/BWJ announces a renewed success for Jordan's garment sector in 2015. Despite regional political challenges, all indicators show a steady growth for the industry: exports have increased 10 percent compared to last year, the total number of garment workers has reached to some 60,000 and three new investors have started their operations in the country. In collaboration with the MOL and the country's employers, more satellite factories were also established in rural areas, where mostly Jordanians live. This has had a positive impact in increasing the number of locals working in the garment sector. The partnership between BWJ and MoL has expanded, building up on the mutual exchange of knowledge and experience that started years ago.

Finally, BWJ will keep working in the coming years with all the stakeholders to improve the working and living conditions of the sector's workers, building capacities for the national constituents and improve Jordan's competitiveness within the global supply chain, thus contributing to bring the local garment sector to the next level.

Tareq Abu Qaoud
Better Work Jordan Programme Manager

From pilot to certainty:

Al Hassan Workers' Center

The Workers' Center in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone has grown into an independent project under the International Labour Organization nearly two years after its establishment in 2014.

The shift will help the Center stand on its own feet in the future and give the opportunity to the over 18,000 workers inside the sprawling factory area to shape services according to their needs.

Originally launched as a pilot project, the Center, the first of its kind in Jordan and the region, seeks to respond to the migrant workers' most pressing needs.

Some 1,000 employees from eight countries, mostly from Southeast Asia, use its facilities weekly to exercise, play cricket, access the internet, take classes in job and life skills, and socialize. The Center is also used for celebration of national days. Thousands have also so far benefitted from legal advice services and trade union support.

"I take computer classes here so, one day, I will be able to work at a company back home," said Roksana, a Bangladeshi garment worker who frequently attends the center. "It is possible to obtain a computer certificate here. My aim is to earn it and then use it to get a better job back in Bangladesh."

Initially supported by the ILO's Better Work Jordan programme, as well as USAID and USDOL, Jordan's Industrial Estates Corporation, the Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters Association, Irbid Chamber of Industry, and the General Trade Union for Garment and Textile Industries, the Center has now secured funds from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) through the ILO's Work in Freedom project.



Jordan seals commitment to implementing unified contract for migrant garment workers

Jordan's main apparel employer associations and the country's garment union signed the guidelines for the implementation of a new unified contract for migrant workers in the garment sector in December. This is a further step towards harmonising recruitment and employment policies among different employee nationalities in the country.

"This is the first version of the contract, we need to see it as an organic document that can evolve over time," said Tareq Abu Qaoud, the ILO's Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme manager. "Following its implementation, we will start learning from it and understanding what parts should be modified or added."

Facilitated by the ILO and supported by BWJ, the contract will help end the practice of some migrant garment workers signing multiple contracts in their home country, and then signing different contracts when they arrive in Jordan. The unified contract will also give them a clearer understanding of their employment conditions.

"This is a huge accomplishment for Jordan, not only for the garment sector, as it can be implemented by other sectors and also outside Jordan," said Dina Khayyat, President of the Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters' Association (JGATE).

Announced earlier this year, the contract is one of the main provisions of a sector-wide collective bargaining agreement signed in 2013 between the Jordan Garments, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association, the Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments, and the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries.

"We need the cooperation of all parties to defeat the existence of multiple different contracts for the migrant workers," said Abdallah al Jbour, Director of Labour Inspection at Jordan's Ministry of Labour. "Any complaint or violation will be investigated by the Ministry's inspectors."

The sector employs approximately 40,000 migrant workers, the majority of whom originate from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India.

"The general idea of the contract is good, as it helps to identify discrepancies among recruitment and employment practices," said Lubna Yasmine, First Labour Secretary at the Bangladeshi Embassy in Jordan.

Fathallah al Omrani, President of the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries welcomed the commitment and said that the garment sector was finally starting to grasp the fruits that all the stakeholders have been working on for years.

For more information, visit:

http://www.ilo.org/beirut/media-centre/news/WCMS_435506/lang--en/index.htm

Jordan's landmark CBA extended until 2017



Jordan's two main apparel employers associations and the country's garment union signed in August a two-year extension of the sector's collective bargaining agreement (CBA) struck in 2013.

The CBA aims at strengthening workers' representation and the stakeholders' partnership, improving the sector's working conditions of over 55,000 employees, as well as the productivity and competitiveness of the industry.

The contract has been a breakthrough in Jordan since its inception and still constitutes one of the most comprehensive of its kind in the region and, in the apparel sector, worldwide.

ILO/BWJ supported the negotiation process between the Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters Association (J-GATE), the Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments (AOFWG) and the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries by providing collective bargaining training to both parties ahead of discussions.

Amendments to the original CBA include an increase in seniority bonuses for workers with more than five years of employment.

FAIR to be fair

BWJ is collaborating on a newly launched international project set to promote fair recruitment practices while tackling abuses on workers active in the local garment sector.

Dubbed "Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment (FAIR)," the ILO project seeks to reduce coercive practices during recruitments, decrease violations of fundamental employees' rights at work and identify unscrupulous actors, who will then be held accountable for violations.

An international ILO programme, the pilot is being implemented in Jordan with garment workers coming from Nepal. But other targeted countries include Tunisia and the Philippines.

"Jordan's side of the project has three main goals," said Suha Labadi, National Coordinator for the FAIR project. "It will establish fair recruitment corridors with Nepal to prevent exploitation of migrant workers, provide them with access to reliable information and services and spread global and national knowledge on ethical recruitment."

All stakeholders in the garment sector greeted and supported the initiative, hoping it would be possible to extend it to the other worker nationalities.

Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the project started in September and will run through 2018.





BWJ and the country's Ministry of Labour are working hand-in-hand to train inspectors to ensure that local garment factories abide by their commitments to implement Jordan's labour law, thus meeting the sector's international standards.

This was the last round of a series of workshops that began earlier this year.

Presenting recurring flaws that they witnessed during factory visits, MoL inspectors suggested actions aimed at reducing their occurrence and ways to carry out controls to reduce risks in the workplace — like the one implemented by BWJ.

Team Leader Zainab Yang and Ala'a Al-Saifi conducted several trainings and brainstorming sessions with MoL inspectors throughout the year highlighting the importance of coordination between the different levels of the organization to achieve a complete adherence to the country's labour law.

Some 60 new inspectors from the MOL attended the last three-session training in December, which also showed the way factories relate to BWJ's work assessments and the task of officials to advise factories on improving their compliance to the specific set of rules.

Jordan spins to success

Shrugging off regional turmoil, Jordan's garment sector continues to grow with no signs of losing momentum any time soon.

The apparel industry accounts for 17 percent of the country's exports —which go mostly to the United States because of a free trade agreement between the two countries —surged from \$700 million in 2007 to some \$1.4 billion in 2014. They are set to grow by an additional 10 percent in 2015, according to the Jordan Garment, Accessories and Textiles Export Association.

Largely producing men's and women's apparel ranging from jeans and sportswear to formal wear and undergarments, Jordan's clothing can access the US, Canada, EU markets as of 2012 – duty free.



An increased desire of buyers to source from Jordan in recent years shows that the trend is not abating. BWJ is currently engaged with the 29 international buyers currently operating in Jordan.

Most apparel factories are situated in 14 Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs), the three largest being located in Dulyal, Sahab and outside the country's second largest city of Irbid.

The industry employs more than 55,000 workers, around three quarters of whom are migrants hailing from South and South-East Asia.

Major retail buyers active in Jordan include US department stores like Target, JC Penney, Sears and Walmart, in addition to brands Calvin Klein, HBI, Gap, Under Armour, Nike, PVH and Ralph Lauren.

For more information, visit:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pM_i4KSziFQ

Adjusted BW Core Services model highlights team force self-engagement

BW's revamped collection of Core Services has put factories' workers and their management in the forefront of change by magnifying their voices, while leading to the enhancement of the companies' competitiveness.

Despite the BW Core Services model has been implemented across eight countries since 2009, it is the first time that all actors within factories are asked to take a critical look to their situation and point out divergence from international labour standards and national labour laws.

The mission of the revised approach launched in April is involving all people from across the supply chain in consultations, which are set to maximize impact, sustainability and scale. "It will do this by stimulating improvements in areas of non-compliance, creating higher levels of factory ownership and responsibility and strengthening worker-management communication at workplace," BWJ Team Leader Zainab Yang said.

Few steps in the process, buyers and factories are then accompanied to fix possible internal issues and build capacity in a sustainable way by relying on a combined mechanism of self-diagnosis and external assessment, advisory program and training sessions provided by BW.

In Numbers

- During the past few years, Jordan has experienced rapid growth in the apparel industry, where in 2014, apparel exports exceeded **\$1.4 BILLION** – almost double that of 2007.
- There are currently **29 INTERNATIONAL BUYERS** sourcing from Jordan and who are engaged with Better Work Jordan, a unique partnership between the International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation
- Jordanians make around **25 PERCENT** of the total workforce. There are currently **15 SATELLITE FACTORIES** in areas across Jordan, including Madaba, al Karak, Irbid, Ajloun and Jerash, employing around **3,500 JORDANIANS** working in the garment industry.
- Since the start of the programme in 2009, Better Work Jordan has conducted **300 ASSESSMENTS** and **2,000 ADVISORY VISITS**.
- It has also conducted some **500 TRAININGS** for over **6,000 WORKERS** and about **500 MANAGERS** in **57 FACTORIES**. The trainings cover topics such as Basic Rights and Responsibilities of Workers, Supervisory Skills Training, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Financial Management, Occupational Safety and Health, and Fire Safety.
- As of its latest compliance report, Better Work Jordan completed assessments of **64 FACTORIES**. **75 EXPORTING FACTORIES** and their subcontractors participate in Better Work Jordan's programme, employing **95 PERCENT OF THE INDUSTRY'S WORKFORCE** and accounting for **95 PERCENT OF JORDAN'S APPAREL EXPORTS**.

For more information on satellite factories, visit:

<http://betterwork.org/jordan/?p=1263>

2016 Vision: BWJ Stakeholders

Abdallah al Jbour, Director of Labour Inspection at Jordan's Ministry of Labour

"I look forward to seeing the implementation of the new unified contract for migrant workers and supervising the inspections to verify its execution in the country with the Ministry of Labour and all the parties which have been involved in its drafting starting immediately in the new year. I hope BWJ will help organize special workshops for the investors to understand the new policies included in the unified contract. Also, in light of the success of the satellite factories in Jerash, Tafleh, Ajloun, Ma'an, where almost 90 percent of the workforce is Jordanian, I would like to see more satellite factories thriving, especially in impoverished rural areas."

Mervat Jumhawi, Jordanian union organizer for the garment sector

"Following the successful BWJ training programs that have been conducted with workers from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, I would like BWJ to extend its awareness sessions and trainings to the workers from Madagascar, Burma and Nepal, which are currently not taking place due to a lack of translators. I also hope that there would be the chance for these workers to see the opening in Amman of their respective embassies in the coming year, as they are much needed. We also urge to improve, together with the help of BWJ, health services, both physical and psychological, for all the workers."

Fathallah Omrani, President of the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries

"We want to continue our fruitful collaboration with BWJ, which has been built up on trust and cooperation over the years. I hope with its help, new agreements struck this year — like the unified contract for migrant workers — will be translated into all the employees' languages and that printed hand outs will be delivered, as not all workers have access to the Internet. It would also be a good idea to add a video in different languages explaining the new regulations, since many among the migrant workers can neither read nor write."

Dina Khayyat, President of the Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters' Association (JGATE).

"As for the garment sector, I hope exports would further increase in order to reach \$2 billion by 2020. I urge that BWJ program to transfer the knowledge to the Jordanian Ministry of Labour inspection department and increase its training of middle management on dealing with the factories' employees. And I hope that the latter could also enjoy BWJ training on dealing with their shared dormitories and living spaces. I hope that through the solid cooperation established throughout the years with BWJ, we would be able to increase the local workforce, thus reducing Jordan's high unemployment rate."

Shakir Ismail, General Manager at EAM Maliban Textiles Jordan Pvt Ltd

"Buyers are concerned about the political situation in the region. The ones who have been working with Jordan don't really have a problem with it, as they know how stable the country is, but in this industry, one needs to add some new buyers every other year. Our problem is that now we are having challenges with attracting new buyers. They should be invited to Jordan because seeing is believing. I wish BWJ will help promote Jordan as a competitive production country, at least highlighting the country's garment sector in the areas where BW already operates."

Ali Imran, Director of Hitech Textile

“BWJ is one of the best things that happened to the sector in Jordan. Also the customers have now understood that we work under this umbrella and everything is following a positive direction but we have to keep building this up. I wish that BWJ will help attract more customers into this market and convince them to rely on BWJ’s assessments instead of relying on their own audits. To achieve that, I expect BWJ to work more closely with the customers and pull them under their umbrella rather than having them decide to go separately.”

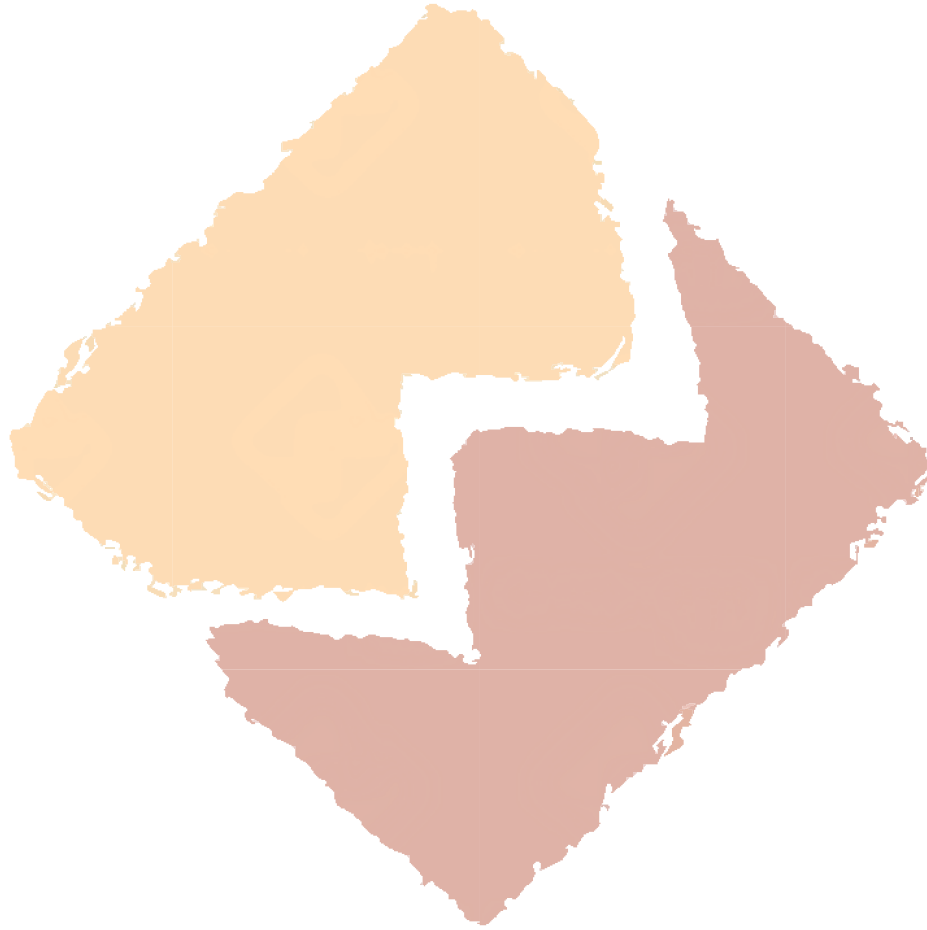
Loay Tolba, New Balance Compliance Manager for Europe, Middle East, Africa and South Asia

“I hope that the program carried out with the ILO about better workers recruitment will continue and expand via seminars that bring together brands and factories, followed by the direct implementation of the ideas discussed. Most of the problems come from the recruitment process in their home countries to the host countries, where they are offered conditions that cannot be fulfilled, leading them to expect a different reality both concerning salaries as well as living conditions. The number one issue in the industry worldwide is the salary, especially when it is connected to overtime, which is a problem in Jordan. Finding a proper bonus scheme in the country and tackling the overtime issue would solve many tensions inside the factories.”

Participating Suppliers

Ajloun Factory (Satellite unit for Hi Tech textile L.L.C Jordan
 and Apparel Concepts L.L.C Jordan)
 Al Areen for Garment Manufacturing L.L.C.
 Al Hadaf
 Al Hanan for clothes manufacturing
 Al-Khawthar
 Al Masera Textile
 Al Qadri for Textile
 Al Tafilah Apparel Co. Ltd
 Al Tayaseer Factory for Apparel
 APPAREL CONCEPTS L.L.C.
 Aseel Universal Garments Mfgr Co Ltd.
 Atateks Foreign Trade
 Atlanta Garment Manufacturing Company.
 Business Faith
 Camel Textile International Corp
 Casual Wear
 Century Miracle - Al-Mustamira Satellite unit
 Century Miracle-Best Quality Jordan
 Century Miracle-Indian Building
 Century Miracle-Main Building
 Century Wear
 Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 1)
 Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 2)
 Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 4)
 Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 6)
 Classic Fashion Satellite (Karak)
 EAM Maliban Textile Jordan (PVT) Ltd. (Dulayl)
 EAM Maliban Textile Jordan (PVT) Ltd. (Satellite Unit)
 El Zay
 Fine Apparel Ltd.
 Galaxy Apparel Industry
 Galaxy Apparel Industry (Satellite)
 Haifa
 Hi-Tech Textile L.L.C.
 International British Garments Mfg Co. Ltd.

International Elegance
 Ivory Garments Factory L.L.C.
 Ivory Satellite
 Jerash Garments Manufacturing Co
 Jordanian Modern Textile
 Kareem
 M/S United Creations L.L.C.
 Musa
 Mustafa and Kamal Ashraf Trading (Jordan) Garment Ltd.
 Needle Craft Ltd. Jordan.
 Oasis
 Paramount
 Pine Tree
 Prestige Apparel Manufacturing Ltd
 Rainbow
 Reginal Textile Supportive Industries (R-TEX)
 Rich Door
 Rich Pine
 Sana Garments
 Saysaban Textile Factory
 Southern Garment
 Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co. (Unit 1)
 Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co. (Unit 2)
 Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co. (Unit 3)
 Standard Jeans Satellite unit
 Standard Textile
 Sterling Apparel Al Qastal Branch
 Sterling Apparel Manufacturing (Sahab).
 Sterling Apparel Manufacturing. (Satellite Unit)
 Straight Line
 Third Dimension Apparel L.L.C.
 Tusker Apparel Ltd. Co.
 United Creations L.L.C (Al-Azraq)
 Vega Textile Ltd
 VML
 W&D Apparel (Jordan) Corp.



BETTER WORK *Jordan*

This newsletter was produced by Better Work Jordan. Better Work is a partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in collaboration with local and international stakeholders. It unites the expertise of the ILO in labour standards with that of the IFC in private sector development.

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