



▶ **Mothers@Work**
A qualitative assessment

► Summary

This report explores the effects of the Mothers@Work programme on participating factories, focusing on changes in policy, practice and pregnancy experiences. This light-touch assessment draws from qualitative interviews in six garment factories enrolled in Better Work Bangladesh (BWB) that participated in the Mothers@Work programme between 2018 and 2019. All factories have updated their workplace policies on maternity benefits and breastfeeding. The interviews highlighted how participation in the programme strengthened factory policies and

practices supporting expecting and new mothers on the factory floors. The report also highlights some additional areas related to women leaving and re-entering the labor market due to childcare responsibilities and women workers' preferences for receiving their salaries in cash. These two topics bring in broader questions about women's economic participation in Bangladesh, which could be explored in future research. The report ends with a set of recommendations for the programme and its design and monitoring.



► Introduction

Better Work has always placed gender equality at the heart of its strategy, recognizing that interventions that support women's empowerment, by addressing the underlying root causes of discrimination and inequality at all levels, and promoting gender equality and effective social dialogue, are the processes that drive lasting improvements within firms and encourage overall inclusive growth in the garment sector and beyond.

In this context, Better Work launched the programme Mothers@Work in partnership with UNICEF in Bangladesh. The national initiative was designed to protect the wellbeing of mothers and to ensure that their children receive adequate early nutrition. Since 2017, Better Work Bangladesh (BWB) has implemented the special initiative in 103 partner factories.

In 2022, a qualitative assessment of the Mothers@Work programme was conducted to understand its implementation and impact on the lives of working mothers in participating BWB factories, focusing on changes in workplace policies, facilities, and practices. It also tries to grasp any spillover effects in households and communities. This report presents findings from the qualitative assessment implemented in June-July 2022. Recommendations presented at the end of the report are based on factory case studies and conversations with Better Work staff.

Programme implementation

The Mothers@Work programme sought to promote seven minimum standards related to maternity rights and breastfeeding at work:

- Breastfeeding rooms in enterprise sites with female employees where nursing mothers can breastfeed or express breastmilk and store the milk
- Breastfeeding breaks for nursing mothers – that is, 30x30 minute breaks in addition to lunch breaks and flexible working arrangements
- Childcare services and early education for pre-school children
- Maternity leave according to legal provision (for at least six months)
- Cash and medical benefits to women who go on maternity leave
- Employment protection and non-discrimination for all workers – guaranteed right to return to work in the former or an equivalent position
- Ensuring health protection of pregnant or nursing mothers, who should not be obliged to perform work that can harm the mother or the child.

Factories engaged with the M@W programme over one year. The programme started with an orientation with the factory's senior management to convey the importance of strengthening maternity rights, especially the minimum standards for breastfeeding and maternity protection. Following this, BWB helps factories develop a workplace breastfeeding policy using a template that outlines the seven minimum standards in detail. BWB and BRAC then conducted training with healthcare providers, supervisors, welfare officer and workers on the benefits of breastfeeding. Over the course of the programme, BWB EAs advised factories and troubleshooted issues as needed.

► Methodology

The light-touch assessment sought to explore the impact of the Mothers@Work programme on a select group of factories. As such, the assessment sought to facilitate conversation and document key insights and progress over time. Primary data was collected through key informant interviews and focus group discussions in selected factories. Such data is complemented with on-site observations and factory compliance data from Better Work.

Assessment Design

The assessment qualitatively explored the effects of the Mothers@Work programme on maternity protection and breastfeeding practices in factories. As such, the assessment sought to understand how Mothers@Work may have *contributed* to more inclusive workspaces for women in participating BWB partner factories. As change is at the core of any evaluation, findings are structured as changes at different levels: factory policy, factory practice, and individual.

At the factory-level, the assessment sought to understand how participation in this programme changed workplace policies on maternity rights and breastfeeding and the implementation of said policies in participating factories. **At the individual-level**, the assessment sought to understand how the programme changed knowledge and practice among pregnant and

new mothers. It further tried to understand changes in attitudes towards pregnant and new mothers in the participating factories.

Case selection

Six factories under two owner groups were selected to participate in this assessment. Factories were selected by the Mothers@Work focal point based on the following considerations:

- *Starting date*: These factories are some of the early participants of the programme. The six factories joined the Mothers@Work programme in mid-late 2018.
- *Commitment*: BWB noted these factory owners to have shown strong commitment to the programme and its agenda.
- *Availability and willingness* to participate in this evaluation were also considered when selecting factories.

TABLE 1. FACTORIES INCLUDED IN THE QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT.

	FACTORY	OWNERSHIP AND LOCATION	TOTAL WORKERS	% WOMEN WORKERS
GROUP A	Factory 1	All four factories are separate buildings but are in the same compound. They share one compliance officer.	7,250	45.0
	Factory 2		1,824	18.8
	Factory 3		984	33.9
	Factory 4		2,534	38.6
GROUP B	Factory 5	The factories are under the same ownership but are located in two different areas and have separate management. They have individual compliance teams.	3,871	58.4
	Factory 6		7,263	60.0

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with different management members and workers between June 19 and 23 (see Annex B for the interview guidelines). One full day was spent at each Group B factory. All four factories under Group A in one day. The FGDs in Factory A included workers from the different factories. Compliance managers, welfare officers and medical staff were also consulted during these visits.

The focus groups were divided into three groups: i) maternity leave returnees, ii) pregnant workers, and iii) newly recruited women workers.¹ To ensure anonymity, the names of factories and interviewees are replaced with pseudonyms. See **Table 3** under **Annex A** for the full list of interviewees for each factory.

It is worth noting that there may have been varying levels of “worker coaching” in the different factories. This refers to factory management coaching workers to say specific things during factory assessments, audits, or project evaluations, which generally tend to give positive responses. Such coaching seemed especially prominent in Factory 5 under Group B, where a few participants had overly similar responses, especially to questions related to maternity benefit payments. One of the FGDs with factories under Group A had an instance where one respondent started narrating points on nutrition when asked about their wages and benefits. These answers could also have resulted from the same participants sitting in on different interviews and consultations on the same topic.

¹ The FGD for new workers and pregnant workers were separated after the first factory visit to Factory 5. This was for easier discussions depending on the priority areas for the two groups.

Limitations

This assessment is not without limitations. First, time was a limiting factor. More extended factory visits could have added further insights into the programme. For instance, four factories had to be covered during one of the visits, which took time away from making more detailed observations on individual factories. First-hand training observations would have also allowed a more nuanced understanding of each factory's training quality.

Second, there is some selection bias in the factories represented in this sample. The six factories from two groups were selected based on their perceived commitment to the programme. These factories also represent some of the highly ranked garment producers in the country and may not be representative of

the industry. Ideally, the factory selection would include a mix of contrasting cases in terms of commitment and performance.

Third, future discussions should include funding and implementation partners, primarily BRAC and UNICEF. Including BRAC can add valuable insights as they led the breastfeeding and nutrition training for factory medical staff and workers.

Lastly, as the programme did not have an articulated theory of change (ToC), it was somewhat challenging to dissect the intended changes and the underlying assumptions. A more robust articulation of the intended changes, especially in the context of Better Work's role, will help with future programme design and related studies and evaluations.



► Findings

The following presents the insights from the interviews, focus group discussions and (limited) document review.

Changes in workplace policies and practice

All factories have updated their workplace policies on maternity rights and breastfeeding.² These policies were revised based on the **seven standards** and were overseen by the Mothers@Work focal point. However, regular implementation of these policies could not be verified with confidence during this study.

Breastfeeding breaks

The law mandates **two 30-minute breaks** for breastfeeding mothers. Although factories were giving these breaks before the programme, this is now fortified in the company policies. In practice, there is a variation in how workers prefer to take these breaks. While some workers prefer to take two separate 30-minute breaks, many prefer to take them together and often around before or after their lunchtimes. Factors such as whether their child is in the factory childcare, distance to their homes and availability of family support contribute to an individual's decision on how they prefer to take these breaks. Pregnant and breastfeeding workers are **given special IDs or gate passes** and leave and enter the premises as needed in all factories.

I am not worried about coming back to work after my maternity leave. Our welfare officer sat me down and shared all the benefits. They [the factory] will give breastfeeding breaks before and after the lunch break. They will support me with leave days. If women want to come back to work after pregnancy, they can.

- A pregnant worker from Factory 6.

Breastfeeding areas

All factories have **designated breastfeeding areas**. Factory 5 separated its childcare and breastfeeding areas in 2019 and attributed this change to its participation in the programme. Other factories noted making minor improvements to their existing breastfeeding areas during their participation in the programme. In addition to breastfeeding areas within childcare facilities, the four factories under Group A also provided breastfeeding areas on some factory floors (depending on the operations). Even so, workers did not seem to prefer using spaces on the floors due to the loudness and perceived lack of privacy.

² The factories did not share their past policies, so I was unable to do a systematic review of the changes in each case.

It's much better now. There was no separate breastfeeding room before – it was a small space inside the childcare. It [the separate breast room] happened after the Mothers@Work programme. This is an improvement. It is a lot better than before.

- A pregnant worker from Factory 5, who had another child some four years ago.

Childcare services

All factories provide **childcare facilities** for their workers. These facilities are equipped with the necessary facilities and personnel. Most workers consulted across the six factories did not use the childcare facilities. Each FGD with workers had 1-2 childcare users, if any. In most cases, women had family members like their mother or mother-in-law helping with childcare duties. Leaving children at home with family members was a prevalent preference. Some women from Factory 5 also noted that their mother or mother-in-law would bring the kids to the factory childcare during breaks (instead of the women worker going home during breaks) for breastfeeding.

Women using the factory childcare facilities were often internal migrants and did not have family members living with them or in proximity. As such, geography and family support also influence individual decisions to use or not use childcare facilities.

Paid leave and salary

Two workers from That's It Sweater linking section noted that they had a **piece rate system** with hourly targets.³ The payment system for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers was said to have been based on a base salary and grade, and that the targets were "adjusted." It remains unclear how the factory adjusts their payment and targets for pregnant and nursing mothers.

All six factories said they gave their women workers the legally required paid maternity leave. This, however, could not be verified first-hand with confidence during this study. According to the latest BWB compliance assessments, EAs did not find any evidence of non-compliance with these factories *paying workers on time and correctly when they take maternity leave*.⁴

Women workers in all factories also noted informal practices where some **preferred** to receive their maternity leave benefits in separate instalments. That is, they would request their factory HR to break up the total payments into smaller amounts. This preference was to help ensure that they could save some money for themselves and did not have to hand over the entire sum to their husbands or in-laws. Other reasons for this aversion included limited education, having to spend more time at banks and ATMs and having to withdraw a minimum amount from the ATMs.

³ This came up during an FGD with new workers in Group A factories.

⁴ Referring to the question "Does the employer pay workers on time and correctly when they take maternity leave?" under the Compensation cluster in Better Work's Compliance Assessment Tool (CAT).

Some women don't use phones or can't read SMS. They can't read the messages to check if they've received money and how much they have. There are problems like these. Husbands tend to spend more money. It's better to get cash in hand. We can 'steal' [referring to saving] some money!

– A new women worker from Factory 5.

We can't withdraw less than BDT 500 at a time. This is a lot. I also have to queue for the bank, which takes a lot of time. I can also keep some money to myself without my husband noticing if I'm paid in cash.

– A new women worker from Factory 6.

All interviewed workers also strongly preferred receiving cash payments rather than digital payments. The interviewees felt greater ownership of their earnings when receiving cash as it allowed them to “hide” and save some of the amounts. With digital payments, women in most cases no longer had control over their earnings.

Employment protection and non-discrimination

None of the interviewees mentioned any concerns about their job security. That is, no one expressed any concerns about being terminated or discriminated against at any point in their pregnancies. This contrasts with reports of

factories sacking pregnant workers and union members in 2020 to avoid paying maternity benefits.⁵ It is possible that this study was unable to capture this within its limited scope. It could be worth exploring who are the women who lost their jobs and from which types of factories. The factories included in this report are top-tier enterprises and may not be represent of the entire sector.

Some factories terminate their pregnant workers, but this factory doesn't do that. Some factories do not pay their workers maternity benefits the worker hasn't worked for at least six months or one year. This factory pays everyone.

– A new worker from Factory 5.

Interviewees also mentioned how some women left the garment sector (or the labor market, more broadly) for a few years or months during and after their pregnancies. This practice speaks to the societal and community expectations of women carrying the entire responsibility for childcare. According to the participants, women workers who rejoin the labor market either return to their previous employer or join a new garment factory.

I had a child three years ago and had left this factory then. Worked here for six years before. My child is now three years old, and I just rejoined this month [June 2022]. Now I have more time.

– A new worker from Factory 5 (participant rejoined the factory).

5 Politzer, M. “‘We are on our own’: Bangladesh’s pregnant garment works face the sack,” *The Guardian*, (9 July 2020). <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jul/09/we-are-on-our-own-bangladeshs-pregnant-garment-workers-face-the-sack>

Those who have economic hardships tend to come back to work. Women who don't have anyone look after their children or any support at home leave after picking up the second half of their salaries. It's mostly women who have absolutely no one else to look after their children. Some of these women come back to work after they're a little older and when they feel comfortable keeping the children in childcare or sending them to madrasa [school].

- A new worker from Factory 2.

Health protection: Both worker and management interviewees noted having maternity-related substitution systems in place. Pregnant and nursing mothers also had spaces – either on the factory floors or in the childcare area – to rest when needed. In general, the medical staff under Group B showed more awareness of the Mothers@Work programme than those in Group A.

Changes among individuals

Overall, those who participated in this study conveyed greater awareness due to their factory's participation in the Mothers@Work programme. Factories 5 and 6 noted that they were already aware of the training materials but participating in the programme helped them streamline their efforts and establish **the associated practices more as norms**. That is, it is now well established that pregnant and nursing mothers will have access to the needed breaks and services and no longer have to negotiate their rights with line supervisors or managers.

Most worker participants could not fully articulate differences in behavior and practices between **supervisors** who received direct training from the Mothers@Work programme compared to those who did not. Some workers from Factory 5 (under Group B) shared that directly trained supervisors were somewhat more aware of pregnant and breastfeeding women's needs and rights than line supervisors who did not participate. Factory 5 workers also recommended training more supervisors on maternity rights in the future.

There are some supervisors who participated in the programme. The supervisors who received training never question women leaving their workplaces for breastfeeding. Sometimes I don't have my mobile phone with me during work. Then my mother-in-law would call my supervisor to let him know that she came to the childcare with my baby. He then lets me go. He's very helpful in this way.

- A maternity leave returnee from Factory 5.

Regarding breastfeeding and nutrition, all women workers shared that they were already aware of the benefits of breastfeeding before Mothers@Work. They noted that the programme helped reemphasize its value. All workers showed strong awareness about their maternity rights and benefits. It might be interesting to investigate any differences in awareness of maternity rights between participating and non-participating factories (both in the Mothers@Work programme and, more broadly, in BWB).

Conditions for “success and sustainability”

All participants – both management and workers – emphasized how **having “buy-in” from the owners and top management was critical** to the programme’s implementation in their factories. The fact that the intervention first worked with factory top management helped the mid-management implement the programme with relative ease. Factories that needed some financial investment to renovate or build breastfeeding and childcare spaces were especially appreciative of having a commitment from the business owners from the start. For instance, Factory 5 had to make some investment in renovating the space for their new breastfeeding area.

All factories have **continued to train new women workers** on their maternity rights during orientation. There is some variation in how factories implement this training – while some factories involved all genders in this

training, others only included women recruits. Mid-management all factories also requested refresher trainings from BWB to stay motivated to continue to improve their support to working mothers.

Five of the six factories had established their **Porshi group** – an in-factory support group comprised of women workers, compliance and welfare officers and medical staff. Although Factory 6 did not have an active porshi group, their management and welfare staff appeared proactive with their pregnant and nursing women workers. Factory 6 management noted how worker turnover and the Covid-19 pandemic had made their support group obsolete over time. The factory, however, continues to train their workers on maternity rights. Interestingly, the medical staff in Group A (Factories 1-4) did not seem to know of their *porshi* group even when their names were on the list of group members.



► Recommendations

In addition to questions about the programme and its training, participants were asked for feedback on the Mothers@Work programme. The following recommendations are based on the findings presented in the previous section and suggestions from participants. These may be considered when designing and scaling Mothers@Work in the future.

Programme design

- The next phase of Mothers@Work should articulate a theory of change and clearly state the assumptions made. The TOC can further strengthen linkages between the programme and Better Work's goals.
- Engaging more men, especially line supervisors and managers, can further strengthen the programme.
- The Mothers@Work programme should continue to start with and emphasize top management buy-in and ownership. This will be particularly critical for factories that may need to build or renovate their childcare and breastfeeding areas.
- BWB should consider conducting refresher training or workshops for factories that have already completed the programme. All factory management expressed interest in continuing to work on this with BWB.
- Some management interviewees from Factory 6 and Group A recommended Better Work (and UNICEF) to expand this programme beyond the garment industry (to other manufacturing sectors).
- It could be worth exploring how to familiarize workers with their wage calculations, including maternity benefits and salaries. This will be particularly relevant for the small group of women workers in departments using piece rate systems.

Future research

- It will be worth exploring differences in policies, practice and worker awareness between factories that have completed the Mothers@Work programme to those that haven't. Further research can also investigate how the programme impacts turnover among women workers in the industry.
- Further research can also try to understand broader dynamics in the labor market, with a focus childcare responsibilities and how women leave and re-enter the labor market.

BWB implementation and monitoring

- Overall, the programme can benefit from streamlined documentation and monitoring of activities and factory engagement. BWB can consider establishing a light-tough monitoring process to keep all EAs and factories engaged throughout the programme.
- Implementation success with these six factories included in this report is also a result of the assigned EA's constant dedication and commitment to the Mothers@Work Programme. It is worth exploring ways to make all EAs and participating factories equally committed to the programme's agenda.

► Annex A. Sampling

TABLE 2. FACTORIES IN THE SAMPLE

	FACTORY	M@W START	BW CYCLE	TOTAL WORKERS	% WOMEN WORKERS
GROUP A	Factory 1	May 2018	6	7,250	45.0
	Factory 2	Dec 2018	5	1,824	18.8
	Factory 3	Dec 2018	5	984	33.9
	Factory 4	N/A	5	2,534	38.6
GROUP B	Factory 5	May 2018	7	3,871	58.4
	Factory 6	May 2018	7	7,263	60.0

TABLE 3. LIST OF KIIS AND FGD

In addition to those mentioned below, childcare staff were consulted in passing.

FACTORIES 1, 2, 3, 4		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Compliance officer ► Welfare officers (5) ► Medical doctor/ nurse – consult in passing (not interviews) 		
KII	FACTORY	FGD PARTICIPANTS
PREGNANT WORKERS (FROM WASHING UNIT)	Factories 1, 2, 3, 4	1. Operator, 5 months pregnant 2. Cutting, 6 months pregnant 3. Helper, 5 months pregnant
NEW WORKERS	Factory 4	1. Finishing, Jan 2022 2. Finishing, Jan 2022
	Factory 1	1. Finishing, Jan 2022 2. Packing, Nov 2021 (one kid in childcare)
	Factory 2	1. Dry processing, Jan 2022 2. Dry processing, Jan 2022
	Factory 3	1. Linking, May 2022 2. Linking, Feb 2022

KII	FACTORY	FGD PARTICIPANTS
MATERNITY LEAVE RETURNEES	Factory 4	1. Quality inspector, October 2021 2. Helper, April 2021 3. Quality inspector, May 2022
	Factory 1	1. Operator, December 2021 2. Finishing/Quality, June 2022
	Factory 2	1. Dry processing, April 2022 2. Dry processing, March 2022
	Factory 3	1. Quality inspector, May 2022 2. Operator, April 2022 3. Quality inspector, May 2022
FACTORY 5		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Compliance officer (1) ▶ General manager (1) ▶ Labor counselors (2) ▶ Medical doctor (1), nurse (2) 		
KII	FGD PARTICIPANTS	
MATERNITY LEAVE RETURNEES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Folding, 2 children 2. Sewing operator, 2 children 3. Sewing operator, 2 children 4. Sewing operator, 2 children 5. Quality controller, 2 children 6. Quality controller, 2 children 7. Sewing operator, 2 children 8. Helper, 2 children 9. Folding, 1 child 10. Finishing/folding, 2 children 	
PREGNANT AND NEW WORKERS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sewing operator, new worker – joined in June 2022 2. Sewing operator, 6 months pregnant 3. Sewing operator, 7 months pregnant 4. Finishing, new worker – joined in June 2022 5. Finishing, 7 months pregnant 6. Quality inspector, join date N/A 7. Quality inspector, join date N/A 8. Sewing operator, new worker, join date N/A 9. Sewing operator, new worker, join date N/A 	

FACTORY 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Compliance officer▶ Compliance and HR manager▶ Welfare officers (5) – Time in factory range from 1-7 years, with the majority having several years’ experience in Factory 6. Of them▶ Medical doctor/ nurse – consult in passing (not interviews)	
KII	FGD PARTICIPANTS
MATERNITY LEAVE RETURNEES	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Operator, June 20222. Folding, Sept 20213. Finishing (button operations), November 20214. Machine operator, June 20225. Sewing operator, April 20226. Helper, June 20227. Quality control, December 20218. Quality control, March 2022

▶ Annex B. Guiding interview questions

Note on conduct

- ▶ In-person, onsite and during working hours
 - ▶ Worker focus groups should be in separate room. Factory management or staff should not be present in the room during group discussions.
- ▶ Check with factories if they have records of workers who participated in the M@W training and list new or expecting mothers
 - ▶ Randomly select 10 x 2 women workers; however, give consideration to work pressure
- ▶ Also try to get an understanding of how many of these workers have left the factory since 2020
- ▶ For FGDs with the four Group A factories, keep track of factory representation
- ▶ Get permission to record interviews on phone (for the consultant's note keeping and not to be shared with others)
- ▶ Note: Two FGDs were not recorded as 1-2 participants had reservations about being recorded.



A. Individual interviews

WHO	Management, HR & compliance team members, Welfare officers, health workers (doctor, nurse, paramedic)
GOAL	To understand how factories have strengthened their policies on maternity rights and are implementing the said policies and training as a result of their participation in Mothers@Work.
KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	<p>How has the M@W programme changed workplace policies on maternity rights and breastfeeding and their implementation among participating factories?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What types of changes did factory managers experience because of the M@W programme? ▶ Are factories more inclusive of pregnant and new mothers as a result of the programme? ▶ Are factories delivering training to i) pregnant workers and ii) newly recruited women workers?

Guiding questions:

1. Does your factory have a policy on maternity benefits and breastfeeding?
 - a. Can you please share some of the changes in policy this factory has made since starting the Mothers@Work programme? How is your factory implementing these policy changes?
 - i. Does your factory provide BF break (30x2)?
2. How do you inform (women) workers on their maternity rights?
 - a. Is this shared during orientation?
 - b. How often do you train women workers on maternity and breastfeeding rights?
3. Does your factory have a childcare facility? If yes, when was it established?
 - a. When can workers bring / keep their children in the child care?
 - b. Do you keep records how its usage?
 - c. *If childcare facility is present, ask to see the area and make observations on location and conditions.*
4. How are health workers engaged in the realization of breastfeeding and maternity rights?
 - a. If and how are factory health workers doing antenatal / post-natal follow-ups with expecting and new mothers?
 - b. How are health workers counselling pregnant workers about breastfeeding and its importance?
5. Have the welfare officers received training on health counselling?
 - a. If yes, how were they trained?
 - b. How do welfare officers counsel workers on the maternity benefit, provision of leave and breastfeeding breaks?

B. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

WHO	<p>The FGDs will include women workers. These will be done in two groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ women workers returning from maternity leave ▶ expecting mothers and newly recruited women workers. <p>Where feasible, try to include trade union and participation committee members.</p>
GOAL	To understand how M@W has impacted – especially their knowledge and practices – expecting and new mothers in participating factories.
KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	<p>How has the M@W programme impacted knowledge and practices among pregnant and new mothers?</p> <p>How has the M@W programme changed attitudes towards pregnant women and new mothers in factories participating?</p>

Guiding questions:

Women workers returning from maternity leave (since 2018) – about 10 participants

1. Background information
 - a. How old are you? When did you join this factory? What is your position in this factory?
 - b. How many children do you have? When did you have your first and last child?
 - c. Is anyone here expecting another child?
2. Do you remember how many weeks/days you took off for maternity leave?
 - a. Were you (fully) paid during this time?
 - b. *[depending on conversation]* Are you aware of the legal provision for maternity leave in Bangladesh? *[8 weeks before delivery, 8 weeks after delivery]*
3. How did going on maternity leave affect your salary? Do you think going on maternity leave decreased your salary over time?
 4. How long did you breastfeed your children after birth?
 - a. Do you remember using feeding formula at any point? If yes, what made you use it?
 - b. After coming back to work, can you recall how often you got breastfeeding breaks?
 - c. How did your supervisors or factory management react when you took breastfeeding breaks?
 - d. Does this factory have designated spaces for breastfeeding? Have you felt comfortable in those spaces?
 5. Did you ever feel afraid of telling factory management that you were pregnant?
 - a. Were you (or any of your colleagues) afraid of losing your job because of your pregnancy or because of having young children?
 6. How often have you used the available childcare facility?
 - a. If never, why not?
 - b. If sometimes/often, what has your experience been like?

7. Have you received any counselling or training related to breastfeeding or caring for newborns and infants from the factory health and welfare officers?

a. If yes, please elaborate.

Expecting and newly recruited women workers – about 10 participants

1. Background information

- a. How old are you? When did you join this factory? What is your position in this factory?
- b. How many children do you have? When did you have your first and last child?
- c. If currently pregnant, when is your expected delivery date?

2. How many weeks will you be taking off from work for maternity leave?

- a. Were you (fully) paid during this time? / How will you be paid during this time?
- b. [*depending on conversation*] Are you aware of the legal provision for maternity leave in Bangladesh? [*8 weeks before delivery, 8 weeks after delivery*]

3. Do you think going on maternity leave will affect your salary? How?

4. Do you know how long you'll breastfeed your children after birth?

- a. Are you using or considering using baby formula? Is yes, why? If no, why not?
- b. Can you recall how your factory is providing breastfeeding breaks to new mothers?
- c. How do your supervisors or factory management react when workers take their breastfeeding breaks?
- d. Does this factory have designated spaces for breastfeeding? Do you think you will feel comfortable in those spaces?

5. Did you ever feel afraid of telling factory management that you were pregnant?

- a. Were you (or any of your colleagues) afraid of losing your job because of your pregnancy or because of having young children?

6. Are currently using or planning to use the childcare facilities in this factory?

- a. If no, why not?
- b. If yes, how often do you expect to use the facilities?

7. Have you received any counselling or training related to breastfeeding or caring for newborns and infants from the factory health and welfare officers?

- a. If yes, please elaborate.

Following donors fund Better Work through a multidonor fund, one or more country programmes or special projects (in alphabetical order)

- ▶ Australia (DFAT)
- ▶ Canada (ESDC)
- ▶ Cambodia (Royal Government, GMAC)
- ▶ European Commission (DG-INTPA)
- ▶ Germany (BMZ and GIZ)
- ▶ Japan (METI)
- ▶ Jordan (The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan)
- ▶ Levi Strauss Foundation
- ▶ Netherlands (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- ▶ Republic of Korea (Ministry of Employment and Labour) Pakistan (Export Development Fund)
- ▶ Switzerland (SECO)
- ▶ United States (US Department of Labour)
- ▶ The Walt Disney Company