

Better Work Jordan Newsletter



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BETTER WORK
Jordan



Launch of new garment workers' center in Jordan brings change to Al-Hassan Industrial Zone

A new garment workers' center in Jordan will provide much needed facilities to workers in the country's largest industrial zone.

A multi-purpose service centre has opened at Jordan's Al-Hassan Industrial Zone in a bid to improve the lives of the thousands of clothing factory workers employed there, the majority of whom are migrants from the Asian subcontinent.

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) coordinated the establishment of the workers' centre with support from USAID, the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation, the Irbid Chamber of Industry, garment factories within the industrial zone, the General Trade Union for Garment and Textile Industries, Jordan's Garment, Accessories and Textile Exporters Association (JGATE) and international brands.

The workers' centre is the first of its kind in the country, and provides facilities such as a computer lab and canteen. It will offer support to workers in the form of skills training, legal advice, and mental health counselling. (continued on page 2)

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The workers' center provides facilities such as a computer lab and canteen

Launch of new garment workers' center in Jordan brings change to Al-Hassan Industrial Zone

(Continued from page 1) The opening of the centre is a major step forward in efforts to improve the lives of tens of thousands of garment workers living and working in Jordan's industrial zones, particularly migrant employees who make up about 80 per cent of the workforce.

"The workers' centre is a breakthrough that will allow us to further progress in the garment sector in Jordan. It shows the commitment of all stakeholders to improving working conditions," said Farhan Ifram, vice chair of JGATE at the inauguration of the centre in the city of Irbid in October.

"We are pleased to be associated with this unique and innovative effort to improve the daily lives of workers in this industrial zone," said Frank Hagemann, ILO Deputy Regional Director for Arab States.

The centre is managed by the National Workers' Centre Association, which includes government, employer, and union representatives, as well as BWJ. It will oversee the overall operation of the centre and possibly others like it in the future. It will be financed through contributions by factories and worker membership fees as well as through the sales of goods and services.



Workers' center canteen

"Let us make sure that this remains a positive project for the workers and the employers at QIZs for many years to come," said Stuart Jones, U.S. ambassador to Jordan who attended the ceremony.

Established in 1998, the Al-Hassan Industrial Zone now hosts approximately 15,000 workers. Over two thirds of Jordan's 40,000 garment workers are migrants from South and South-East Asia. The majority of migrant workers originate from India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

"All sides, including the employers, made a great effort to achieve this. We want similar projects to be set up in other parts of Jordan and in countries around the world," said Fathallah Omrani, President of the General Trade Union for Garment and Textile Industries.

To learn more, visit [the website](#) of the National Workers' Center Association

Garment factory in Anjara provides rare opportunity for the economically marginalized

A government supported initiative to promote employment in the garment industry creates economic opportunity for women in marginalized communities.

Anjara – a small town in the north of Jordan – is classified by the government as one of the Kingdom's twenty six poverty pockets, districts where more than a quarter of the population lives in poverty.

Employment opportunities in Anjara are scarce and for most local women, the only work available is informal daily labour in the agricultural sector, work which is both low paid and fails to provide job security or social security benefits.

As part of an initiative to create employment in Jordan's poverty pockets, the government has recently supported the creation of a small garment factory in Anjara under the aegis of Jordan's largest garment manufacturer, Classic Fashion Apparel Industries.

"We are working on providing women with incentives by improving working conditions, improving wages, and encouraging factory owners to employ Jordanian women by paying for some of these incentives" says Hamada Abu Nijmeh, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Labour. He adds "We are

also planning on opening nurseries in these factories to encourage married women to work."

Under this initiative, the government has so far supported the establishment of five "satellite" garment factories in poverty pockets across the Kingdom, each of which is a small subsidiary of a larger garment manufacturer operating in Jordan. Over the coming year, the government expects to support the establishment of several more of these factories.

The factory in Anjara employs two hundred Jordanian workers, the vast majority of whom are women.

At first, the town's tight-knit, conservative community was reluctant to allow its young women to work in a factory but families were eventually convinced otherwise after seeing their family members at training, and learning that employees would be working under good conditions for a decent wage.

According to the factory manager, Rania Abu Zeitoun "Most of the women here have taken up

employment for the first time, it changed their personality, gave them self-confidence, and they are able to help their families with the extra income." She adds that demand for jobs at the factory has become so high that the Classic Fashion Apparel management has committed to expanding the factory. There are currently three hundred applicants on the waiting list for jobs at the small factory.

While the factory largely focuses on providing work opportunities for women, it also aims to help other marginalized groups such as persons with disability. Indeed, Abu Zeitoun herself lives with a serious disability resulting from rheumatoid arthritis.

Abu Zeitoun is optimistic about the future of satellite garment factories in Jordan, saying "We are Jordanians and we can work and be productive. We have proved ourselves. We are not at one hundred percent yet, but God willing, we will get there."

[*Click to watch a short video about this initiative*](#)



"Most of the women here have taken up employment for the first time"

Bringing Jordan's collective agreement for the garment industry to the factory level

Workers and employers come together to ensure implementation of Jordan's collective agreement for the garment industry

Following the signing of a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for Jordan's garment industry earlier this year, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has been providing support to the sector to ensure effective implementation of the agreement.

Jordan's CBA is considered to be one of the more comprehensive of its type in the garment sector in the world, with provisions on union recognition and access to workers, dues check-off, dormitory standards, dispute settlement, employer rights, and annual seniority bonuses. It came as a response to a series of longstanding disputes between workers and their employers over wages, working conditions and dormitory standards.

"Because this agreement is legally binding, everyone must comply" said Mervat Abed Al Kareem Al Jamhawi, of the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing. "But we still need help from Better Work Jordan, the Ministry of Labour and employer associations to make sure that the factories are complying."

BWJ Programme Manager, Phillip Fishman, also stresses the need to ensure compliance with the CBA. "For now the agreement is only a piece of paper," he said. "The next step is how to make it a reality and how to collaborate to make it work."



"For now the agreement is only a piece of paper. The next step is how to make it a reality"

To this end, BWJ has hosted a series of workshops led by a team of international experts on industrial relations and bringing together representatives of garment industry employers and workers.

Through this process an agreement was reached to establish a National Joint Council for the Jordan Garment and Textile Industry composed of the Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters' Association, the Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments, and the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries.

The council will be responsible for administering the implementation of the CBA by working with employers and workers to raise awareness about the terms of the agreement, receiving and processing complaints about non-compliance with the agreement, and facilitating the resolution of disputes when required. Over the coming months stakeholders will be working together to officially establish the council.

[Click to watch the video on Jordan's collective bargaining agreement for the garment industry](#)

Formation of sector team to implement national strategy for Jordan's garment industry

Jordan's national sector team for the garment industry brings government, employers and workers together to build a vision for the future of the industry

Key stakeholders from Jordan's garment industry have established a national sector team tasked with launching a national strategy for Jordan's garment industry. The team, which is composed of representatives from government, employers and the garment workers' trade union, will be overseeing the implementation of the national strategy over the coming years.

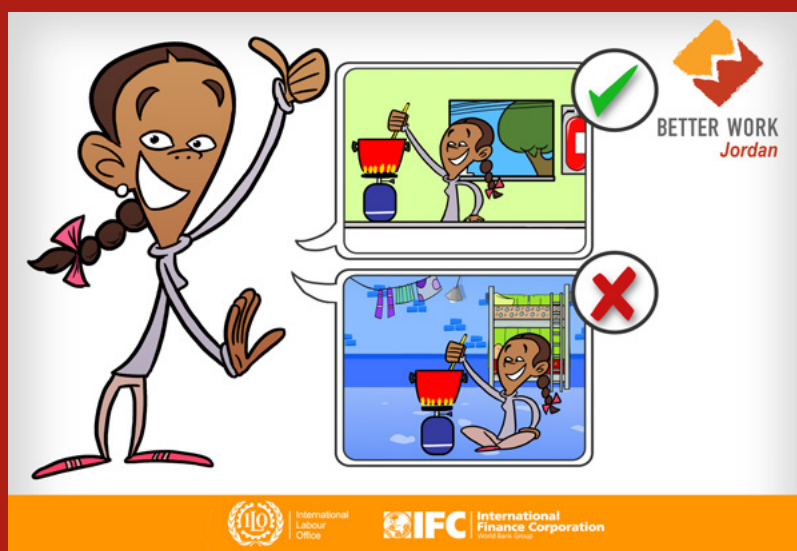
The formation of this sector team follows several months of consultation between stakeholders to develop a shared vision for the future of Jordan's garment industry. The consultation process involved two participatory strategic planning workshops hosted by Better Work Jordan during 2013.

Innovative campaign brings management and workers together to improve dormitory conditions

Worker dormitory standards have long been a major area of concern in Jordan's garment industry. Indeed, only fifteen per cent of garment factories in Jordan are fully compliant with worker dormitory standards according to Better Work Jordan's (BWJ) most recent factory assessments.

Importantly, many violations found in worker dormitories can only be resolved through effective collaboration between factory managers and workers themselves. One such violation is lack of cleanliness in worker dormitories, which BWJ has identified as a health concern in twenty three per cent of garment factories in Jordan.

At International British Garments, a factory employing over a thousand workers in the Al-Dulayl Industrial Zone, management has introduced a new approach to dealing with this issue by holding a factory-wide competition for the cleanest dormitory room. Each of the two winning rooms of the competition will receive a cash reward of 150 JOD (212 USD).



According to BWJ Enterprise Advisor Yusra Al-Asir, "This initiative is a promising new addition to the factory's ongoing efforts to improve cleanliness in their worker dormitories. The workers are very enthusiastic about the competition. Not only will they be doing something positive for their own health and wellbeing, but they will also have a chance to make money while they are at it."

She added, "It is great when factories giving workers positive incentives to improve their working and living environment, rather than penalizing them for mistakes."

Garment manufacturer joins ILO child labour project in Jordanian garment sector

Sterling Apparel Manufacturing has joined a programme of the International Labour Organization and the International Organization of Employers in Jordan to guide companies in tackling child labour.

Sterling Apparel Manufacturing has joined a programme of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization of Employers (IOE) in Jordan to guide companies in tackling child labour, including in their supply chains. The participation of Sterling brings valuable insights to the project and is an example of effective public-private collaboration to prevent child labour.

The ILO/IOE project focuses on fundamental labour rights in line with the United Nations' "Protect, Respect, and Remedy" Framework and its Guiding Principles. The framework was adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2008 and provides guidance to companies seeking a proactive, rights-based approach to preventing child labour.

Better Work Jordan's (BWJ) ongoing assessments of garment factories have found that child labour is virtually non-existent in the Jordanian garment industry.

In 2012, only one garment factory in Jordan was found to be in violation of child labour standards. Following advice from BWJ's Enterprise Advisors, the factory in question quickly remedied these violations.



*ILO child labour corporate social responsibility workshop
October, 2013 - Amman, Jordan*

Factory survey reveals high level of satisfaction with Better Work Jordan services

During August, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) conducted an online survey of garment factories enrolled in the programme in order to obtain their feedback on BWJ's factory assessments, advisory services and training programmes.

Around two thirds of the factories surveyed expressed a very positive view of the quality of BWJ's factory assessments and advisory services.

Seventy five per cent of the factories surveyed had participated in BWJ training programmes. Of those, over sixty per cent reported that the knowledge provided in the training was highly relevant to their day to day work. BWJ's training programme on Occupational Safety and Health was found to be particularly popular among factories.

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EAM Maliban Textile Jordan Ltd. (Satellite Unit)

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Sana Factory

Southern Garment Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co.

Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co. (Satellite Unit)

Standard Textile Jordan

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Sterling Apparel Manufacturing (Satellite Unit)

Straight Line

The Sun Jordan Textiles Co. Ltd.

Third Dimension Apparel L.L.C.

Trans World Apparel Manufacturing Co. Ltd

Tusker Apparel Ltd. Co.

United Creations L.L.C.

Vega Textile Ltd.

Victorious Apparel Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

W&D Apparel (Jordan) Corp.

UPCOMING PUBLIC TRAINING

Better Work Jordan offers a range of targeted training programs to managers, supervisors and workers, both in the classroom and at the factory. Our trainings focus on improving compliance with labour standards, productivity and quality through building effective workplace cooperation. For more information, please contact our offices.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT

About the course:	This course helps participants understand that OSHM should be an integral part of factory management. The training gives guidance on how to improve safety and health within factories to meet both national and international standards. Participants will engage in a series of practical activities that will not only benefit safety and health within the enterprise, but also offer low-cost suggestions for improving working conditions and increasing productivity.
Target participants:	Factory management, OSH committee members and trade union/worker representatives
Duration:	2 days
Cost per participant:	80 JDs

INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

About the course:	This course is designed to help factories overcome non-compliance in human resources and bridge the gap between BWJ standards and current practices in garment sectors. The training programme covers: Human Resources roles, workplace cooperation, compliance with national labour legislation and personnel administration. Factories are guided to create concrete action plans, and encouraged to implement them. BWJ Enterprise Advisors monitor factories' progress through regular visits.
Target participants:	Human resource managers, Human Resource Officers, Compliance Officers
Duration:	4 days
Cost per participant:	160 JDs

ADVANCED HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

About the course:	This course provides participants with in-depth training on the following human resource management topics: » Conflict resolution and industrial relations » Performance appraisal » Continuous improvement » Training/capacity building of employees » Competency mapping and job descriptions » Succession planning » Compensation and benefits
Target participants:	Human resource managers, Human Resource Officers, Compliance Officers
Duration:	5 days
Cost per participant:	200 JDs

SUPERVISORY SKILLS TRAINING

About the course:	This course enables participants to gain valuable leadership and management skills to further enhance dialogue between the company and its employees. The content of the course will cover the following topics: » How to be a professional supervisor » Building good relationships » Influencing skills » Managing people » Videotaped practice
Target participants:	Factory supervisors and managers
Cost per participant:	120 JDs
Duration:	4 days, split into 2 x 2 day courses

This newsletter is published by Better Work Jordan, a joint programme between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Finance Corporation (IFC). The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official views of the ILO, nor those of the IFC.

For more information about Better Work Jordan, visit www.betterwork.org/jordan or contact us at jordan@betterwork.