

Better Work Jordan Newsletter

No. 12, Dec 2013 - Feb 2014



BETTER WORK
Jordan



Better Work Jordan finds improved working conditions in Jordan's garment industry

Latest Better Work Jordan report highlights several improvements in working conditions in Jordan's garment industry, despite increase in wage discrimination against migrant workers

In December, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) published the findings of its latest assessment of working conditions across Jordan's garment industry in the *Fifth Garment Industry Compliance Synthesis Report*. The report covers the findings of BWJ factory assessments carried out between October 2012 and September 2013 in 55 factories, representing over 90 per cent of the export garment industry workforce in Jordan.

This snapshot of working conditions in Jordan's export-oriented garment factories highlights the fact that child labour continues to be virtually nonexistent in these factories, with nearly all workers at least 18 years old.

The report also indicates that the delivery of BWJ core services contributes to ongoing, measurable improvements in working conditions at the factory level. During 2013, there were significant improvements in Jordan's garment industry related to forced labour, working time and compensation. (continued on page 2)

In this issue:

Better Work Jordan finds improved working conditions in Jordan's garment industry (page 1)

Workers celebrate the launch of workers' center in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone (page 2)

Senior factory managers chart obstacles to business success (page 4)

Better Work Jordan enters new phase of operations (page 5)

ILO reviews Jordan's Decent Work Country Programme (page 6)

Awareness campaign to counter spread of tuberculosis (page 6)

Upcoming Better Work Jordan training (page 8)

Better Work Jordan finds improved working conditions in Jordan's garment industry

(continued from page 1) However, labour rights violations remain in several areas. One major area of concern is the increase in nationality-based discrimination against workers. For most Jordanian workers, overtime pay is calculated according to their full wages while for most migrant garment workers it is calculated based only on their cash wages, despite the fact that non-cash wages such as food and housing benefits typically make up around 40 per cent of these migrant workers' incomes.

Nationality-based discrimination was found in 80 per cent of Jordan's export-oriented garment factories during 2013, up from 46 per cent of factories in the previous year. This increase is related to new wage regulations passed by the Jordanian government in 2012.

The BWJ report also shows that 48 per cent of factories do not comply with legal requirements for hiring workers with disabilities. Jordanian law requires employers who employ more than 50 workers to have no less than four per cent disabled workers in their workforce, a disabled employment quota that is among the highest in the world. While Jordan's garment factories have much room for improvement in this area, there has been significant progress since last year, when 60 per cent of factories did not comply with these requirements.

This disabled worker quota is relatively new in Jordan, and it is expected that compliance will continue to improve as factories adapt their working environments to accommodate disabled workers and improve their recruitment practices in this area.

Of the 47 factories that have been assessed more than once by BWJ, 22 factories (47 per cent) showed measurable improvement in their overall labour compliance, and 22 factories showed some decline, with three factories unchanged.

In most factories that showed a decline in compliance, this is because of increasing non-compliance in the area of discrimination. If discrimination non-compliances are excluded, labour compliance is found to have improved in 90 per cent of factories assessed more than once by BWJ.

The full Fifth Garment Industry Compliance Synthesis Report can be accessed on BWJ's website [here](#).

Hundreds of workers celebrate launch of workers' center in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone

Workers' centre supported by Better Work Jordan launches with a multi-cultural celebration and training for women workers from Bangladesh on labour organizing

A multi-purpose workers' centre has opened its doors to thousands of garment workers at the Al-Hassan Industrial Estate in northern Jordan. In February, over 600 workers gathered at the centre to celebrate its opening with a talent show performed by workers from across the world, including Jordan, Myanmar, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India and Madagascar.

The workers entertained their colleagues with dances, musical pieces, magic shows and comedy routines. Among the performers was a group of Indian and Bangladeshi workers who joined together to perform music, a group of women from Myanmar performing a Burmese New Year dance and a trio of dancers from Madagascar performing a combination of traditional Malagasy and hip hop dance.

Melad Alhmoud, the Workers' Center Manager, opened the event by welcoming workers to the center and encouraging them to get involved in future activities. "Our main priority here at the Workers' Center is to benefit the workers," he said. (continued on page 3)



Hundreds of workers celebrate the launch of workers' center in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone

(continued from page 2) Throughout the party, guests could explore the facility to see classrooms, outdoor areas, and the canteen. The party also served as a platform to distribute written information about the center's services and activities in the ten languages used by workers in the industrial zone.

The workers centre will provide workers with access to recreational facilities, legal advice, and mental health and counseling services. Facilities include a computer lab and a canteen, and the services on offer include job skills training and cultural orientation for newly-arrived migrant workers.

The centre's training services were also launched in February, with a workshop for seventeen Bangladeshi women workers on how to promote gender equality in the workplace through organizing. The workers identified several issues to organize around, including the availability of female doctors and ensuring that all factories have mechanisms that allow workers to file complaints to management. The workshop was organized by the ILO's Regional Office for Arab States in partnership with BWJ.

The workers' centre is supported by the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme, USAID, the Al-Hassan Industrial Zone Authority, apparel factories at the Al-Hassan Industrial Estate, the garment workers' union and international clothing brands.

In numbers

1300 square meters of indoor recreational and learning space

Over **600** workers attended the opening celebration

Over **70** workers currently enrolled in English language courses

Over **50** workers currently enrolled in IT training courses

30 computers with internet access for workers

17 women workers attended ILO training on promoting gender equality in the workplace



Senior factory managers chart obstacles to success in Jordan's garment industry

Despite steadily increasing exports in recent years, Jordan's garment industry has not been successful in upgrading into high value-added activities, according to a survey of senior garment factory managers carried out by Better Work and Tufts University.

The survey provides insights about production and management trends in the industry, as well as managers' perceptions of business challenges.

According to the survey, over eighty per cent of Jordan's export-oriented garment factories continue to engage in Cut-Make-Pack production, with far fewer factories involved in high value-added activities such as sample making, logistics and design.

Although research conducted by Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has identified a need for Jordan to upgrade its garment industry into high value-added activities, the survey suggests this has not been happening over the past several years. Fewer than twenty per cent of factories are involved in design activities, a percentage that has remained stable over recent years.

Uncertain orders from customers and penalties for late delivery of orders are the most commonly cited business challenges in the industry.

On a positive note, the survey also shows that the longer a factory is enrolled in BWJ, the less often its international customers audit the factory's labour conditions. Factories that have been enrolled in BWJ for four years have seen a major decrease in visits conducted by their customers' labour compliance teams, down from an average of 5 to 6 visits per year to only two.



Fewer than twenty per cent of factories are involved in design activities, a figure that has remained stable over recent years

Key findings from research conducted by Better Work and Tufts University are regularly shared with factories to provide insights to improve their business success.

Five years after launching, Better Work Jordan enters new phase of operations

The second phase of Better Work Jordan was launched in January, beginning a three-year process to transition from a joint ILO-IFC initiative to a Jordanian programme

Five years after it was established, the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme is now entering the second phase of its operations during which it will transition from a joint ILO-IFC initiative to a Jordanian programme.

By the end of this phase, BWJ will be managed by a national entity, and a significant portion of the operating costs will be covered by revenues generated by the program.

The transition to a national entity will be implemented in steps including the transformation of the BWJ Project Advisory Committee into a Board of Trustees, the incorporation of BWJ as a Jordanian non-profit company, the recruitment of a Jordanian national as the Programme Manager and determining the appropriate role for the ILO to play once the national entity is established.

The full sustainability plan for the second phase of BWJ is available [here](#), and the evaluation report for the first phase is available [here](#).

Better Work Jordan Objectives

Like the first phase, this phase aims to improve the competitiveness of the industry by enhancing economic performance at the enterprise level and improving compliance with Jordanian labour law and ILO core labour standards. The objectives of this phase are:

- Strengthening the quality and consistency of BWJ's assessment, advisory and training services
- Extending the impact of the project beyond the factory level by developing and implementing sector wide initiatives to enhance economic performance and promote decent work
- Implementing a business model that aims to recover a substantial percentage of the costs for delivering BWJ's core services and builds long term financial viability

In brief:

In 2013, Jordan's garment **exports** reached a record high of **US\$1.3 billion**. This marks the second consecutive year in which Jordan has reached record garment export figures. Garment exports reached US\$1.2 billion in 2012.

Three new garment "**satellite units**" have been launched in the Jordanian poverty pockets of Azraq, Karak and Ma'an, through a partnership between garment manufacturers and the Government of Jordan. Garment satellite units are small subsidiaries of larger garment factories that benefit from government incentives, providing employment opportunities to Jordanians in districts where jobs are scarce. Twenty six districts in Jordan are categorized as **poverty pockets**, defined as areas in which more than a quarter of the population lives under the poverty line.

Annual **wage increases** for garment workers have been clarified after some disagreement about the terms of Jordan's **collective labour agreement** for the garment industry. Employers and the trade union have negotiated an annex to the collective agreement clarifying that an annual 5 JOD (US\$7) increase to workers' monthly wages applies to both Jordanian and migrant workers. The annex has also removed the cap on this annual wage increase, whereas the original agreement had capped it at four years.

A delegation from **Nike** visited Jordan in February to explore investing in the country's garment industry. Nike does not currently source from Jordan, although it has in the past.

Better Work has published a case study on its pioneering awareness-raising programme to **combat sexual harassment** in Jordan's apparel sector. The case study presents the experiences of workers and managers with this training programme as well as participant evaluations and a description of the programme. It is available [here](#).

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has welcomed a **new Enterprise Advisor** to its team. Maysa Al-Hmouz is a psychologist with a Masters' Degree in Organizational Psychology and seven years of experience as a psychosocial counsellor and therapist. Her experience includes providing psychosocial counselling to survivors of war trauma and torture at the Centre for Victims of Torture in Jordan.

ILO conducts review of Jordan's "Decent Work Country Programme"

This February, a mid-term review was conducted for Jordan's Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for 2012-2015, which is the framework for all ILO activities in the country. The review involved a series of meetings with government officials as well as workers' and employers' organisations to review DWCP progress, as well as identify and address challenges and issues faced in implementing the programme.

The key aims of Jordan's DWCP are to create decent work opportunities for young Jordanian men and women through the promotion of non-discrimination and of better working conditions, to extend a minimum level of social security to the most vulnerable groups in society and to enhance employment opportunities for youth.

The review highlighted the achievements made by Better Work Jordan in advancing industrial relations in Jordan through supporting the negotiation of a collective agreement for the garment industry which is the first of its kind in the country. This collective agreement was the first in Jordan to set out a detailed mechanism for settling disputes between workers and employers and to guarantee trade union access to workers.

Better Work Jordan launches awareness campaign to counter spread of tuberculosis

Following the discovery of cases of tuberculosis among garment workers in Jordan, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has launched a campaign to educate garment workers about this disease.

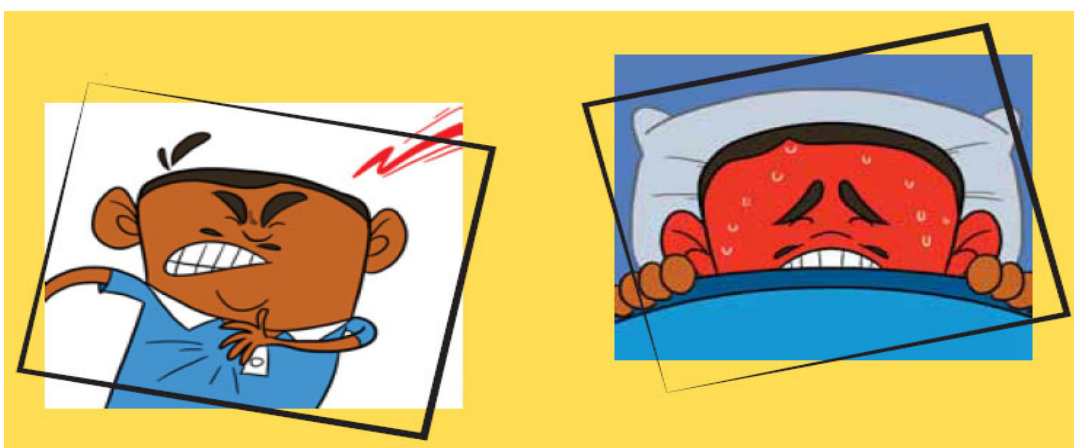
As part of this campaign, an informational brochure has been published describing the symptoms of the disease to workers, the preventative measures they can take to protect themselves and how they can seek medical treatment.

"It was not possible to deliver training on tuberculosis to all fifty thousand garment workers in Jordan, so we designed a brochure that BWJ could distribute and is also available online, so factories can print it out and distribute it among their workers" said Tareq Abu Qaoud, Technical Officer for BWJ.

The brochure is designed to convey messages through illustrations rather than written text because of the large number of languages spoken by migrant garment workers in Jordan, who come from various countries in South Asia, Southeast Asia and Africa. It has been distributed to workers by factory managers, through workers' committees and in BWJ training sessions for workers.

Tuberculosis is one of the developing world's most common diseases, killing over a million people every year. The informational brochure is available on BWJ's website [here](#).

Images
from Better Work
Jordan tuberculosis
brochure



Better Work Jordan is funded and supported by:

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Jordanian Ministry of Labour

The Better Work global programme is supported by (in alphabetical order):

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany (BMZ)

International Finance Corporation (funds provided by IrishAid and The Walt Disney Company)

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Switzerland (SECO)

United States Council Foundation, Inc. (funds provided by select USCIB member companies)

Participating Buyers

Ann Inc.

American Eagle Outfitters, Inc.

Columbia Sportswear Company

Gap, Inc.

Hanesbrands

Jones Apparel Group, Inc.

Li & Fung

L.L. Bean

New Balance

Nordstrom, Inc.

Patagonia, Inc.

Santex

Sears Holding Corporation

PVH

Ralph Lauren

Swiss Post

Target

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Participating Suppliers

Al-Areen for Garment Manufacturing L.L.C.

Al-Hadaf Manufacturing Co.

Al-Hanan for Clothes Manufacturing

Al-Masera Textile

Al-Tafilah Apparel Co. Ltd.

Al-Tayaseer Factory

Al-Kawthar Garment Industry & Trade Co. Ltd.

Apparel Concepts L.L.C.

Aseel Universal Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

Atateks Foreign Trade

Atlanta Garment Manufacturing Company

Business Faith Garment Manufacturing Co.

Camel Textile International Corporation

Casual Wear

Century Miracle

Century Wear

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co.

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. (Satellite Unit) – Kerak

EAM Maliban Textile Jordan (PVT) Ltd.

EAM Maliban Textile Jordan (PVT) Ltd. (Satellite Unit)

Elzay Ready Wear Manufacturing Co.

Fine Apparel Ltd.

Galaxy Apparel Industry

Haifa Apparel

Harthi Textile Industry

Hi-Tech Textile L.L.C.

Horizon Clothing Manufacturing Co.

International British Garments Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

International Elegance Garment

Ivory Garments Factory L.L.C.

Jerash Garments and Fashions Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

Jordan Star

Jordanian Modern Textile

Kareem Manufacturing Company

Modern Apparel Co. Ltd.

Mousa Ready Garment

Mustafa and Kamal Ashraf Trading (Jordan) Garment Ltd.

Needle Craft Ltd. Jordan

Oasis Textile International Co. Ltd.

Paramount Garment Ltd.

Prestige Apparel Manufacturing Ltd.

Qadri Group

Rainbow Textile

Rich Door Textile Factory

Rich Pine International Group Ltd.

Sana Factory

Southern Garment Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co.

Standard Jeans Apparel Manufacturing Co. (Satellite Unit) – Ajloun

Standard Textile Jordan

Sterling Apparel Manufacturing

Sterling Apparel Manufacturing – Al Qastal

Sterling Apparel Manufacturing (Satellite Unit)

Straight Line

The Sun Jordan Textiles Co. Ltd.

Third Dimension Apparel L.L.C.

Trans World Apparel Mfg. Co. Ltd.

Tusker Apparel Ltd. Co.

United Creations L.L.C.

Vega Textile Ltd.

Victorious Apparel Manufacturing Co. Ltd.

W&D Apparel (Jordan) Corporation

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 (90 JDs to be paid by the factory and 30 JDs sponsored by The Walt Disney Company)
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.