

Better Work Jordan Enters New Phase of Operations

With the beginning of a new year, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) enters a new phase of the programme building on the groundwork laid over the past two years.

At the enterprise level, BWJ is now able to measure improvement in garment factories as a result of our advisory services. After a full year of participation in the BWJ programme, ten factories have undergone their second BWJ factory assessment.

Second factory assessment findings show many improvements in compliance effort. Two fewer factories were cited for non-payment of minimum wage or annual leave and for issues related to their contracting procedures. Four factories were no longer cited for disciplinary issues and two fewer factories were cited for compulsory overtime. The decline in the number of factories with compulsory overtime violations after a year of participation in the BWJ programme provides some optimism for the future. In the coming year, BWJ will build on these successes, and increase focus on areas that continue to have non-compliance challenges (see below article).

At the sectoral level, BWJ is in the process of working with the Government of Jordan to finalize mandatory participation arrangements for factories exporting under the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement and Qualifying Industrial Zones agreement.

This year also presents a new phase in BWJ's partnership with stakeholders. This will include implementation of capacity building programs for the Ministry of Labour and the General



Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing, as well as a policy-oriented research project on the value-added of the apparel sector to the Jordanian economy.

Importantly, all key stakeholders have recently committed to participate in a process facilitated by BWJ to develop and implement a coordinated strategy for increasing Jordanian employment and investment in the garment sector.

Garment Industry 2nd Compliance Synthesis Report Published

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has just released its Garment Industry 2nd Compliance Synthesis Report. The report covers the findings of assessments carried out between December 2009 and December 2010 in 24 factories, employing a total of 20,203 workers out of approximately 40,000 in the industry.

The report provides a snapshot of non-compliance findings in factories participating in BWJ. This is the first Better Work report globally which includes second assessment findings and mentions factories by name.

One positive finding is the absence of child labour in all 24 factories assessed. The report also notes that the Cabinet has approved an amendment to the labour law eliminating language that specifically forbids migrant workers from joining trade unions. BWJ views this as a significant step toward respecting freedom of association in the apparel sector.

However, labour rights violations remain in several areas. The report emphasizes violations related to health and safety in most garment factories and worker dormitories.

Violations of Jordanian law related to wages were also found in a substantial number of factories. In 29% of factories, workers were not paid on time while nearly 42% of factories did not

pay workers properly for overtime to which they were entitled.

BWJ also reported issues related to forced labour in the sector. 29% of factories were found to employ workers who owed recruitment fees. Moreover, just over half of the factories maintained a curfew for workers living in dormitories, raising concerns about their lack of freedom to leave the factory/dormitory premises. This represents an improvement from last year. The full report can be accessed [here](#).



Project Advisory Committee meets to discuss Second Compliance Synthesis Report

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Better Work Jordan and Ministry of Labour Build on Partnership

On February 23rd, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) held the first in a series of quarterly meetings with the Ministry of Labour's (MoL) Inspection Directorate. These meetings are a key component of the collaboration plan between BWJ and MoL and aim to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices between the two. The meeting introduced both BWJ and MoL factory assessment procedures, and was attended by 17 labour inspectors. The labour inspectors formulated several recommendations for improving MoL factory assessment procedures in line with BWJ best practices.

As part of this collaboration plan, Labour Inspectors have also observed BWJ factory assessments and advisory visits, and have participated in staff trainings and factory training programs.

A review of the collaboration plan's Human Rights Protocol



A Labour Inspector presents recommendations for factory assessment procedures

will be conducted during the first half of 2011 to build in more specificity concerning BWJ's responsibilities, vis-à-vis the Ministry of Labour, with regard to potential serious forced labour non-compliances.

Stakeholders Commit to Developing an Employment and Investment Strategy for Garment Sector

On March 24th, Better Work Jordan's (BWJ's) Project Advisory Committee issued a statement encouraging BWJ to facilitate a process involving all key stakeholders to develop and implement a coordinated strategy for increasing Jordanian employment and investment in the garment sector.

Currently, Jordanian workers comprise around a quarter of workers in the Jordanian garment industry. The Jordanian government has made efforts to encourage Jordanian employment in the sector by subsidizing factories which employ only Jordanians. However, employers in the sector continue to face difficulty in recruiting Jordanian workers.

BWJ's Project Advisory Committee is a tripartite committee. It is comprised of three representatives from the government (Ministry of Labour; Ministry of Industry and Trade), three from employers' organizations (Jordan Garments, Accessories, and Textiles Exporters' Association; Foreign Investors Association; Jordan Chamber of Industry) and three from worker organizations (General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries; General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions).

The commitment of these key stakeholders to participating in this process presents an important opportunity to work towards building a strong and sustainable garment sector in Jordan.

A study recently commissioned by BWJ on the contribution of the garment sector to the Jordanian economy will lay a strong foundation upon which to build this sectoral strategy. The study is expected to be published mid-year.

Jordan in Focus

Jordanian garment exports increase by 33.4% in 2010

Official figures released in January show that Jordanian garment exports increased 33.4 per cent in 2010. Exports reached \$1.06 billion in 2010, compared to \$748 million in 2009. This represents the highest percentage increase in garment exports over the past four years.

Government of Jordan unveils employment strategy

The Government of Jordan has unveiled a national strategy for employment that aims at reducing jobless rates and striking a balance between demand and supply in the labour market.

The strategy focuses on creating opportunities for decent work, amending laws to promote women's participation in the labour market and establishing a business environment attractive to investments.

Short-term (1-3 years) objectives include replacing migrant workers with local labour in the service and the construction sector. Medium-term (3-9 years) objectives include replacing migrant workers with local labour in the mining, industrial and agricultural sectors.

New Minister of Labour appointed

On February 9th, Dr. Mahmoud Kafaween was sworn in by His Majesty King Abdullah II as the new Minister of Labour. Prior to his appointment as Minister of Labour, Dr. Kafaween was the Director-General of the National Aid Fund, the Government of Jordan's cash assistance program. Better Work Jordan looks forward to working with HE Dr. Kafaween to further strengthen the relationship between Better Work and the Government of Jordan.

Human Resources Management Training Launched

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has completed piloting its *Introduction to Human Resources Management* training programme, funded by the Labour Programme of Human Resources and Skills Development, Canada.

Human Resources issues amount to 31% of all non-compliances in Jordan's garment sector. This five-day modular training programme aims to bridge the gap between BWJ standards and current practices in garment factories.

This training curriculum was designed jointly between BWJ and Better Work Global to address specific challenges of the sector in Jordan. It was attended by participants from 13 factories and the Ministry of Labour.

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.

Occupational Health and Safety training for workers Launched

Better Work Jordan has completed piloting its *Occupational Health and Safety* training programme for workers. The training was piloted with 110 Jordanian, Indian and Bangladeshi workers and deals with health and safety issues in the workplace as well as worker dormitories.

Over half of all non-compliances in Jordan's garment sector are found in Occupational Safety and Health in the factories and in worker dormitories.

The training curriculum was designed jointly between BWJ and Better Work Global to address specific challenges of the sector in Jordan. It is funded by the Labour Programme of Human Resources and Skills Development, Canada.



Bengali workers discuss safety and health issues in the factory

In Brief

Better Work Jordan welcomes new staff

Since the beginning of the year, Better Work Jordan has welcomed three new additions to its team: a Finance Assistant, Knowledge Management Officer and Driver.

Annual staff planning meeting

On February 9th-10th, Better Work Jordan held its annual staff planning meeting. This provided an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned in 2010 and develop detailed work plans for 2011.

Training Better Work Lesotho staff

This February, Better Work Jordan Enterprise Advisor Rebal Daoud visited Better Work Lesotho to help build the capacity of their Enterprise Advisory team.

Mr. Daoud guided the team through the enterprise assessment process, coached them during the assessment and discussed assessment results with the team.

Participating Suppliers

Al Hanan for Clothes Mnfg.

Al Masera Textile.

Apparel Concepts L.L.C.

Atlanta Garment Mnfg Company.

Camel Textile International Corp.

Casual Wear

Century Miracle.

Century Standards Textile.

Century Wear.

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co.

Classic Jeans Apparel Mnfg Co.

EAM Maliban Textile Jordan (PVT) Ltd.

Fine Apparel Ltd.

Galaxy Apparel Industry.

Hi-Tech Textile L.L.C.

International British Garments Co. Ltd.

Ivory Garments Factory L.L.C.

Jerash Classic Garments Mnfg Co.

Maintrend International Corp.

Mustafa & Kamal Ashraf Trading (Jordan) Garment Ltd.

Needle Craft Ltd. Jordan.

Prestige Apparel Mnfg Ltd.

Sterling Apparel Mnfg.

Third Dimension Apparel L.L.C.

United Creations L.L.C.

Vega Textile Ltd.

W&D Apparel (Jordan) Corp.

Participating Buyers

American Eagle Outfitters, Inc.

Gap, Inc.

Jones Apparel Group, Inc.

L.L. Bean.

Marks & Spencer.

New Balance.

Patagonia, Inc.

Sears Holding Corporation.

Talbots.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

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