



BetterWork
Jordan

2018 Newsletter
Mid Year Review

January-June

A review of Better Work Jordan's key activities, initiatives, and partnerships.

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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Strengthening ties: Swiss government delegates visit Better Work Jordan garment factories



Better Work Jordan accompanied a Swiss delegation to factories in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone, Irbid on Monday May 7, 2018. Representing the delegation was Raymund Furrer, Ambassador and Delegate of the Swiss Government for Trade Agreements, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO); Hanspeter Wyss, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; and Aya Maraqa, Regional Program Officer at the Swiss Cooperation Office in the Embassy of Switzerland. The aim of the visit was to learn more about the current state of the garment industry in Jordan, key changes and developments, labour conditions, and remaining challenges. During a packed two-hour trip, the delegates drove to the hilly town of Irbid and visited two factories, namely Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. and Century Miracle Jordan, located in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone. Better Work Jordan shared information about its role and current activities, including steps taken to ensure compliance of factories engaged with the programme and efforts to further improve working conditions. The delegation and Better Work Jordan also discussed possible future strategies for the programme to address remaining issues in the sector. Raymund Furrer, Ambassador and Delegate of the Swiss Government for Trade Agreements, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) said, "This trip has allowed us to see Better Work's value-add in person and strengthen our ties with our partners." Switzerland has been a core donor of Better Work since 2009, helping the programme grow to reach some 1,500 clothing and footwear factories and more than two million workers across four continents.

The Secretariat for Economic Affairs is the Swiss federal government's center of expertise for all core issues relating to economic policy. Its aim is to ensure sustainable economic growth by putting the necessary regulatory and economic policy conditions in place. The organization is a major supporter of the Better Work programme globally as part of a four-year investment plan, which aims to help Better Work continue its mission to provide decent working conditions, drive business competitiveness, and encourage economic participation in the global garment industry. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation is an office-level agency in the federal administration of Switzerland, and a part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. "The visit of these two factories enabled us to have a better view on the work ILO has been doing with projects funded by Switzerland," shared Hanspeter Wyss, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Aya Maraqa, National Program Officer at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, added, "It is great to see the development of the garment sector in Jordan and the improvement on workers' conditions which was contributed to by Better Work Jordan." The embassy of Switzerland in Jordan is responsible for coordinating all local activities pertaining to Swiss agencies. On the occasion, Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan shared, "SECO's commitment to Better Work will help us promote decent working conditions for all in addition to sustaining jobs, which will make the business more profitable."



Celebrating safety and health: The Ministry of Labour in cooperation with Better Work Jordan celebrates the 14th “National Week of Occupational Safety and Health”



The Ministry of Labour in partnership with Better Work Jordan celebrated the International Labour Organization’s annual World Day for Safety and Health at Work (SafeDay) on 29 April, 2018.

An annual occasion observed by many authorities, trade unions, employers organizations, and safety and health practitioners around the world, the aim of the celebration, which took place globally on 28, April, 2018, is to prevent occupational accidents and diseases across the globe, and raise awareness on best practices and trends in occupational safety and health.

In line with the global theme for SafeDay 2018, “OSH Vulnerability of Young Workers,” as chosen by the International Labour Organization, this year’s efforts aim to improve the safety and health of young workers and end child labour, in addition to achieving “Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 8.8 of safe and secure working environments for all workers by 2030 and SDG target 8.7 of ending all forms of child labour by 2025,” according to the International Labour Organization’s website.

In Jordan, the Ministry of Labour took to celebrating this special occasion for its 14th consecutive year as part of the ministry’s “National Occupational Safety and Health Week” to raise awareness on the importance of occupational safety and health. “We are delighted that all relevant stakeholders have come together to mark OSH Day. By participating in this joint campaign on a national level, I am confident that we will be able to further improve the safety and health of young workers,” shared Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan.

Events and activities by the Ministry of Labour to celebrate SafeDay commenced with an opening ceremony under the patronage of His Excellency Samir Murad, Minister of Labour who on the occasion said, “Ensuring the safety and health of workers will aid in further growth on a multitude of fronts. Protecting the rights of workers with regards to the safety and health of workers is essential, which is why it is imperative that all rules and regulations are implemented. The ministry is committed to raising awareness and implementing procedures.”

“The world is witnessing a significant development in the realm of further protecting workers’ safety and health. In Jordan, we have been actively involved in the strengthening of workers’ skills, enabling them to be responsible through educational and training programs in addition to creating policies and strategies in partnership with the private sector,” explained Adnan Abu Alragheb, Chairman of Amman Chamber of Industry.

In his speech, Mohammad Ghanem, Head of the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, said “The union is actively involved in providing training and workshops in partnership with civil society to provide a safe place for workers. It is our conviction that occupational safety and health is vital to the protection of our human and economic resources. We aspire to create a working environment that is totally safe and completely accident free.”

Egidijus Navikas, Head of Political Section at the EU Delegation in Jordan, emphasized the importance of occupational health and safety especially for young workers as it has been proven that it has implications for productivity and quality of life. “The European Union is committed to supporting Better Work Jordan in adapting its Compliance Assessment Tool for the three non-garment sectors; chemicals, engineering, and plas-



tics. The adaptation comes in context to Better Work Jordan’s expansion to non-garment sectors under the European Union’s simplified rules of origin initiative for Jordan.” Additional presentations were made by the Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health and by Better Work Jordan. A documentary film produced by the International Labour Organization was also presented.

Stakeholders also participated in the “Sixth Occupational Safety and Health Management” conference as part of the weeklong activities. Workshops geared towards addressing issues on occupational safety and health were conducted throughout Jordan covering the Northern Region, the Central Region, and the Southern Region.

On this occasion, Rand Al-Araj, Ministry of Labour Inspector on secondment to Better Work Jordan shared, “We commend and support the Ministry of Labour’s efforts on the many valuable activities they have planned for SafeDay. The safety and health of workers should always be the main objective of policies and strategies.”



Better Work Jordan and The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries sign a Memorandum of Understanding

Plans for development of The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries as an organization move ahead with the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding with Better Work Jordan on 11 April, 2018.

In a plan for bi-lateral cooperation between The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries and Better Work Jordan, along with Better Work, the International Labour Organization Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), a Memorandum of Understanding was signed to support the union.

The signing ceremony took place at Better Work Jordan's offices in Amman on 11 April where both Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan and Fathallah Al-Omrani, President of The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries, signed on behalf of the union.

On the occasion Tareq AbuQaoud said, "We look forward to supporting The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries and look forward to our collaboration over the next two years. This agreement will further propagate Better Work's mission to improve

working conditions, protect workers' rights, and boost the competitiveness of the industry."

Maysa Al-Hmouz, Enterprise Advisor at Better Work Jordan further added, "Engaging in these types of partnerships and offering support to further support workers' and factories' rights is at the core of what we do at Better Work Jordan."

To date the union has established an on-site base to accommodate workers complaints in addition to promoting the implementation of the most recent sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreement which it negotiated with Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters' Association and The Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments.

The overall objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to strengthen the working relationship between both parties. "The Memorandum of Understanding between both parties focuses on joint advisory visits, capacity building, information exchange, and communication between Better Work Jordan and The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries," explained Fathallah Al-Omrani.

In the spirit of fairness

Taking another step in the ongoing and fundamental process to safeguard the rights of migrant workers, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) held a meeting on 25 January, 2018 to discuss the first objective of FAIR: Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment.

The main objectives of FAIR are to prevent abuses and exploitation of migrant workers, to provide workers with access to reliable information and improved services, and lastly, to redefine ethical recruitment to incorporate innovative approaches.

As discussed in the meeting, raising awareness on the existing challenges is a necessary component to guarantee the successful implementation of FAIR, with one prevailing example of country specific issues raised being high and unfair recruitment fees across the board. In line with the ILO's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment (http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/fair-recruitment/WCMS_536755/lang--en/index.htm), an on-going commitment to ensuring that workers in the Jordanian garment sector do not pay a recruitment fee is essential. Phillip Fishman, the ILO's Senior Technical Advisor for Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, further commended the endeavor by adding, "We are fully committed to recruitment reform and the zero-cost recruitment fee in line with ILO's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment."

BWJ's current approach in assessing the payment of recruitment fees for assessments conducted before January 2019 stipulates that a factory is found compliant if the recruitment fees paid by workers do not exceed USD300. However, effective January 2019 BWJ will find factories in non-compliance if any of their employees have reportedly paid a recruitment fee for any workers recruited on or after January 2019. "This commendable practice is inevitable and all stakeholders agreed to follow the international movement towards responsible business practices by adopting a zero recruitment fees policy," explained Husam Saleh, Chairman of JGATE.

Another point of view: Columbia University graduate students visit Jordan



With the aim of producing a report assessing the impact of Better Work Jordan's policy work and making recommendations on how to sustain and improve positive outcomes, six graduate students of the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University visited Jordan in the first quarter of 2018.

The team consisted of graduate students of SIPA, Columbia's Graduate School of International and Public Affairs, Naoya, Nathan, Jess, Esther, Fatimah, and Evie. They are all students of international affairs and public policy, concentrating their studies on human rights and economic development. The team worked with Better Work Jordan to develop a framework that will help monitor, evaluate, and improve the organization's policy work with national and international stakeholders. For this project, the team visited Jordan, to better understand Better Work Jordan's existing collaboration and coordination efforts in the country through desk research and stakeholder interviews.

The research is designed to gauge the policy impact that Better Work Jordan has had here in Jordan, not only to help inform the objectives of Better Work Jordan going forward, but also in order to create a scalable assessment tool that can be used in other fields in which Better Work operates.

2017, a breakthrough year for Better Work Jordan



A Jordanian stakeholder meeting debates labour issues upon the release of Better Work Jordan's latest annual report.

The Jordanian garment industry has made significant progress on meeting key labour standards, according to a new report by Better Work Jordan. The Better Work Jordan Annual Report 2018: An Industry and Compliance Review issues showed notable achievements on a number of issues including the implementation of a new minimum wage and the signing of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan said, "The findings highlight progress on a multitude of fronts in the industry and prove that it is possible to instigate sustainable change. Better Work Jordan has helped the garment sector thrive and is striving to improve other sectors as well through cooperating with the national stakeholders"

Other areas of improvement over the reporting period include fewer cases of discrimination related to working hours during Ramadan, better recruitment practices, lower incidence of excessive recruitment fees, and better practices with keeping time records. Further, the number of cases of confiscation of passports has decreased since the previous annual report from 10 percent to three percent. Gender discrimination in the workplace has also dropped since the previous report – from 31 percent factories in 2016 to about seven percent in 2017.

The results, which reflect assessments over the period of January to December 2017, were showcased at the 37th Project Advisory Committee meeting held in Amman on 18, April. At the meeting was Abdullah Al-Jbour, Assistant Secretary General for Technical Affairs, who noted, "With

the combined efforts of the Ministry of Labour; Better Work Jordan; and The General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, and Jordan Garments, Accessories, and Textiles Exporters Association there have been many achievements in the garment sector. These accomplishments include dorm inspections, implementation of the unified contract, and an increase in exports."

A highlight of the meeting was a reaffirmation by all members to start implementing the "zero recruitment fees" policy as of January 2019 as per a statement endorsed by the Project Advisory Committee earlier this year. However, members of the committee observed that the industry continues to face a number of challenges. Ahlam Al-Terawi, a Coordinator at the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, raised the issue of discriminatory working hours saying, "Factories give incentives to migrant workers for two to four hours of overtime and these incentives are not given to the Jordanian workers, this issue needs to be addressed."

With worker absenteeism remaining a major issue, Project Advisory Committee members stressed the need to further educate the workers and raise awareness.

An additional challenge facing Jordan's garment sector is a lack of recognition by European Union buyers, who are sometimes unaware that Jordan is eligible to export garments under the relaxed rules of origin regime agreed in 2016.

Other highlights of the meeting included comments from Minwer Abu Al Ghanam, Head of Inspection, and the Project Advisory Committee's newest president, who expressed his interest in collaborating with Better Work Jordan, saying, "The establishment of the Memorandum of Understanding with Better Work Jordan and the Ministry of Labour in December 2016 had a crucial role in strengthening and improving the work conditions of the garment sector."

Ilektra Tsakalidou, Policy Officer of Industrial Trade and Private Sector Development at the European Commission in Jordan added, "The European Union is working hand in hand with the International Labour Organization to ensure every single employee has decent work conditions." On a final note, Farhan Ifram, CEO of MAS KREEDA Al Safi, a clothing manufacturer, said, "The garment sector is constantly improving and has many achievements. However, there is always room for improvement."

The Jordanian garment sector makes up about 25 percent of Jordan's total exports at over USD1.69 billion. The sector employs over 70,000 workers (16,643 Jordanians and 54,215 migrant workers) in 89 apparel factories. Bangladeshi workers make up more than half of the migrant workers in the sector (52 percent) followed by Indians who make up 17 percent of the migrant workers in the garment sector.

Visit: (<https://betterwork.org/blog/portfolio/better-work-jordan-annual-report-2018-an-industry-and-compliance-review/>) to download the complete report.

To read the Arabic version of the report visit:

(<https://betterwork.org/blog/portfolio/%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A3%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AB-%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85-2017-2/?lang=ar>)



His Majesty King Abdullah visits a garment factory in Sahab



His Majesty King Abdullah on 2 May visited Jerash Garments and Fashions Manufacturing Company's factory in Al Tajamouat Industrial Zone, Sahab. The factory produces and exports garments to the United States and the European Union.

Currently in its 18th year of establishment, the factory is comprised of three operating units employing 800 Jordanians, including 50 physically challenged workers.

At a meeting with the company's Chairperson, Choi Lin Hung and senior executives, His Majesty King Abdullah commended the factory for being the first Jordanian and Arab garment company to be listed on NASDAQ Stock Exchange. His Majesty affirmed his support for companies implementing local investment projects. His Majesty also stressed that Jordanian women must play a key role in productive sectors, calling for empowering women and increasing their economic participation.

Choi Lin Hung shared that the company works to empower local communities by providing training and employment opportunities.

Highlighting plans to open a new satellite project in Al Hassan, Executive Manager of Jerash Garments and Fashions Manufacturing Company, Oryana Awaishah said, "The idea for this project came after His Majesty's visit to The Netherlands in March 2018."

Productivity Project: working conditions and business efficiency improved

Better Work Jordan's SME Productivity Project has designed specific, productivity-enhancing toolkits to train both workers and managers in the garment industry.

Programmes for workers primarily address two skill sets; soft skills and technical skills. The former focuses on improving worker culture and efficiency via training on the overall structure of the garment industry and roles, rights, and responsibilities in the workplace. Topics covered include Supervisory Skills Training, the Supply Chain, Financial Literacy, Workplace Communication, and Basic Rights and Responsibilities.

Through the Productivity Project's targeted Supply Chain training, workers are also introduced to the basic concept of a supply chain including the components and parties involved. The Productivity Project also delivers technical training, highlighting aspects of manufacturing that boost productivity at the factory level. Trainings cover themes including plant layout and logistics, machinery and equipment, and resource efficiency, among others.

International Finance Corporation Operations Officer, Soledad Requejo explained, "The Productivity Project's soft skills and technical skills trainings have been created after carefully assessing the needs of factories and workers, which is why we believe that these trainings can greatly improve productivity, employee morale, and factory culture."



Better Work Jordan focuses on women empowerment in the workplace

Better Work Jordan embarked on a Gender Equality agenda in early 2013, doubling its energies to create a more thriving environment for women in the workplace through two gender specific activities launched earlier this year in line with Better Work Global's agenda.

Through Better Work Jordan's targeted "Supply Chain" workshops, which commenced in February 2018, female workers were introduced to the basic concept of a supply chain including components and parties involved. To date a total of 11 workshops have taken place.

This year's three-day "Supervisory Skills Training" (SST) programme targeted an ever-expanding pool of female participants. The session, which addresses rights, responsibilities, and professionalism in the workplace, was deemed highly beneficial. Since 2014, more than 5,850 supervisors have taken part in the programme, which was first developed in 2005. The SST programme was created to educate supervisors on their roles, professional behavior, communication skills, and elevating the level of worker performance.

"I truly believe that women empowerment and awareness raising to men and women are essential to encourage a person to obtain the opportunity to get what he or she deserves regardless of gender," shared Zainab Yang, Team Leader at Better Work Jordan.

Jordan Garment Alliance holds first steering committee meeting



The first steering committee meeting of the Jordan Garment Alliance (JGA) was held at the Jordan Chamber of Industry on Tuesday May 15, 2018. The meeting was chaired by His Excellency Yousef Al Shamali, The Secretary General representing His Excellency Engineer Yarub Al Qudah , Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply and Adnan Abu Al Ragheb, CEO of Jordan Chamber of Industry. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Labor, and Jordan Investment Commission. Representatives from the private sector, Jordan's international partners, NGOs, and the garment sector industry were also in attendance. This meeting sought to acquaint stakeholders and Jordan's international partners of the latest developments and achievements made thus far by the alliance in the past period, as well as present the alliance's road map for the advancement of the sector.

The Jordan Garment Alliance is a coordination platform inclusive of all the relevant stakeholders aiming at consolidating the efforts of the stakeholders to develop the sector's mission, vision, and resolve obstacles and challenges that impede the sector's growth and productivity. The alliance promotes the development of exports, jobs creation, and the enhancement of responsible business practices and social integration.

The alliance through its steering and technical working committees are committed to developing and implementing periodic sector strategies, roadmaps and work plans which will be evaluated and revised periodically in consultation with the government and other partners.

This meeting sought to acquaint stakeholders and Jordan's international partners of the latest developments and achievements made to date by the alliance, as well as present the alliance's future plans for the advancement of the sector. At the close of the meeting the proposed road map of the Garment Sector alliance was approved and the technical committee was given the green light to move ahead with its implementation.

Better Work Jordan trains labour inspectors on Compliance Tools and Assessment

Better Work Jordan hosted two workshops under the title, "Inspectors' Training on Compliance Tools and Assessment" in Amman on 9-10 May, and 13-14 May, 2018. These, the second and third sessions in the series brings to 90 the number of inspectors and heads of inspection at the Ministry of Labour to undergo training since November 2017. The aim of the two-day sessions was to introduce Better Work Jordan's compliance tool and assessment guidelines to inspectors. The team shared the 208-question compliance tool with the participants while highlighting pertinent issues of sexual harassment and human trafficking as part of the initiative's work tool. Better Work's compliance assessment reporting is organized into eight core areas (clusters) including : child labour, discrimination, forced labour, and freedom of association - under the international labour standards section - and compensation, contracts/human resources, safety/health, and working time - under the labour law section.

Among the activities participants were given the 208 question questionnaire and instructed on assessment guidelines. The Better Work Jordan team walked the inspectors through a standard Better Work Jordan "un-

announced assessment day," which includes preparation, gaining entry, a site tour, worker interviews, management interviews, a report check, pre-closing, and closing. The group was then coached on report writing and were afforded the opportunity to preview the STAR software utilized by Better Work. Special focus was given to dorms inspection in line with the Ministry of Health's 2013 mandate to prevent health hazards on site. Commenting on Better Work Jordan's impact, Abdullah Al-Jbour, Assistant Secretary General for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Labour said, "With the combined efforts of the Ministry of Labour and Better Work Jordan there have been many achievements in the garment sector. We look forward to our continuous cooperation."

Sharing his views on the workshop, Ala'a Al-Saifi, Better Work Jordan Team Leader said, "The exchange of ideas and practices is always enriching and beneficial to both parties. Ultimately, we are all working towards the same goal."

Rand Al-Araj, Ministry of Labour Inspector on secondment to Better Work Jordan noted, "This workshop presents an excellent opportunity for inspectors to learn more about Compliance Tools."

What it takes: Strategic Compliance Planning

With the aim of better clarifying Strategic Compliance Planning, Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch, and Better Work Jordan held a workshop on 14-15 February. Offering guidance and support to Better Work advisors including temporarily seconded labour inspectors from Jordanian Ministry of Labour, the workshop enabled all participants to maneuver through the various processes of the International Labour Organization Approach to Strategic Compliance Planning and seamlessly execute the required steps to launch a tailored plan. Key participants were subsequently selected to participate as catalysts for changed thinking in the Strategic Compliance Planning Workshop with the Ministry of Labour in May 2018, and support the implementation of the Plan in conjunction with the Strategic Compliance Focal Point, selected by the labour inspectorate.

To empower labour inspectors to apply a more progressive and inclusive approach to compliance, The Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch, a branch of the International Labour Organization's Governance and Tripartism Department, developed the International Labour Organization Approach to Strategic Compliance Planning for Labour Inspectorates. This approach not only provides labour inspectorates with the tools to develop both a short-term inspection strategy and a long-term inspection plan, but also covers contingencies that fall between these two extremes.

(For more information visit http://www.ilo.org/labadmin/info/public/fs/WCMS_606471/lang--en/index.htm)

Planning for Action: inside the Strategic Compliance Planning Workshop with the Ministry of Labour



The Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the International Labour Organization and Better Work Jordan hosted a Strategic Compliance Planning Workshop with the Ministry of Labour on 6-8 May, which explored the potential implementation and impact of strategic compliance planning for the nation's labour inspection regime.

Strategic compliance planning looks beyond the traditional enforcement model of routine inspections and reaction with the aim of designing targeted, tailored, and proactive compliance interventions along with strategies for their effective implementation, despite resource limitations. The plan aims to empower the labour inspectorate to apply a more progressive and innovative approach to compliance.

Valkyrie Hanson, International Labour Organization Technical Specialist for Strategic Compliance, who lead the workshop said, "Strategic compliance planning helps labour inspectorates to resourcefully and inventively identify stakeholders and tailored interventions to influence compliance. This novel methodology is anticipated to enable them to achieve sustainable and measurable compliance outcomes".

"Developing a Strategic Compliance Plan enables the labour inspectorates to effectively utilize their limited resources by working with all relevant

stakeholders to promote compliance with the relevant legal provisions," explained Andrew Christian, Labour Administration and Labour Inspection Officer at the International Labour Organization.

The result of the workshop was a draft Strategic Compliance Plan that the labour inspectorate will now refine and implement in the coming months. "The unique methodology of this planning workshop was appreciated by all, making for a highly interactive three-day experience. The skills offered are excellent and useful," said Abed Aljwad Al-Natsha, Ministry of Labour Inspector on secondment to Better Work Jordan.

Amin Al-Wreidat, Labour Inspection and OSH RO-Arab States/DWT-Beirut also shared his views on the workshop, saying, "This workshop empowered labour inspectors to act and helped them realize that compliance can be achieved despite resource limitations. We look forward to the implementation stage of the Strategic Compliance Plan."



Keen to be clean

As one of several on-site workshops, Better Work Jordan hosted a series of Personal Hygiene workshops to shed light on the importance of personal care in the workplace. In addition to raising awareness on the invaluable health importance of personal hygiene, the workshop also touched upon how personal grooming can aid in the emotional betterment of employees by raising self-esteem, building confidence, and creating respect among coworkers.

"Practicing personal hygiene is essential when a woman is significantly contributing personally and socially. The possibility of sustainable development is at its highest when women are in good health. It increases the value of a person. Personal hygiene is also indispensable for health, as it helps to prevent the growth and spread of infections," said Munira Shirajum, Consultant for Migrant Workers at Better Work Jordan.

The workshops started off with a brief explanation of personal hygiene and best practices. A series of group activities were then introduced followed by role-playing games where the participants listed ideal personal hygiene habits.



Better Work Jordan heads to The Netherlands with His Majesty King Abdullah as part of Jordanian delegation



His Majesty King Abdullah and Her Majesty Queen Rania paid an official visit to The Netherlands as per the invitation of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander on 20-21 March. The visit aimed to further enhance the bilateral relations between the two countries, and identify partnership opportunities to promote Jordan's economic prosperity, with an emphasis on employment and the state of Syrian refugees. Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at the International Labour Organization - Better Work Jordan, was among a select number of government and representatives of Jordan's business community chosen to accompany His Majesty King Abdullah.

His Majesty King Abdullah met with a group of business leaders and CEOs of major companies in the Netherlands, in the presence of King

Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands and discussions covered Jordan's economic advantages and the incentives it offers to investors, the importance of expanding and diversifying bilateral trade.

For her part, Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Sigrid Kaag said the Dutch government and the private sector will prepare an action plan and roadmap, in partnership with their Jordanian counterparts, to advance economic cooperation and identify investment opportunities in key sectors to create jobs and achieve sustainable development in Jordan.

Tareq AbuQaoud, along with Jordanian representatives of the business sector met with Dutch counterparts and examined opportunities to expand cooperation in the agriculture and textile sectors.

Better Work Jordan participates in TexWorld, Paris



Upon the invitation of World Bank Group and Jordan Garments, Accessories, and Textiles Exporters Association, Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan participated in TexWorld trade show in Paris, France on 10-13 February. The overall aim of the visit was to present achieved progresses in the labour force's work conditions since BWJ's inception in 2008 to EU buyers.

As one of the main supporters of Jordan's garment sector, WBG has worked to create employment opportunities for Jordanians and Syrians, pushing for the formation of a global alliance to promote the sector worldwide.

As a first experience of its kind as per World Bank Group's findings, participation in the trade show highlighted Better Work Jordan's

pivotal role in influencing national stakeholders to promote decent working conditions, which will lead to creating more sustainable jobs. BWJ's participation further lead to the conclusion that attracting locals and Syrians is the key to the success of the country's promotion in the industry, a fact that was recommended to be communicated to international buyers as a key factor to grow in the Jordanian garment sector.

Better Work's activities at the trade show included participating in a press conference along with Jordan Garments, Accessories, and Textiles Exporters Association, Ethiopia, China, and Myanmar, where a business case on complying with national and international labour standards was presented to the audience.

Decent work for Syrian refugees: Better Work Jordan shares its experience in Turkey



Better Work Jordan participated in the “Labour Adaptation of Syrians under Temporary Protection in Turkey: Challenges and Opportunities” conference on Friday, May 11, 2018 in Istanbul, Turkey. The event was organized by the Turkish Government, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-Turkey, the European Union Delegation, and the Fair Labour Association. It aimed to highlight best practices and policy reform with regards to the integration of Syrians under temporary protections into the Turkish labour market.

In his briefing speech, Hakan Yurdakul, Head of the Economy Monitoring Board at Presidency of the Republic of Turkey explained that while Turkey’s role among other countries was initially addressing humanitarian needs, the country has increasingly shifted their focus towards employment and livelihoods support.

Turkey is currently home to an estimated 3.5 million Syrian refugees, and the country is fully committed to the provision of safe living conditions, in addition to education and employment opportunities, to all members of this demographic. However, there are challenges in the form of taxes, social security, and the language barrier.

The conference hosted four sessions including a session on the

perspective of international brands, which featured Puma, Adidas, H&M, Inditex, C&A, and ASOS.

The conference featured a special session on Jordan, which included presentations by Hamdan Yacoub, Head of the Syrian Refugee Department at the Ministry of Labour in Jordan who said, “We are proud of our accomplishments to safeguard the employment rights and opportunities of Syrian refugees and locals in Jordan. We are more than happy to share our experiences in this matter to create even more interactive approaches in dealing with labour issues and promoting the economy.”

Laura Buffoni, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-Jordan, Senior Livelihoods Manager, who also participated in the session explained, “In Jordan we have between six to seven thousand refugees working in manufacturing... this is a real success for the international community. The presence of refugees in the workforce can be an asset.”

At the conference, Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan took the opportunity to share the work of Better Work Jordan programme in the integration and subsequent employment of the Syrian refugee community in Jordan.

International buyers in Istanbul meet with Better Work Jordan



International buyers in Istanbul meet with Better Work Jordan Brands Adidas, JD Williams, M&S, New Balance, Nike, Puma, PVH, and Inditex along with organizations Fair Labor Association, Ethical Trading Initiative, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-Turkey and Better Work Jordan (BWJ) met in Adidas Liaison Office in Istanbul, Turkey on 1-2 March. The aim of the collaboration was to devise a leading approach to support manufacturers in managing a progressive, multinational workforce including two focus areas, namely, migrant workers and Syrian refugee workers. The approach aims to evaluate existing best practices spanning the migrant worker lifecycle that can adapted per country and explore the possibility of collaboration in the region.

Existing challenges include fear of not being relocated and subjection to income tax on the refugees’ part, and a perceived lack of added value and language barriers on the employers’ part, this is especially true for Turkey. Nonetheless, in an attempt to defuse any potential tension, UNHCR-Turkey and other parties have been supporting community inclusion activities between Syrians and the local community in Turkey.

Acknowledging the progress on improving the working and living conditions for migrant workers in Jordan’s garment sector thanks to the joint efforts of all stakeholders, Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager Better Work Jordan took the opportunity to share different milestones in the sector in the context of migrant workers and recruitment guidelines.

A decade from now: The Garment And Textile Union collaboration paves the way forward

Better Work Jordan, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the Garment Union Executive Board embarked on a five-day collaboration from 4-8 March 2018 with the aim of developing a new vision, mission, and plans for the Garment Union and Textile's development as an organization.

The mission, which was prepared in collaboration between Better Work Jordan, Better Work Global, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) Arab world specialist Mustapha Said, was created to support the Garment and Textile Union. With the majority of the 75,000 workers in the apparel industry living and working in Jordan's Qualified Industrial Zones, the union established an on-site base to accommodate the grievances of workers in addition to promoting the implementation of the most recent sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreement, which it negotiated with The Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments.

The overall objectives of this initiative were to support the Garment Union in developing a vision, mission, and plans for the future, facilitate the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Better Work Jordan and Garment Union to guide the collaboration for the next two years, and strengthen the working relationships between the Garment Union and Better Work Jordan. "This is indeed a positive initiative. By drafting a well-thought and airtight plan our Union will be able to more effectively implement its vision and mission," shared Fathallah Al-Omrani, President of The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries.

During the five-day workshop, a set of four strategic objectives were established by the Union for their work this year, with the main activities and objectives including the finalization of the Garment Union's vision and mission, which is intended to be fully realized by 2028. Other activities and objectives were further listed such as capacity building, the establishment of regional branches, and enhancing communication both with migrant workers and stakeholders. "I would say this has been a very fruitful and promising step," explained Fathallah Al-Omrani.

The mission also lead to a draft MoU between Better Work and the Garment Union which focused on joint advisory visits, capacity building, information exchange, and communication between both parties. "We are very excited to be part of this initiative and commend The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile Garment & Clothing on their efforts to make this endeavor come to fruition," shared Maysa Al-Hmouz, Enterprise Advisor at Better Work Jordan.

Save the date: Better Work Jordan's Multi Stakeholder's Meeting scheduled for 1 - 2 August



Better Work Jordan's annual multi stakeholder meeting aims to discuss lessons learned and the way forward. The meeting will also afford participants the opportunity to reflect on previous initiatives, assess the performance of current activities, and discuss possible future initiatives to enhance the performance of the garment sector in Jordan. The main objectives of the meeting include:

- Sharing and discussing progress
- Exchange stories of success
- Identify opportunities and challenges

Lasts year event included the Ministry of Labour, the United States Embassy in Jordan, the European Union in Jordan, the British Embassy in Jordan, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-Jordan, Ministry of State for Investment Affairs, Jordan Investment Commission (JIC), and the Jordan Chamber of Industry, among others. This year's meeting, which, is set to take place on 1-2 August, 2018 is also anticipated to bring together representatives of the private and the public sector,

and civil society who are anticipated to reinforce the unique roles of their respective organizations.

Participants in the 2017 event included Muhannad Shehadeh, Minister of State for Investment Affairs Chairman, Jordan Investment Commission (JIC), who shared "What the ILO is providing us with is the branding Jordan needs. Improving working conditions in the country is an important ingredient to attract investment." Henry T. Wooster, United States Chargé d'Affaires to Jordan, added "I want to commend the Government of Jordan, the ILO and BW and all the stakeholders for raising the climate and the standards of labour in Jordan and to make it an attractive market."

Andrea Matteo Fontana, Ambassador of the European Union to Jordan, said, "We are working on multiple levels, the regulatory level through the adoption of the Rules of Origin agreement - but also directly with the enterprises to ease their access to the market and their compliance with our standards, and through the ILO to guarantee that these job opportunities are part of the decent work initiative."

Better Work Jordan is supported by the following key donor partners:

