



BetterWork
Jordan

2019 End of Year Newsletter A Year in Review

Dear Friends,

It has been ten years since Better Work Jordan established its operations in the country, accepting the challenge of extending its mandate to the garment industry in cooperation with local and international stakeholders.

At BWJ, we believe that only with your precious and continuous help, milestones have been reached and new ambitious goals can be achieved.

Almost doubling its size since BWJ's inception, the sector was valued USD1.7 billion last year, making up 25 percent of the country's total exports and employing some 73,000 workers. Women represent three quarters of the workforce. Ninety-five factories are currently affiliated with the UN programme.

The continuous promotion of social dialogue and decent work alongside ever-improving compliance with international labour standards and Jordan's Labour Law have cemented the country's position as a preferred outsourcing production hub over the years.

This great result has been achieved only thanks to your commitment and strong action.

Since 2016, the ILO/BWJ have geared up to help boost investment and create jobs for both locals and thousands of Syrian refugees hosted by the country over the years.

As a result, BWJ recently extended its factory-level core services to three further manufacturing sectors eligible to export to the European bloc following the unique trade agreement between the Government of Jordan and the European Union. Nine EU-exporting factories are registered with the programme today.

BWJ strives and campaigns for a Jordanian manufacturing sector that lifts local, migrant and refugee workers out of poverty by providing decent work, empowering women, driving business competitiveness and supporting inclusive economic growth.

There is much to be done, and success is only achievable if all stakeholders join forces.

We want to ensure we all converge on one set of standards for the manufacturing industry, so that Jordan can become stronger economically and a further model of compliance for many decades to come.

Thank you, and Happy New Year!

The BWJ team

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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International
Labour
Organization



International
Finance
Corporation
WORLD BANK GROUP

A TEN-YEAR JOURNEY



2009

Phase I: 2009- 2013

- Launch of BWJ's core services across local factories in the garment industry.

2013

Phase II: 2013-2018

- First Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in Jordan's garment industry.

2010

- Release of instructions defining Better Work Jordan role in inspection in the garment sector.
- Signing the 1st cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Labour.

2014

- Opening of the multi-purpose service centre for migrant workers at Jordan's Al-Hassan Industrial Zone.

2015

- Apparel employer associations and Jordan's garment union commit to implementing unified contract for migrant garment workers by 2016.
- Renewal of the CBA in Jordan's garment industry.
- Launch of the BWJ-Labour Ministry secondment programme.

2017

Phase III: 2017-2022

- EU-ILO collaboration in response to the provisions under the RoO Agreement to ensure decent working conditions in companies exporting to the EU.
- BWJ-Social Security Corporation MoU on boosting the provision of safer working conditions across the country's factories.
- Adaptation of BW's tools to the chemical, plastics and engineering industries.
- Renewal of the CBA in Jordan's garment industry.
- Launch of BW's Transparency Portal in Jordan.

2016

- Removal of garments produced in Jordan from Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPPRA).
- Ministry of Labour-BWJ Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

2018

- Continuation of the BWJ-Ministry of Labour secondment programme.
- Signing an agreement with Garment Trade Union.

2019

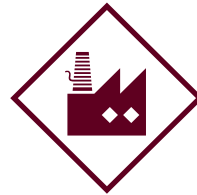
- Industry-wide policy of zero recruitment fees on migrant workers.
- Labour Ministry's inspection guidelines to apply across EU-exporting factories.
- Start of BWJ services across new manufacturing sectors.
- Start of BWJ-Canada project for strengthening the Union's capacity.

Better Work Jordan at a glance



20

international buyers sourcing from Jordan and who are engaged with BWJ.



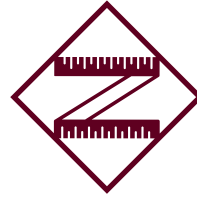
94

exporting factories and their subcontractors participate in BWJ's programme.



73,000 workers

are employed across the country's garment factories.



552

assessments and advisory visits were delivered and conducted in 2019.



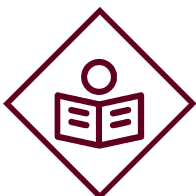
6 industrial seminars

were conducted on topics spanning Sexual Harassment Prevention, Mental Health Awareness, Dormitory Management Systems, Respectful Workplace practices, Supervisor Skills programme and amendments to Jordan's Labour Law.



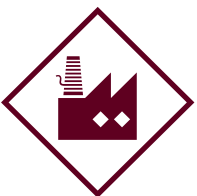
62 training sessions

were conducted by BWJ covering topics such as Supervisory Skills Training, Training of Trainers (TOT) and Workplace Communication.



1,221 trainees from 32 factories

(Women represented 77% of the total).



5 EU-exporting factories

from different manufacturing sectors have joined BWJ.

Click [here](#) to access BWJ Infographic.



BWJ seminars shed light on amendments to Labour Law

BWJ has been running a string of seminars this year, introducing factories to new inspection instructions issued by the Ministry of Labour to raise businesses' legal awareness and improve trade and working conditions at national level.

Some 60 factory and union representatives have attended the BWJ-run seminars between September and October.

Belal Harb, Manager at Century Miracle Apparel factory, said the

session he attended was extremely informative and filled many gaps.

"Providing examples of previous legal cases involving workers helped us better understand the latest amendments," he said. "The meeting was an eye-opener. My work will definitely benefit from this new information".

Going beyond the garment sector

BWJ and the Labour Ministry organized a series of activities this year to illustrate new inspection guidelines to be applied across EU-exporting factories. The new instructions aim to enhance labour compliance in the local manufacturing sector.

As more factories from new industries are expected to join BWJ next year, the programme is boosting its collaboration with relevant partners to promote decent work across factories and create job opportunities for Jordanian and Syrian job seekers.

The string of workshops and trainings is part of an ILO-EU partnership to support the implementation of the Agreement for the relaxation of the Rules of Origin between the EU and Jordan.

BWJ has also run an occupational safety and health training

in November to contribute to improving working conditions in non-garment factories benefitting from the agreement.

Nine EU-exporting factories are currently part of BWJ. These are Al Rawi for Jordanian Cables and Wires, Sigma Detergents Industry Co. L.L.C, Muwaffaq Iriqsousi Clothing EST. Additionally, four garment factories (Needle Craft, Jarash, Classic fashion and Atlanta) have been already registered to the BW programme for many years as they also export to the US market.

Read more:

ILO holds workshop on labour inspection instructions for factories benefitting from the EU's simplified rules of origin.

ILO's Better Work Jordan conducts Occupational Safety and Health workshop.





Mobilizing efforts

Following the publish of the inspection instructions, this July also witnessed the designations of three MoL labour inspectors to the joint committee along with three of Better Work Jordan's Enterprise Advisors (EAs). These labour inspectors joined BW EAs in their introductory follow-up

visits to the remaining factories per the Customs Department authorized exporters list. Starting this October, the labour inspectors received various in-class and field visits trainings from BWJ and joined the BW team in their advisory and assessment visits.

Labour Ministry-BWJ secondment programme

The long-term secondment programme implemented between the Ministry of Labour and BWJ is proceeding at full steam, three seconded MoL Labour Inspectors continue to provide the program's factory-level core services. Besides that, the first short-seconded programme initiated in August 2018 was concluded this year with three Labour Inspectors seconded to BW per quarter. Moreover, 44 labour and OSH inspectors received both classroom and field training by the UN programme this year.

Training topics included Better Work model and compliance tools, sexual harassment prevention, dormitory inspection,

among others.

"The secondment programme provided me with more knowledge on dorms' and occupational safety and health issue. Through our work, we now pay more attention to non-compliances around recruitment fees inside factories," said Malik Mahasneh – a labour inspector seconded to Better Work Jordan.

BWJ and the Labour Ministry carried out 73 between joint inspection and advisory visits across affiliated garment and non-garment factories in 2019.

BWJ and the ILO: events

Earlier this month, BWJ participated in a two-day knowledge sharing event that brought together ILO experts and constituents from across the Arab region and beyond, to exchange case studies and good practices on the inclusion of refugees and displaced persons in the labour market.

Several case studies were presented at the event, highlighting labour market challenges at a time of crisis and innovative solutions that practically address the needs of refugees/displaced persons and countries hosting them – through key themes, models of intervention and good practices.

Click [here](#) to access the "Inclusion of refugees and displaced persons in the labour market with a humanitarian development nexus focus" collection of studies.

BWJ also took part in a two-day conference organized by the ILO and the Labour Ministry on inspection practices in the local agricultural sector in August. Members of the team facilitated discussions among different working groups on topics ranging



from amendments to the Labour Law and their implications for labour inspections to the independence and protection of inspectors and complaint management.



BWJ and the garment union: a fruitful cooperation

The longstanding cooperation between BWJ and the country's General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries has continued throughout 2019. The partnership aims to strengthen the capacity of the trade union across Jordan's garment sector, promote social dialogue on a sectoral-level and actively engage workers in the discussion around the CBA.

A string of BWJ-run TOT sessions was launched in the Sahab industrial estate earlier this month, aiming to build the capacity of dozens of union representatives on topics ranging from workplace communication to sexual harassment prevention and clarification of their roles and responsibilities. BWJ and the garment union are currently conducting a series of trainings for workers at Al Hassan Industrial Estate in Irbid. The sessions will run through January.

New Collective Bargaining Agreement signed for Jordanian Apparel Sector

A three-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between two apparel employers associations and Jordan's garment union was signed on December 2.

The agreement was signed between the Jordan Garments, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association (J-GATE), The Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments (AOFWG) and the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries.

BWJ promoted the bargaining process and helped recruit lawyers to provide stakeholders with legal assistance throughout the negotiation process.

The newly inked CBA adds new provisions to its previous versions, including wages and annual payment increase for

workers. The agreement is also set to completely eliminate abusive behaviours from the factory floor through adopting internal policies under the factory's bylaws which are proposed by the Ministry of Labour.

According to the new CBA, employers will need to take all necessary measures to provide medical care to the workers, including those concerning their mental wellbeing.

Around 300 union-affiliated workers hailing from Jordan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Pakistan and Bangladesh held consultations touching on the CBA in the past few months. Their requests were discussed by stakeholders in the final negotiation rounds.





DMS and Inspection guidelines: new steps to improve dormitories conditions

BWJ supported the development of customized dormitory management systems across 21 exporting factories this year, taking into account the specific needs of each clothing plant.

Jordan's apparel industry employs some 54,750 migrant workers, the majority of whom originate from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India. Factories are required to provide them with food and accommodation throughout their working residency in the country.

The country's Ministries of Health and Labour have signed a breakthrough agreement in 2016 that entrusts government officials to inspect the housing units where garment migrant workers reside.

BWJ saw the agreement a positive step in improving the living conditions of the sector's workforce and helped the ministries develop an official assessment guide to be used during dorms inspections.

The Guide aims to establish common terms of reference to enable those who conduct dormitory inspections/assessments to do so in line with consistent, health and safety standards.

Meanwhile, BWJ will keep on delivering trainings to local factories to help them further develop customized management dormitory systems, support their implementation, and oversee their impact on the workers' living conditions.

PAC and BWJ: a winning alliance

BWJ and its Project Advisory Committee (PAC), which includes members of Jordan's Labour Ministry, apparel employer associations and the country's garment union, have been holding regular meetings throughout the year, discussing the garment sector's latest hot topics and ways to overcome its protracted as well as new challenges.

The UN programme presented the round table with its 10th Annual Report earlier this year, which lists findings and observations gathered during factory assessments. The data reports compliance with labour standards and working conditions.

PAC members also discussed the CBA renewal, a fledgling

sustainable strategy for the sector, BWJ Worker Voice Survey results, and ways to scale up efforts concerning fair recruitment practices throughout 2019.

BWJ and its national stakeholders celebrated a fruitful decade-long cooperation on December 2. The Committee commended the increased number of Jordanians employed in the sector, the issuance of a unified, non-discriminatory contract for migrant workers, and the sector's newly inked CBA. The latter is of the most comprehensive of its kind across the Middle East, and in the apparel sector globally.

To read more about the recent PAC meeting, please follow this [link](#).





Discussion papers and research

BWJ published three discussion papers and a policy brief during 2019, exploring both the past and present of the garment sector in Jordan by looking at its challenges, opportunities and successes.

Discussion Paper 32 – Working Conditions, Transparency, and Compliance in Global Value Chains: Evidence from Better Work Jordan estimates how compliance with national labour law and international labor standards within Jordan’s garment exporting factories changed after the implementation of a transparency programme that made compliance assessments publicly available. Compliance increased in a group of 28 critical compliance areas that represent fundamental worker rights relative to relevant comparison groups.

Discussion Paper 33 – Supporting Mental Well-being of Migrant Garment Workers in Jordan aims to understand the role of mental health and well-being in migrant worker communities by identifying the overarching factors

adversely impacting the mental health and well-being of these workers.

Discussion Paper 34 – The Jordanian Garment Industry and Better Work traces the history of the garment sector in Jordan from the 1990s to the present. It examines the political, economic and legal context that gave rise to the garment industry, the events that nearly felled it, and how an alternative form of supply chain governance spearheaded by the ILO and IFC developed to sustainably build an important economic sector in Jordan.

Better Work Jordan Worker Voice Survey Results present data gathered over the course of four weeks from 1700 workers across 77 factories. The survey gathered data on demographic information, working conditions, factors for business competitiveness, engagement with national stakeholders, and life for workers outside the factory.

BWJ joins hands with Jobedu

Jobedu, the clothing and design company best known for its pop culture t-shirts, has become the first local brand and supplier to join BWJ in February.

Following an agreement with the Walt Disney Company, the Jordanian firm will add its unique Middle Eastern touch to new clothing and accessory collections based on Walt Disney’s most iconic characters.

“The cooperation with BWJ is a great opportunity to continue Jobedu’s never-ending quest for improvement,” says Tamer Al Masri, co-founder and CEO of Jobedu. “We would like to further strengthen this collaboration to enhance OSH measures in our facilities. This will positively reflect on our work.” BWJ welcomes its first collaboration with a local brand and hopes more Jordanian labels will join the programme in the future.





Voices from the field - Ahlam Al Tirawi

When college graduate Ahlam Al Tirawi first visited Al-Hassan Industrial Zone in Irbid looking for a job in the year 2000, she couldn't imagine what the future had in store for her.

Initially working as a sewing operator in a local factory, Ahlam became a production line supervisor in the same plant four years later. Impressed by her determination, the company signed her up for further sewing trainings where she could hone her technical skills. For the next two years, Ahlam would divide herself among three different factories, covering several roles across the factory floor.

But the breakthrough arrived in 2004, when she joined a Training of Trainers seminar on topics spanning gender and union regulations. Two years later, she joined the trade union administration unit in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone.

Ahlam says she worked tirelessly back then, following workers' cases, helping broker solutions during strikes and protests and assisting workers in the industrial zone. Meanwhile, she contributed to the formation of union committees and monitored the union representatives' elections over the years.

Six years later, Ahlam was among the founders of the Workers'

Centre Association, which to this day includes government, employer, and union representatives, as well as BWJ. The association launched a multi-purpose service centre to improve the lives of the thousands of clothing factory workers employed in Al-Hassan Industrial Zone in 2013. The centre, the first of its kind in the country, includes facilities such as a computer lab and canteen. It also offers support in the form of skills training, legal advice, and mental health counselling.

Ahlam has been a leading figure of the Workers' Centre Association since its inception, eventually becoming its chairwoman in September. She sees this achievement as a victory for women's empowerment in Jordan's garment industry.

Today, Ahlam is more determined than ever to spur change through her work.

"I want to continue the cooperation with all the relevant stakeholders and partners to fully implement the 2019 Collective Bargaining Agreement provisions," she says. "I will focus on ensuring that workers' rights are respected, while also making sure that workers receive adequate support to build their capacities, especially migrant workers, who represent the majority of the workforce in the industry."





Afia Rashid

Afia joined BWJ in March last year, after relocating from her native Bangladesh. She has been supporting the deliverance of the programme's core services and the translation of training materials in Hindi, Bangla, English and Urdu ever since.

Afia hopes to use her skills to increase the workers' knowledge level and help factory owners and their management understand that compliance with international labour standards is good to their businesses and not impossible to achieve.



Hazem Nammari

Hazem has been with BWJ since its inception, advising Jordan's garment factories based on his extensive experience with governmental organizations as well as multinational enterprises throughout the Middle East.

"In the beginning, we faced many challenges and resistance across the sector," he says. "Today, stakeholders are coming to us with their own initiatives. They have become more proactive and are enthusiastic about our collaboration!" Hazem holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from the University of Jordan, where he also holds a Higher Diploma in Total Quality Management.



Better Work Jordan/ILO in the Media

- Jordan Times - Workshop held on inspection instructions, rules of origin.
- Just-Style - Jordan mulls increasing local design content in manufacturing.
- Al-Ghad (Arabic Press Release) - Despite the reduction of violations, the International Labour Organisation confirms cases of non-compliance in Jordanian factories.
- Al Ghad (Arabic Press Release) - Better Work: 68,000 Jordanian and migrant workers in 90 eligible factories.

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وزارة العمل



Canada

