



International
Labour
Organization

Better Work Jordan Phase IV Strategy (2022-2027)



BetterWork

Statement of the Better Work Jordan Project Advisory Committee



Over the past decade, Jordan's garment industry has consistently increased its contribution to the country's socioeconomic development. Through our combined efforts and in partnership with Better Work Jordan, the industry's exports have more than doubled and the number of jobs it has created has increased significantly. The industry has also witnessed substantive improvements in working conditions. The incidence of forced labour has decreased dramatically and is now limited to isolated cases which do not represent general conditions in the sector.

Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy strives to build on these achievements in order to realise our shared vision of a competitive Jordanian garment industry that advances national socioeconomic development, lifts people out of poverty and upholds the fundamental rights of all workers. To accomplish this, we commit to working with Better Work Jordan to strengthen labour market governance in Jordan's garment industry, to ensure that workers' rights are upheld and protected in line with national labour laws and core international labour standards, and to improve the industry's competitiveness and its contribution to Jordan's economy. We further seek to establish the Jordanian garment industry as an example of good practice that positively influences other economic sectors.

As we look forward to our collaboration with Better Work Jordan to implement the initiatives set out in this strategy, we are confident that we can achieve remarkable progress that contributes to building more resilient, more inclusive and more sustainable industries.





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List of abbreviations and acronyms



ACTEMP	ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities
CBA	Collective bargaining agreement
DoL	United States Department of Labor
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EPP	Economic Priorities Programme
EU	European Union
FoA	Freedom of association
GoJ	Government of Jordan
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JCI	Jordan Chamber of Industry
J-GATE	Jordanian Garment, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association
GTUWTGCI	General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries
LABADMIN/OSH	ILO Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoIT	Ministry of Industry, Trade & Supply
MoL	Ministry of Labour
NCHR	National Centre for Human Rights
NLC	National Labor Committee
NSSCG	National Sector Skills Council in the Garment & Leather Industry
RoO	Rules of origin
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
USJFTA	United States Jordan Free Trade Agreement

Better Work Jordan is a partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group. The programme engages with workers, employers and governments to improve working conditions and boost competitiveness in Jordan's industrial sector, with a focus on the garment industry.



Introduction

The Better Work Jordan programme strives for an export-oriented Jordanian garment industry¹ that lifts people out of poverty by providing decent work, empowering women, and driving business competitiveness and inclusive economic growth. In its fourteen years of operations, the programme has made important strides in improving working conditions and industrial relations in Jordan's manufacturing sector, with a focus on the garment industry.² Over this period, the total value of Jordanian garment exports has doubled and the number of jobs created in the sector has increased significantly³ despite the challenging operating environment in the region.



As Better Work Jordan enters its fourth phase, the programme aims to consolidate and expand on its achievements while simultaneously equipping the tripartite constituents in Jordan to take a leading role in maintaining and advancing these achievements. Using this approach, Better Work Jordan aspires to ensure that the programme's impact on working conditions in the garment industry is sustainable.

► Box 1: Better Work Jordan Phase IV Strategy Outcomes

- **Outcome 1:** By 2027, Jordan's garment industry will have an effective system of tripartite-plus labour market governance, in which workers' rights are upheld and protected in line with national labour laws and core international labour standards.
- **Outcome 2:** By 2027, export growth combined with active labour market policies will increase the garment industry's contribution to Jordanian employment.
- **Outcome 3:** By 2027, Better Work Jordan will have made a positive impact on working conditions and labour market governance beyond Jordan's export-oriented garment industry.

1 The Better Work Jordan programme's mandate is focused on Jordan's export-oriented garment industry, which comprises direct exporters, their satellite production units and their subcontractors. It does not include enterprises which manufacture garments for the domestic market. All references to Jordan's garment industry in this document refer to the export-oriented industry unless otherwise stated.

2 Brown, D. et al (2016) *The Impact of Better Work. Tufts University Labor Lab. Available online; International Labour Organization (2020) Independent Interim Evaluation: Better Work Phase III in Jordan.*

3 Better Work Jordan (2011) *Garment Industry Second Compliance Synthesis Report; Better Work Jordan (2021) Better Work Jordan Annual Report 2021.*



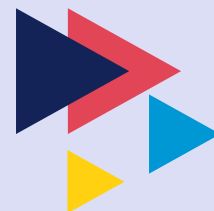
During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will work in close partnership with the tripartite constituents to build institutional capacity that enables them to more effectively fulfil their mandates in monitoring, addressing and remediating labour non-compliances. In addition, the programme will support constituents' efforts to collaborate toward fostering a competitive Jordanian garment industry which advances national socioeconomic development and upholds workers' rights.

Using the garment industry as an entry point, Better Work Jordan will work to make a positive impact on working conditions and labour market governance beyond Jordan's garment industry. To achieve this, the programme's phase IV capacity building interventions have been designed to have positive spillover effects in areas such as labour inspection and combating gender-based violence (GBV) in the workplace.

This strategy was developed through a participatory process conducted in partnership with the national tripartite constituents, and in consultation with other stakeholders including international brands, donors, civil society organisations and international development organisations. Building on Better Work Jordan's long record of successful partnership with the tripartite constituents, it outlines a joint roadmap for a transition to national stakeholder leadership in monitoring working conditions in Jordan's garment industry and advancing long-lasting improvements in workers' lives and Jordan's business competitiveness.



Programme progress and impact: 2008-2021



Better Work Jordan was established in 2008 at the request of the Government of Jordan (GoJ) and with the support of the US Government, following the exposure of severe labour and human rights violations in the Jordanian garment industry in 2006.

During the early 2000s, the preferential terms of the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (USJFTA) led to rapid growth of Jordan's garment industry.⁴ This entailed a large and sudden expansion of the migrant workforce in Jordanian garment factories and led to considerable challenges in effectively monitoring labour conditions in the sector. In May 2006, the National Labour Committee (NLC)⁵ – an American labour rights advocacy group – published an extensive report documenting alleged labour and human rights violations against migrant workers in over 25 Jordanian garment factories. The findings of the report were widely publicized and included allegations of forced labour resulting from employer confiscation of worker passports and deceptive recruitment practices, underpayment of wages, degrading and unhygienic worker dormitory conditions, as well as allegations of physical abuse against workers by factory managers.⁶ Responding to these allegations, the US Department of State's Special Ambassador to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons stated to the press that, "The practices that are alleged, if they are true – and nobody has denied them – if they are true, this constitutes slavery."⁷ The exposure of these labour issues led to great concern among several US brands about sourcing from Jordan, with some reducing the quantity of their sourcing from the country while others decided to cease sourcing from Jordan entirely.⁸

In recent years, US Government assessments regarding the incidence of forced labour in Jordan's garment industry have documented dramatic improvement. In 2009, the US Department of Labor (DoL) placed garments produced in Jordan on its List of Goods Produced by *Child Labor* or *Forced Labor* based on data from numerous sources dating from 2005 to 2008. In 2016, Jordan's garment sector was removed from this list, which DoL attributed in significant part to the work of Better Work Jordan. DoL concluded that forced labour in the sector had been significantly reduced, and the incidence of forced labour indicators had become isolated to a few cases that did not represent general working conditions in the sector.⁹ A similar picture emerges from the trafficking profile of the Jordanian garment industry described in the US Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report*, as presented in Table 1 (see page 9). The results of the independent impact assessment of Better Work Jordan conducted by researchers at Tufts University provides strong quantitative evidence that this decline in forced labour is driven by participation in the Better Work Jordan programme.¹⁰

4 Kolben, K. (2019) "The Jordanian Garment Industry and Better Work." *Better Work Discussion Paper 34*. [Available online](#).

5 The NLC has since been renamed the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights.

6 National Labor Committee (2006). *US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement Descends into Human Trafficking & Involuntary Servitude*.

7 Gillespie, K. (2006). "Jordan Accused of Harboring Sweatshop Factories", 26 June, *National Public Radio*, [Available online](#).

8 Kolben, K. (2019). "The Jordanian Garment Industry and Better Work." *Better Work Discussion Paper 34*. [Available online](#).

9 United States Department of Labor (2016) *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*. [Available online](#).

10 Brown, D. et al (2016). *The Impact of Better Work*. Tufts University Labor Lab. [Available online](#)

► **Table 1 – Trafficking profile of Jordanian garment industry report in the US Department of State’s annual Trafficking in Persons Report¹¹**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2020
Well-documented evidence of serious forced labour / involuntary servitude		✓															
Presence of working conditions indicative of forced labour	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Presence of labour practices that increase vulnerability to trafficking and debt bondage											✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Over time, Better Work Jordan has grown to include over 90 participating factories and has expanded beyond the garment sector to engage with sectors benefiting from the relaxation of the Rules of Origin (RoO) requirements in the EU–Jordan Association Agreement,¹² most notably including the chemical, engineering and plastic industries. At the level of participating factories, Better Work Jordan has improved working conditions by driving improvement in human resources management and occupational health and safety practices, as well as enhancing social dialogue between workers and management. Most notably, the independent impact assessment of Better Work Jordan highlighted strong evidence that participation in the programme led to a lower incidence of forced labour tactics in the garment industry, as well as an increase in worker take-home pay and a reduction in workers’ concerns about sexual harassment in their workplace.¹³

11 This table presents a summary of the trafficking profile for the Jordanian garment industry presented in the US Department of State’s annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* over the period 2006-2021. For each year, the trafficking profile describes the situation in the sector as being broadly characterized by either: 1) well-documented evidence of “serious cases” of forced labour or involuntary servitude; 2) conditions indicative of / similar to forced labor, in particular: passport withholding, delayed payment of wages, verbal and physical abuse of workers, unsanitary living conditions, and indebtedness to recruitment agencies in workers’ home countries; or 3) labour practices which make workers vulnerable to trafficking and/ or debt bondage, in particular: passport withholding, restricted movement and payment of unauthorized fees to recruitment agents in workers’ home countries.

12 Jordanian-EU Association Committee Decision No.1/2016 dated 19/7/2016 concerning the amendment of the Association Agreement Rules of Origin Protocol; Jordanian-EU Association Committee Decision No.01/2018 dated 4/12/2018 concerning the amendment of the Association Agreement Rules of Origin Protocol.

13 Brown, D. et al (2016). *The Impact of Better Work*. Tufts University Labor Lab. [Available online](#).



Importantly, many decent work deficits cannot be tackled exclusively at the workplace level. Sustainable solutions often require policy and institutional reform by national constituents to reinforce workplace interventions. At the policy level, Better Work Jordan has provided support to enable the industrial sector to achieve several major milestones in recent years. Since 2013, the programme has facilitated the successful negotiation of a series of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) for the garment industry that have promoted workplace cooperation and raised labour standards in the sector. To support implementation of the CBA provisions, the programme also facilitated the development and adoption of a unified contract for migrant workers and refugees in the garment industry. This contract serves to clarify employment conditions in the sector and replace the practice of migrant workers signing different contracts in their home country and upon arrival in Jordan. Over the past two years, the programme has additionally supported the tripartite constituents in working toward a sectoral strategy for the garment industry which aims to increase its competitiveness and contribution to Jordan's socioeconomic development.

At the institutional level, Better Work Jordan has worked to strengthen the capacity of the tripartite constituents to fulfil their mandates in promoting decent work outcomes. In recent years, the programme has worked with the ILO's Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch (LABADMIN/OSH) to equip Ministry of Labour (MoL) inspectors with the tools, skills and knowledge to undertake factory assessments using the Better Work methodology. This initiative resulted in the establishment of a dedicated Better Work Unit at MoL tasked with conducting inspections in the garment sector jointly with Better Work Jordan staff.

Better Work Jordan has also built strong partnerships with workers' and employers' organizations that aim to build their institutional capacity. During phase III, the programme supported the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries / Jordan (GTUWTGCI) to strengthen its capacity to engage with migrant workers by establishing a team of migrant worker organisers. In 2021, the union developed its first ever comprehensive strategic plan with support from Better Work Jordan and the ILO's Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV). In collaboration with the ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACTEMP), Better Work Jordan also partnered with employers' organizations to work toward improving the sector's competitiveness, industrial relations and promotion of decent employment opportunities. This involved engagement with the Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI), the ILO's national partner among Jordanian employers' organizations, and with the Jordanian Garment, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association (J-GATE).



Vision

A competitive Jordanian garment industry built on stakeholder collaboration, which advances national socioeconomic development, lifts people out of poverty and upholds the fundamental rights of all workers.

Cross-cutting themes



The phase IV strategy of the Better Work Jordan programme will embed five cross-cutting themes across its three strategic outcomes: gender equality, migration, social dialogue, data and evidence, and digitalization. Each of these contributes to the priority themes set out in the Better Work global strategy for the period 2022-2027. These themes are also informed by the GoJ's national policy priorities and the needs of workers and employers in Jordan's garment industry.

- **Gender equality** – Evidence from several Better Work country programmes, including Jordan, shows that positive changes in working conditions at the enterprise and sectoral levels are driven by interventions that empower women to participate more fully in the change process and which advance gender equality. Building on this learning, Better Work Jordan will collaborate with stakeholders to:
- 1) Foster women's economic empowerment by promoting an enabling environment that supports workers with family responsibilities and provides opportunities for women's career development;
 - 2) Reduce gender-based discrimination, including violence and harassment in the world of work;
 - 3) Strengthen women's voice in factories, labour management committees and the garment industry trade union.



The programme will also ensure that sound knowledge and data arising from this work informs current national policy debates on increasing female labour force participation, tackling gender-based discrimination in the workplace and improving childcare provision for working parents.

- ▶ **Migration** – The labour migration process involves complex challenges in terms of governance, worker protection and international cooperation. With migrants comprising a large majority of garment workers in Jordan, addressing such challenges has long been a priority for the Better Work Jordan programme. During phase IV, the programme will continue to work with stakeholders to uphold migrant workers' rights by tackling the issues of pay discrimination, living conditions in worker dormitories and deficient recruitment processes. Better Work Jordan's phase IV interventions to improve recruitment processes will involve new modes of cooperation with stakeholders in sending countries, including governments, worker organizations and UN agencies.
- ▶ **Social dialogue** – Effective, representative and inclusive social dialogue has the potential to improve labour conditions, boost economic progress and advance industrial peace and stability. Better Work Jordan will harness this potential by supporting national stakeholders' efforts to develop robust social dialogue institutions and processes in Jordan's garment industry. This will involve strengthening social dialogue at the factory-level through bipartite worker management committees, as well as at the sectoral level through the work of a tripartite-plus sectoral forum.
- ▶ **Data and evidence** – Actionable, reliable and timely data can be transformative to policymakers, worker organisations, employer representatives, business and civil society as they adapt to promote decent work outcomes in a changing industry. As a key provider of data and research on Jordan's garment industry, Better Work Jordan will continue to enable evidence-based policymaking at the sectoral and institutional levels. The programme will also work to build stakeholders' capacity to collect, analyse and effectively disseminate their own data to build a sustainable knowledge base on Jordan's garment industry, and on labour issues in the country more broadly.
- ▶ **Digitalization** – Better Work Jordan will harness the potential of digitalization to create productivity gains that promote decent work and increase the institutional capacity of our key stakeholders in a cost-effective manner. To this end, the programme will continue its support for the establishment of a comprehensive electronic case management system at MoL which will significantly increase labour inspector productivity. Better Work Jordan will also support the garment industry trade union improve its communication and engagement with garment workers through several digital channels, including social media, a mobile application, and an electronic membership database.

Development impact

► By 2027, Better Work Jordan strives to:

- Ensure that its impact on working conditions in Jordan's garment industry can be sustained by national tripartite constituents fulfilling their mandates and establishing transparent relations with the international community and civil society.
- Improve working conditions in Jordan's garment factories, as well as workers' ability to advocate for their interests.
- Increase the competitiveness of Jordan's garment industry and its contribution to Jordan's socioeconomic development.
- Improve working conditions and labour market governance beyond the garment industry through policy and institutional support to stakeholders, and by transferring Better Work tools, good practices and technical expertise.



Strategic goals

Outcome 1: By 2027, Jordan's garment industry will have an effective system of tripartite-plus labour market governance,¹⁴ in which workers' rights are upheld and protected in line with national labour laws and core international labour standards.

Phase IV of Better Work Jordan will support the efforts of national tripartite constituents to improve labour market governance in the garment industry. At the institutional level, this will involve supporting constituents build their capacity to more effectively fulfil their mandates in monitoring, addressing and remediating labour non-compliances in the garment industry. At the policy level, the programme will leverage its convening power and research capability to facilitate strong partnerships between stakeholders that address persistent labour issues related to freedom of association, dormitory conditions, pay discrimination, sexual harassment and working hours.

- **Output 1.1. MoL's Better Work Unit delivers factory assessments across the export-oriented Jordanian garment industry and effectively communicates their findings.** Better Work Jordan's long record of successful collaboration with GoJ places the programme in a strong position to support the government's efforts to further develop its capacity to monitor labour compliance in Jordan's garment industry. By 2027, it is anticipated that that GoJ will have the capacity to employ the Better

¹⁴ Labour market governance refers to the totality of institutions, policies, norms, laws, regulations, machinery and processes that influence the functioning of the labour market. Improving labour market governance implies upgrading these various elements to produce more efficient, fair and equitable outcomes.



Work methodology in conducting high-quality factory assessments across the garment industry, as well as the capacity to provide targeted advisory services to improve labour compliance.

To achieve this outcome, Better Work Jordan will continue to train MoL inspectors in undertaking factory assessments using the Better Work methodology. This will enable MoL to realise its commitments to expanding the capacity of its Better Work Unit and taking on a greater role in monitoring labour conditions in the garment industry. A shift to greater MoL involvement in delivering Better Work factory assessments will be managed in accordance with a phased transition plan, which will be developed in close consultation with key stakeholders and based on milestone indicators for transition.

To enable MoL to effectively track and assess the Better Work Unit's performance, Better Work Jordan will support the development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework for labour inspection at the ministry.

In addition, Better Work Jordan will support MoL in developing the capacity to effectively communicate the findings of Better Work factory assessments to external stakeholders. This will involve building the ministry's capacity to issue annual reports on labour compliance in Jordan's garment industry and supporting the establishment of a MoL focal point to liaise with international buyers.

Finally, Better Work Jordan will provide technical support to MoL in upgrading the Golden List, a Jordanian government code of practice that aims to improve labour conditions in the garment industry.¹⁵

- ▶ **Output 1.2. Advisory and training services for labour compliance in the garment industry are delivered partially or entirely by national tripartite constituents.** Better Work Jordan will support the tripartite constituents to play a larger role in promoting social dialogue at the factory level and advising factories on improving labour compliance. Working with ACTRAV, the programme will support GTUWTGCI to implement its strategy to increase the number and effectiveness of elected bipartite worker management committees. Better Work Jordan will also support the establishment of a factory ambassador programme¹⁶ in partnership with J-GATE.
- ▶ **Output 1.3. Better Work Jordan monitors and assesses the quality and effectiveness of assessment, advisory and training delivered by national tripartite constituents.** During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will work with national tripartite constituents to assess their progress in monitoring, addressing and remediating labour non-compliances in the garment industry. Key activities under this output include providing quality assurance for factory assessment reports issued by MoL's Better Work Unit, benchmarking the quality of these assessments against those carried out by Better Work Jordan Enterprise Advisors and evaluating the impact of the factory ambassador

¹⁵ The Golden List is a code of practice that aims to incentivise compliance with Jordanian labour laws and international standards in the garment industry. Enterprises that adhere to the Golden List's compliance criteria qualify for incentives that lower the costs of recruiting migrant workers.

¹⁶ Factory Ambassadors are factory compliance staff and workers' representatives who are empowered to have greater ownership in the factory's improvement process. Participants of this programme are coached and trained to strengthen their knowledge, competencies and skills to bring long-lasting changes to their workplace, using tried and tested Better Work tools and techniques.



programme. These activities will generate the data needed to establish milestones for managing the transition to national stakeholder leadership.

- ▶ **Output 1.4. Better Work Jordan mental health initiative is implemented. During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will continue its work to improve the mental health of garment workers in Jordan, especially migrants and women.** This will involve activities to identify workers' mental health needs, raise their awareness of mental health issues, establish mental health and psychosocial support referral systems that are accessible to all workers, and build stakeholder capacity to support these efforts.
- ▶ **Output 1.5. A labour compliant procurement mechanism for subcontractors is established and implemented in partnership with J-GATE.** Better Work Jordan will support J-GATE in establishing and implementing a programme to certify labour compliant subcontracting factories so that they may qualify for contracts with large manufacturers. This programme aims to create positive incentives for improved labour compliance among subcontracting factories, which are not subject to scrutiny from international buyers. Key activities under this output include supporting J-GATE to develop standards and processes for the procurement mechanism as well as supporting implementation of the mechanism.
- ▶ **Output 1.6. GTUWTGCI's ability to represent and engage with workers is enhanced. In 2021, GTUWTGCI developed its first ever comprehensive strategic plan with support from Better Work Jordan and ACTRAV.** This five-year strategy sets out the union's plans for widening its reach, building stronger relationships with workers, providing its members with demand-driven services, advancing industrial relations in the sector and strengthening its governance. During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will continue to work closely with ACTRAV to support implementation of this plan. This will involve providing technical support to the union in areas such as the implementation of a worker grievance mechanism and the establishment of effective digital channels for communication with workers. It will also involve capacity building for trade union staff in areas such as digital skills and worker organising. By 2027, it is anticipated that the union will have robust mechanisms in place to address worker grievances, as well as an enhanced ability to monitor labour conditions in the industry and effectively represent the rights and interests of garment workers. Importantly, gender equality and migration are cross-cutting themes which will be at the centre of Better Work Jordan's engagement with GTUWTGCI throughout phase IV.
- ▶ **Output 1.7. Effective, representative and inclusive social dialogue for evidence-based policy making is conducted through a tripartite-plus sectoral forum.** For over a decade, Better Work Jordan has brought national tripartite constituents together to collaborate with the ILO, IFC, donors, international buyers and civil society to improve working conditions in the garment industry and innovate partnerships for enhanced labour governance. During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will accelerate and deepen these efforts. The programme will work with social partners to institutionalize social dialogue at the sectoral level by establishing a tripartite-plus sectoral body to serve as a forum for evidence-based policymaking. This will involve reaching consensus on the institutional structure of this forum as well as development and adoption of its bylaws.



Better Work Jordan will work closely with this sectoral forum to implement several other key activities under this output. This includes the development and implementation of a research agenda to inform evidence-based policymaking on key issues such as working hours, gender-based discrimination, employing persons with disabilities, recruitment processes, and the valuation of in-kind wages. Better Work Jordan will also work with this forum to develop and implement sectoral roadmaps to improve worker dormitory conditions,¹⁷ expand worker access to childcare and promote inclusive and accessible workplaces for persons with disabilities.

Importantly, stakeholders beyond the national tripartite constituents have a key role to play in contributing to a resilient ecosystem that safeguards decent work and creates economic opportunity in Jordan's garment industry. In addition to donors and international buyers, these stakeholders include labour and human rights NGOs, media organizations, and research organizations. The history of Jordan's garment sector over the past fifteen years attests to the ability of such organizations to catalyse positive change through monitoring and reporting activities, by influencing the policy agenda, and by providing services to vulnerable workers. Better Work Jordan will therefore engage with these stakeholders to support their role in advocating for and protecting workers, as well as in promoting inclusive economic growth. This will include ongoing collaboration with the Al Hassan Workers' Center located in the Al Hassan Industrial Zone, which is supported by the ILO's Work in Freedom Programme in Jordan.

Outcome 2: By 2027, export growth combined with active labour market policies will increase the garment industry's contribution to Jordanian employment.

During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will work with national stakeholders to increase the garment industry's contribution to Jordanian employment while simultaneously ensuring that the sector maintains its competitiveness.

► **Output 2.1. The national strategy for the garment industry is developed and implemented.** During phase III, Better Work Jordan initiated a process with the national tripartite constituents to develop a national strategy for the garment industry that articulates their shared vision for the future of the industry. This strategy aims to increase Jordanian employment in the garment industry through a combination of export growth, growth in the sector's domestic value-added and active labour market policies. During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will support finalization and implementation of this strategy. This will involve supporting establishment of the institutional arrangements for strategy implementation and conducting policy-oriented research required for implementing the strategy, including on issues such as Jordanian employment, strategic investment areas, and international buyer perceptions of the sector. Better Work Jordan will also support the sectoral forum in developing policy proposals which aim to create an enabling environment for achieving the strategy's objectives.

¹⁷ In addition to the members of the sectoral forum, the Jordanian Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Greater Amman Municipality are key stakeholders who will be involved in the development and implementation of the sectoral roadmap to improve worker dormitory conditions.



- ▶ **Output 2.2. Jordanian workers are prepared for employment in the garment industry.** To address mismatches between the needs of garment industry employers and the skills of the Jordanian workforce, Better Work Jordan will support constituents' efforts to prepare Jordanian workers for employment in the garment industry in collaboration with the ILO's Skills and Employability Branch. Key activities under this output include supporting the National Sector Skills Council in the Garment & Leather Industry (NSSCG) in establishing a supervisory skills training programme and an apprenticeship programme for knowledge-intensive positions in the garment industry. Better Work Jordan will also support the NSSCG in further developing its training curricula for production-related workers.
- ▶ **Output 2.3. Employer and Business Membership Organizations' capacity to increase sector competitiveness is enhanced.** Employers' organizations have an important role to play in enhancing sectoral competitiveness by coordinating private sector responses to industry challenges, providing services to their members and implementing initiatives to promote their sector. During phase IV, Better Work Jordan will work closely with ACTEMP to support employers' organizations in this role. Key activities under this output include supporting JCI and J-GATE to develop consistent sectoral representation as well as an evidence base and communications materials for promoting the sector both locally and internationally.

Outcome 3: By 2027, Better Work Jordan will have made a positive impact on working conditions and labour market governance beyond Jordan's export-oriented garment industry.

Over the past decade, Better Work country programmes have learned that they can reach many more workers and enterprises by transferring Better Work tools and good practices beyond the garment industry and to other countries. Thus, phase IV of Better Work Jordan will strive to increase the programme's impact by engaging with other sectors and countries.

- ▶ **Output 3.1. National constituents' capacity to fulfil their mandate beyond the export-oriented garment sector is enhanced.** Using the garment industry as an entry point, Better Work Jordan will work to make a positive impact on working conditions and labour market governance in other economic sectors. To this end, the programme will provide capacity building support to tripartite constituents through interventions designed to produce spillover effects that positively impact other sectors.

During phase III, Better Work Jordan supported MoL in the early stages of establishing a comprehensive electronic case management system that aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of labour inspection across Jordan. During phase IV, the programme will work closely with LABADMIN/OSH to continue supporting MoL in establishing and implementing this system. By 2027, it is envisaged that this system will be fully implemented. Better Work Jordan will also work with MoL's Labour Inspection Directorate and other social partners to assess the feasibility of expanding the ministry's Golden List to new economic sectors. Moreover, Better Work Jordan will work closely with the Women's Work



Directorate at MoL and the ILO's Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch on addressing GBV in the workplace. This will involve adapting Better Work Jordan's GBV tools for use beyond the garment industry and promoting the implementation of these tools in selected non-garment enterprises.

Finally, Better Work Jordan will support employers' organizations in transferring knowledge from Jordan's export-oriented garment industry to other economic sectors. This will involve supporting JCI in replicating the policy-oriented research conducted for the garment industry in other industrial sectors as well as working with JCI and J-GATE to transfer know-how from the export-oriented garment industry to SMEs that produce garments for the domestic market.

- **Output 3.2. Better Work country programmes adopt learnings from Better Work Jordan's good practices and lessons learned.** In its fourteen years of operations, Better Work Jordan has accumulated a wealth of good practices and lessons learned which have driven the programme's success. During phase IV, the programme will document and disseminate these learnings to other Better Work country programmes, with a focus on collective bargaining, creating local ownership, capacity building for national constituents and policy influence.



Theory of sustained change

Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy is based on a theory of sustained change which works through multiple channels to enable national stakeholders to uphold worker rights and improve working conditions in Jordan's exporting industrial sector, while simultaneously promoting the sector's competitiveness. The following narrative describes these channels and how this model of intervention will lead to a sustainable, long-term impact. It also clarifies the crucial assumptions underlying this theory of change. The accompanying theory of change visualization provides an overview of the linkages between key outputs and outcomes.



- **Outcome 1** – Better Work Jordan's work with national stakeholders to establish an effective system of tripartite-plus labour market governance in Jordan's garment industry will involve interventions at the factory, institutional and sectoral levels. Factory-level interventions under this outcome are based on Better Work's well-established model of core service provision, in which assessments, advisory visits, and in-factory training facilitate and increase labour compliance. During phase IV, these services will be delivered in partnership with the tripartite constituents.

At the institutional level, interventions under this outcome will involve building national constituents' capacity to fulfil their mandates more effectively. As the institutional capacity of the tripartite partners is strengthened, they will increasingly be able to independently deliver a greater proportion of factory assessments, advisory visits, and in-factory trainings in Jordan's garment industry.

To strengthen governance on sector-wide issues, Better Work Jordan will support effective social dialogue among social partners and industry stakeholders. This will involve establishing a tripartite-plus sectoral forum which will enable agile, evidence-based policymaking. It will also involve technical support to produce evidence, research and tools that help address sector-wide issues.

- **Outcome 2** – In line with Jordan's national development objectives, Better Work Jordan will support constituents' efforts to increase the garment industry's contribution to Jordanian employment. To ensure that these employment gains are sustainable, it is necessary that the sector maintains its competitiveness. Interventions under this outcome therefore have two objectives. First, Better Work Jordan will work with national constituents to facilitate the entry of Jordanians into garment industry employment. Second, the programme will support constituents' efforts to enhance the sector's competitiveness.

To ensure sustainable impact, interventions under this outcome will be implemented in close partnership with the tripartite national constituents. By 2027, it is envisaged that the constituents will have the capacity to independently maintain the active labour market policies supported by Better Work Jordan during phase IV, as well as to foster the sector's competitiveness.

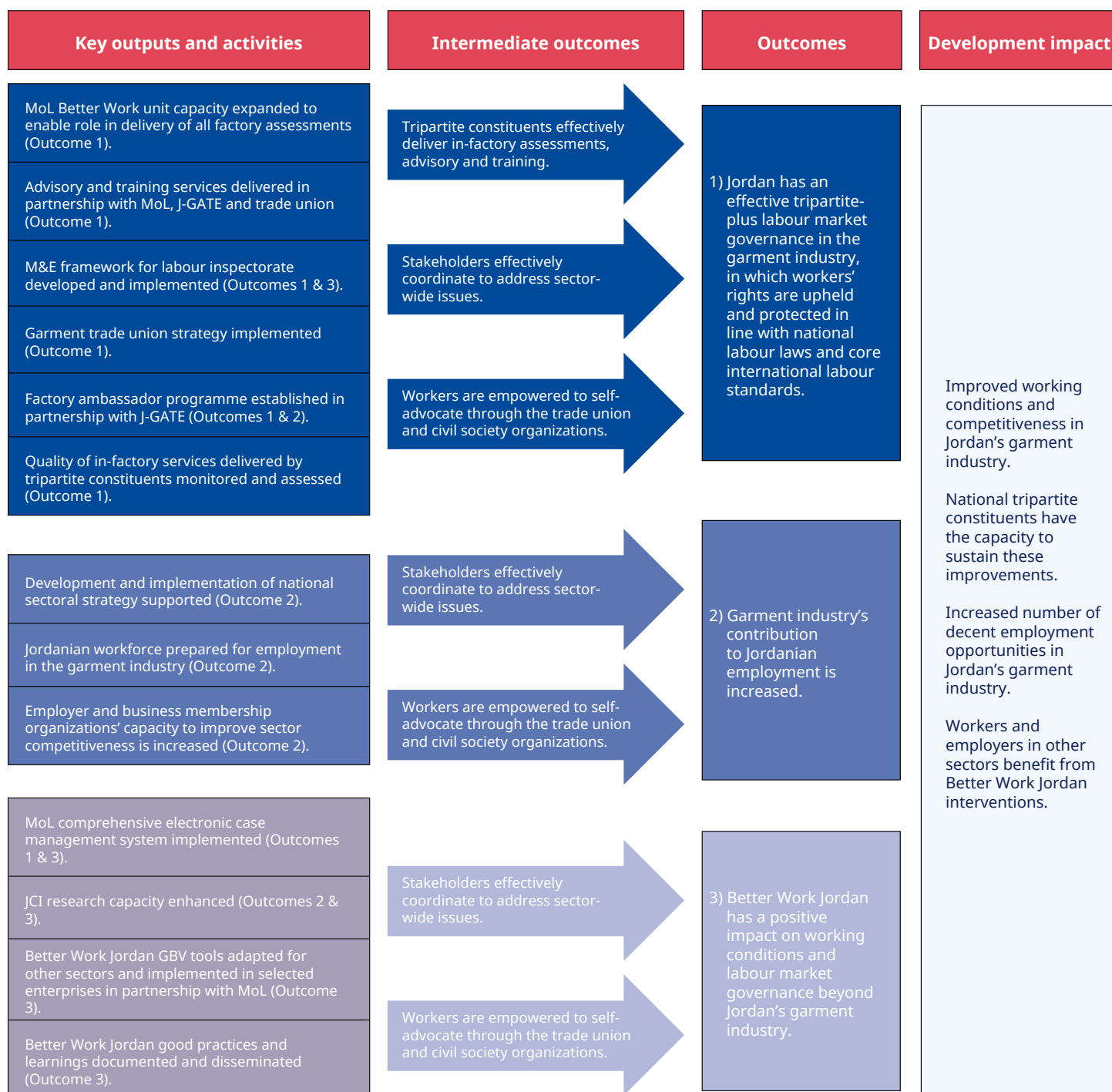


- ▶ **Outcome 3** – In its fourteen years of operations, Better Work Jordan has developed deep expertise in improving labour compliance and working conditions in Jordan’s garment industry. Interventions under this outcome seek to leverage this expertise in order to benefit workers and enterprises in other sectors and countries. In Jordan, this will involve transferring the programme’s skills, tools and good practices to national partners whose mandate extends beyond the garment industry, and supporting national partners in investing these resources for the benefit of workers and enterprises in other sectors. To engage with other countries, Better Work Jordan will implement knowledge management activities to make its good practices and lessons learned readily accessible to other Better Work country programmes and ILO programmes more broadly.
- ▶ **Assumptions** – Three key assumptions underlie this theory of sustained change. The first is that working conditions improve with assessments, training and advisory visits. Over the course of ten years working in the garment industry, Better Work has built up a substantial evidence base to support this assumption.

The second assumption is that national partners are willing and able to play a leading role in the governance and development of Jordan’s garment industry. Better Work Jordan’s key tripartite partners have expressed commitment to these roles, and these commitments will be institutionalized through formal agreements with partner institutions. However, it is important to note that interventions planned at the institutional and sectoral levels are relatively new and untested. This includes the establishment of the Better Work Unit and comprehensive electronic case management system at MoL, the factory ambassador programme in partnership with J-GATE, and the various interventions to build GTUWTGCI’s institutional capacity. It also includes the sectoral forum’s planned activities. To establish whether these interventions enable national constituents to play a leading role in the governance and development of Jordan’s garment industry, Better Work Jordan will put in place a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework to assess their effectiveness. This framework will provide ongoing opportunities to modify and adapt the phase IV strategy if necessary, and will include assessment of the quality of in-factory services provided by national partners.

The third assumption underlying this theory of sustained change is that Better Work Jordan and the tripartite constituents have sufficient leverage to incentivise improved labour compliance among garment factories. The existing Better Work model is based on engaging international buyers with the programme and leveraging their influence to incentivise labour compliance. While buyer leverage is relevant to direct exporters who manufacture garments for reputation-sensitive buyers, it is much less relevant to subcontracting factories and those manufacturing for buyers who are not engaged with Better Work Jordan. To address these limitations, Better Work Jordan will work closely with MoL and J-GATE to create incentives for labour compliance among factories in the latter category. This will involve positive incentives such as a J-GATE programme to certify labour compliant subcontracting factories to qualify for contracts with large garment manufacturers, as well as negative incentives such as MoL exercising its mandate to penalise persistently non-compliant factories.

18 Brown, D. et al (2016). *The Impact of Better Work*. Tufts University Labor Lab. [Available online](#).





Measuring success

Since its inception, Better Work Jordan has taken a rigorous approach to monitoring the programme's progress and measuring its impact. During phase IV, the programme will build on and update this approach, adapting it to the changing nature of the programme's activities.

Better Work Jordan will continue to measure the progress and impact of in-factory services using its established key indicators, which relate to the reach and quality of service provision, and to improvements in labour compliance in the sector. Given that the effectiveness of these services is already supported by a substantial evidence base, monitoring and evaluation efforts during phase IV will instead focus on measuring the impact of new interventions. A stakeholder consultation exercise will be conducted at the beginning of phase IV to inform the design of these impact evaluations. During phase IV, there will be a particular focus on assessing the impact of national stakeholders' increased involvement in conducting factory assessments and providing advisory services, as outlined below.

- ▶ The quality of factory assessments delivered by MoL's Better Work Unit will be monitored and assessed. This will involve benchmarking the quality of MoL factory assessments against those carried out by Better Work Jordan Enterprise Advisors.
- ▶ The effectiveness of the factory ambassador programme and the impact of factory-level social dialogue on labour compliance will be assessed using mixed-methods approaches which combine quantitative and qualitative evidence.

By enabling Better Work Jordan to measure the progress and impact of phase IV interventions, these research initiatives will allow the programme to establish milestones for managing the transition to national stakeholder leadership. They will also establish an evidence base for new modes of Better Work intervention which can inform the programme's work in other country contexts, as well as informing future ILO capacity building activities towards strengthened institutions of work.

Finally, the monitoring and evaluation framework for Better Work Jordan phase IV will document the policy support provided by the programme and assess its impact. Qualitative indicators will be used to document the legislative and institutional changes resulting from Better Work Jordan policy support in areas such as collective bargaining, the work of the sectoral forum and research production.





Strategic fit

Lessons from several country contexts demonstrate that Better Work's impact is enhanced when country programmes are successfully embedded within broader policy interventions.¹⁹ Building on these lessons, Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy is aligned with key policy priorities at both the global and country levels.

Phase IV of the Better Work Jordan programme will strive toward a competitive Jordanian garment industry, which advances national economic development, lifts people out of poverty and upholds the fundamental rights of all workers. It is therefore highly relevant to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim to end poverty (SDG 1), promote decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and foster inclusive and sustainable industrialization (SDG 9). In addition, phase IV of Better Work Jordan will contribute to SDG 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower women. Because women comprise around 75 percent of workers in Jordan's export-oriented garment industry²⁰, improvements in working conditions will benefit women disproportionately. In addition, advancing gender equality is one of five key cross-cutting themes in Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy, and the programme will implement specific initiatives designed to empower women.

Importantly, Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy also aligns with key GoJ policy priorities. Over the past two years, the longstanding economic challenges of poverty and unemployment faced by Jordan have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nationwide closures have impacted performance across many economic sectors including the garment industry, while global changes in supply chains and shipping costs have also taken their toll on the economy. In response to these challenges, GoJ has launched the *Economic Priorities Programme 2021-2023* (EPP). Outcome 2 of Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy is strongly linked to the first two pillars of the EPP which aim to improve Jordan's business and investment environment and increase Jordanian employment. All three outcomes of Better Work Jordan's phase IV strategy are also aligned with the *Jordan 2025 National Vision and Strategy*, which aims to create quality, private-sector jobs for Jordanians and foster inclusive growth. Outcome 2 of this strategy is particularly linked to the strategy's objectives of accelerating and deepening export promotion capabilities and improving the business environment.



¹⁹ Better Work (2021) *Better Work Strategy 2022-2027*.

²⁰ Better Work Jordan (2021) *Better Work Jordan Annual Report*. [Available online](#).

► Box 2: Better Work Global Strategy 2022-2027 outcomes

- **Outcome 1** - By 2027, employers and workers and their representatives in the Better Work programme uphold and are protected by national labour laws and fundamental principles and rights at work; and enterprises in the sector that have emerged from the COVID-19 crisis are more sustainable, resilient and inclusive.
- **Outcome 2** - By 2027, Better Work's impact on workers, businesses and compliance is sustained by national institutions that leverage the programme's approaches, data and evidence.
- **Outcome 3** - By 2027, enterprises that participate in Better Work have adopted policies and practices on responsible business conduct that support the realization of decent work.
- **Outcome 4** - By 2027, Better Work's learnings and methods have created positive social and environmental impacts beyond the programme as they are adopted in other countries and sectors.

During phase IV of the programme, Better Work Jordan will contribute to meeting the strategic goals set out in the Better Work Global Strategy 2022-2027 in several ways. Most notably:

- Better Work Jordan will contribute to outcome 1 by continuing to work with employers, workers, and their representatives to uphold national labour laws and fundamental principles and rights at work in Jordan.
- The programme will contribute to outcome 2 by collaborating with social partners to develop an effective tripartite-plus system of labour market governance in Jordan's garment industry, thus ensuring that Better Work Jordan's impact can be sustained by national institutions.
- Better Work Jordan will contribute to outcome 4 through support for initiatives that aim to build the institutional capacity of the tripartite constituents at the national level, for example, by supporting the implementation of an e-inspection system at MoL and the development of research capabilities at JCI. Support for such initiatives will have positive spillover effects in sectors other than the garment industry. Better Work Jordan will also continue to document and disseminate its good practices and learnings to facilitate knowledge sharing with other Better Work country programmes.

Moreover, phase IV of Better Work Jordan contributes to the priority themes set out in the global Better Work strategy. The five cross-cutting themes embedded in the Better Work Jordan strategy correspond directly to the global Better Work priority themes of *Gender equality, diversity and inclusion, Social dialogue, and Digitalization, data and evidence*. Better Work Jordan interventions related to worker dormitory conditions and pay discrimination will contribute to the global Better Work priority themes *Wages and Occupational safety and health*.

The Better Work Jordan phase IV strategy also actively seeks to align with the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Jordan (2018-2022). Indeed, this strategy is aligned with all three key DWCP priorities: 1) Employment creation for economic and social stability; 2) Decent working conditions for all to create a level playing field for male and female Jordanians, refugees and migrants; and 3) Social partners to increase their contribution to decent work. As the current DWCP comes to an end, Better Work Jordan will play an active role in contributing to the upcoming DWCP and ensuring that the programme continues to be aligned with its strategic direction.



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