



BETTER WORK

Programme Update

April/May 2010

Welcome to this edition of Better Work's Programme Update, designed to keep you up-to-date with Better Work activities across the globe.

If you would like more in-depth information on any of the topics below, contact Chandra Garber at garber@ilo.org

Global Activities

New Members of the Better Work Team

Dan Rees, of the Ethical Trading Initiative in the UK, has been named the new Director of Better Work. He will join the global team in Geneva in August. For more information, [please visit our web site](#).

Better Work also welcomes two new staff who have joined the team in May. Kristina Kurths has begun her post as Programme Manager for the Better Work Lesotho programme. Ms. Kurths comes to Better Work from the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), where she managed the social standards component of the GTZ Programme in Bangladesh, Garment and Textile Industry from 2006–2009. And at the Better Work global office in Geneva, Cheikh Camara has begun his post as Better Work's new Finance Officer. Mr. Camara comes to us from Mercy Corp, where he worked as the Finance and Administration Manager.

Partnership Agreement with Australia Brings 7.5 Million Dollars to Better Work

Under the new Partnership Agreement between the Australian Government and ILO, a total amount of 7.5 million Australian dollars has been allocated to support implementation of the Better Work programme. Funds under the Partnership Agreement will allow Better Work to continue implementation and expansion of its country programmes in Asia, in particular the coming Better Work Indonesia programme.

Country Activities

Jordan

Better Work Jordan has released its first public Garment Industry— Compliance Synthesis Report, which provides an examination of non-compliance performance in participating garment factories. The report illustrates the findings of assessments carried out between March 2009–February 2010 in 15 factories covering 13,338 workers (over 30% of total workers in the industry). The sample factories employ an average of nearly 900 employees each, of whom 75% are migrant workers and 56% are women. This first report presents an important baseline for assessment and advisory services. [Click here to view a copy of the report](#).

Cambodia

On 6–7 May, ILO Better Factories Cambodia hosted its annual Buyers' Forum, along with the Better Work Regional Buyers' Forum. The forums brought together approximately 30 buyer representatives, Better Work Vietnam and global staff, ILO staff from Bangkok, IFC representatives from Phnom Penh, Dhaka, Washington and Ho Chi Minh City, and local NGOs. Representatives from the Royal Government of Cambodia, the Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia and the trade unions were also invited to take part in specific sessions. Among the topics discussed were the transition process to an independent organization and buyer feedback on issues relevant to the Cambodian context, such as expansion to the footwear industry, paid sick leave regulations, subcontracting and others. At a meeting with high-level government representatives, the Government reiterated their support for Better Factories Cambodia, as did buyers, who also encouraged the Government to recognize the importance of ensuring the programme remain sustainable over the long term.

Ms. Chhim Narin, a worker from the Lotus garment factory finished first in the Cambodian Labour Law radio competition. On 22 May, three finalists competed for the 2010 championship, which involved 60 minutes of questions and debate on Cambodia Labour Law case studies. Previous rounds in the competition focussed on employment contracts, wages, working hours and overtime, and leave. The radio competition is a collaboration between local radio station Mohanokor FM 93.5 MHz and ILO Better Factories Cambodia.

Haiti

Better Work Haiti finalized factory assessment reports and held a meeting to share the results with factory owners. This was a good opportunity to discuss major findings with national programme stakeholders. The Better Work Haiti: Garment Industry—Compliance Synthesis Report will be finalized and released publicly in the coming weeks.

Better Work Haiti also conducted a needs assessment to understand better the current situation regarding trade unions in the country and to support capacity building efforts.

Vietnam

Nearly 2,500 garment workers from Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding provinces ran in a safety campaign on 25 April in Binh Duong Province, Vietnam to mark World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2010. Through a skit performed by Better Work Vietnam team members and a quiz session, the Safety Fun Run campaign gave workers and their managers a chance to learn how to promote safety through understanding risks and preventative measures at their factories. The event was organized by Better Work Vietnam to raise awareness of occupational safety and health in the Vietnamese apparel industry, and was sponsored by PVH, Target, Levis, Adidas and TMI factory. For photos and video of this event, [please visit our Facebook page](#).

Highlights

New Web Sites Launched

Better Work global and country programmes are pleased to announce the launch of our redesigned, updated web sites. We invite you to visit and explore the sites and see what's new!

<http://www.betterwork.org>

<http://www.betterwork.org/vietnam>

<http://www.betterwork.org/jordan>

International Buyers' Forum in Geneva

An International Buyers' Forum, held on 25 May at the ILO offices in Geneva, gave European buyers the opportunity to meet with one another and Better Work global staff to discuss pressing issues. Among the topics discussed were the establishment of a timeline for a Bangladesh feasibility study, as well as the development of a sustainable "cost recovery" fee structure for country programmes, on which IFC is currently conducting a study.

In addition, buyers expressed their commitment to Better Work, but identified barriers to translating this commitment into purchasing assessment reports and encouraging factories to sign up. In this respect, Better Work indicated it would strengthen work with buyers to provide effective communications for buyer engagement and buyer outreach to factories.

[International Buyer Principles >>](#)

Quote of the Month

"Today's event is about fun and entertainment, but also about understanding safety and health at work. I think ensuring safety at work is that you do comfortable work that is suitable with your health and pay high attention to prevent any accidents."

*Bui Thi Thuong, worker from CMC VINA,
Safety Fun Run, Winner—Women's Race*

Better Work Jobs

Better Work is continually looking for qualified professionals to work with the global and country programmes. When posts are available they are listed on our web site.

Better Work is currently accepting applications for the following positions:

- **Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), P-5, Better Work Nicaragua programme**

For more information about these vacancies, please visit our web site at the link below.

[See vacancies and tenders >>](#)

About Better Work

Better Work is a unique partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). It unites the expertise of the ILO in labour standards with that of the IFC in private-sector development. Better Work brings together local enterprises, international buyers, governments, and workers' and employers' organizations to improve labour standards and competitiveness in global supply chains.

[See our brochure >>](#)

Better Work is supported by the governments of Australia, Canada, the European Union, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.