



## Programme Update

June/July 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](mailto:garber@ilo.org).

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### Global Activities

#### Better Work Stakeholders Reaffirm Commitment to Programme in Nicaragua

At meetings with high-level officials on 27–28 July in Managua, Better Work Nicaragua stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to active participation in the upcoming programme, which is planned for roll out of services in early 2011. National and international attendees, including Nicaraguan Minister of Labour Jeannette Chávez Gómez and U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solís, shared their vision and expectations for successful implementation. “We think that it is important to develop a programme that, like Better Work does, highlights the respect and improvement of working conditions of the textile workers in Export Processing Zones,” stated Minister Chávez Gómez. In addition, Better Work staff engaged substantially with international buyers—including Fishman & Tobin, Gap Inc., Gildan, Levi Strauss & Co., VF Corp. and Wal-Mart—as well as the textile employers’ association and factory owners, to review plans for factory assessments, clarify the sign-up process and discuss the development of key advisory and training services. To view the press release for this event, please [click here](#).



Left to right: Robert J. Callahan, U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua; Hilda Solís, U.S. Secretary of Labor; Virgilio Levaggi, Director of the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team (Costa Rica); Laetitia Dumas, Senior Programme Officer, Better Work.

### Country Activities

#### Cambodia

On 8 July, the Cambodian Labour Advisory Committee (LAC) voted 20 to 5 in favour of raising the minimum wage for garment and footwear industry workers. The LAC also decided to bundle the previously separated \$6/month cost-of-living allowance with the new minimum wage, which will be increased by \$5/month. As of October 2010, the minimum wage for regular workers will be \$61/month, and probationary workers will earn a minimum of \$56/month. Cambodian garment and footwear workers paid on a “piece rate” basis will also be guaranteed the new minimum wage. For more information, please [click here](#).

On 23 June, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, in partnership with ILO/AIDS and Better Factories Cambodia (BFC), launched its “[Guidelines on HIV/AIDS in the Workplace](#)”. The guidelines, developed for government and employers’ and workers’ organizations, are a “how-to” tool that provides practical guidance on establishing and implementing a programme and policy on HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

In late May, the ILO Decent Work Team Bangkok, with the support of BFC, organized a knowledge-sharing event in order to raise awareness about Cambodia’s new *Law on the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. BFC and ILO tools, such as the Alleviating Poverty

through Peer Training toolkit and BFC's [new disability brochure](#), were shared with about 50 participants representing the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation; the private sector; and national organizations for people with disabilities. The new law contains provisions for the inclusion of people with disabilities into the workplace, including garment industry workplaces.

### Haiti

On 18 June, Better Work Haiti and Business for Social Responsibility held a teleconference with international buyers to provide an update on programme activities in the country. Representatives from eight retailers and brands participated in the call. Given that the majority of communications since January 2010 has been focussed on earthquake relief efforts, this teleconference provided a good opportunity to discuss the current situation and buyer commitment to the Better Work Haiti programme. An in-person buyers' forum will be held in the fall of 2010.

As part of its support to the development of information access and management systems within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Better Work Haiti provided 17 computers and printers to the Central Administration in Port-au-Prince and 13 regional offices. The General Director of the Ministry expressed his gratitude to the U.S. Department of Labor and to Better Work Haiti for their support.

### Jordan

As part of the effort to build the capacity of Jordan's labour administration, the Ministry of Labour and Better Work Jordan have agreed on language for a collaboration plan on joint training for Ministry Labour Inspectors and Better Work Jordan Enterprise Advisors. In addition, on 20 July, the Ministry of Labour and Better Work Jordan signed a protocol concerning the handling of possible human rights abuses uncovered by Enterprise Advisors in apparel factories.

The Canadian Government's Labour Program of Human Resources and Skills Development has approved a proposal to provide funding for the development and implementation of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and Human Resources (HR) training modules targeting both factory management and workers in Jordan. The goal is to conduct the HR training pilot by the end of the year, with the OSH pilot to be conducted in the early part of 2011.

### Lesotho

Two key industry organizations—the Mapotsoe-based Lesotho Industry Employers Association and the Maseru-based Lesotho Textile Exporters Association—have confirmed their commitment to industrywide participation in Better Work Lesotho. In addition, five major international buyers, including Gap Inc., Jones New York, Levi Strauss & Co., Primark and Wal-Mart, have formally endorsed the programme.

On 13 July, Rachel Kyte, IFC's Vice President of Business Advisory Services, met with Better Work Lesotho stakeholders in Maseru. Representatives of employers' organizations discussed the challenges facing Lesotho's garment industry, and Ms. Kyte reaffirmed the role of Better Work in helping to strengthen the competitiveness of the industry while remaining committed to protecting workers' rights.

### Vietnam



A new trailer for “At the Factory Gates”, an innovative soap opera video exploring worker-management relations, is now available on the Better Work Vietnam web site (click video to view). The soap opera, which is paired with a complementary comic book, is used to train workers on their rights and responsibilities, and is part of Better Work's tailored training curriculum.

There are currently 63 enterprises registered with Better Work

Vietnam, and advisory services have begun in 30 factories. In addition, the programme has delivered nine training courses, which included 753 participants from 93 factories. Six of these courses were offered as special introductions to the Better Work training curriculum, with each factory sending one worker to take part.

As Better Work Vietnam enters its second year of operation, the programme is scaling up to reach about 150,000 workers this year. To meet this growth, six new Enterprise Advisors have recently been recruited, bringing the team total to 12. A rigorous training programme for Enterprise Advisors will ensure that staff has the capacity to provide all Better Work services with quality and integrity.

Better Work Vietnam will release its first public synthesis report in August showing the compliance performance of enterprises assessed between December 2009 and June 2010.

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## Highlights

### Swiss President Briefed on Better Work During Visit to Indonesia

During a visit in early July to Jakarta, the President of the Swiss Confederation, H.E. Madame Doris Leuthard, met with Peter Van Rooij, Director of ILO's Jakarta Office. The event was an opportunity for Mr. Van Rooij to present the Better Work programme to President Leuthard and to representatives of the tripartite constituents participating in Better Work Indonesia. The Swiss Government is a donor to the Better Work global programme.



Peter Van Rooij, Director of ILO's Jakarta Office (left) with President of the Swiss Confederation, H.E. Madame Doris Leuthard.

### Upcoming Governance Meetings to be Held in Programme Country

For the first time in the programme's history, Better Work will hold its semi-annual governance meetings in a Better Work programme country. During the week of 20 September, donors, members of the global Advisory Committee and the Management Group will convene in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to discuss programme activities and to strategize future objectives. Meeting participants will also visit factories, where they will hear from workers and managers on the Performance Improvement Consultative Committee. The Better Work Vietnam Project Advisory Committee (which includes representatives from the Ministry of Labour–Invalids and Social Affairs; the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour) will also discuss their vision of the programme.

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## Jobs

Better Work is continually looking for qualified professionals to work with the global and country programmes. All available posts are listed on our web site. [See vacancies and tenders >>](#)

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## 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.**



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