

January–March 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)

## Global Activities

### Rolling Out New Country Programmes: Activities in Lesotho and Nicaragua

The manager for the Lesotho country programme has been selected and is expected to arrive in the country in May. In addition, during the Better Work mission to Pretoria and Maseru in January, stakeholders gave final feedback on the project document and reaffirmed their commitment to industry-wide participation in Better Work.

A project design mission was also conducted in Nicaragua, where Better Work is preparing to launch a new country programme in the final quarter of 2010. The decision on programme implementation has been endorsed by all social partners, and the United States Department of Labor has expressed its commitment to fund the project. In addition, eight international buyers have already indicated that they will be actively engaged in implementation of the programme in Nicaragua.

### New Communications and Marketing Officer Joins Better Work Global Team

In February, the global team welcomed Chandra Garber as its new Communications and Marketing Officer. Chandra's background ranges from the World Health Organization to NGOs and the private sector. She will be working to strengthen Better Work's messaging and visibility to create a strong brand across the global and country programmes.

### Strengthening Advisory and Training Services: Global and Country Programmes Meet to Discuss Quality Assurance in Phnom Penh

Decision-makers from Better Work global and country programmes in Cambodia, Jordan and Vietnam met recently in Phnom Penh for three days to discuss and agree on the strategy and practice of Better Work advisory and training services. The meeting, which gave country programme representatives an opportunity to share learning experiences and develop a common strategy, highlighted the need for consistency of service delivery in all country programmes, while allowing for flexibility to address local legal and cultural contexts.

## Highlights

### First Vendor Forum Held in Hong Kong

As part of Better Work's effort to more effectively engage all stakeholders in global supply chains, staff from Better Work global and country programmes in Cambodia and Vietnam met with several international vendor firms in Hong Kong, following a meeting with international buyer representatives. The forum, the first official one of its kind, was an opportunity for vendor representatives to provide feedback about their role in Better Work's continuous improvement approach, and there was general support for greater involvement in the programme.

### Better Work Global Strategic Planning Meeting a Success

The annual Strategic Planning Meeting, which took place at the ILO's International Training Institute in Turin, Italy on 25–28 January, brought together staff from the global programme as well as staff from country programmes. Among the outcomes of the meeting, a shared mission statement giving direction to future projects was developed:

***Mission:** Better Work helps governments, workers and companies achieve compliance with the International Labour Organization's (ILO) core labour standards and national labour law through market incentives. It builds the capacity of employers, governments and unions to work together toward solutions that benefit all. By promoting innovative and credible systems, Better Work has sustainable impact and directly benefits the lives of millions of workers.*

Additional workshops with Enterprise Advisors from each country programme will be held annually to provide practitioners with face-to-face learning opportunities that build on each other's experiences and help ensure the quality of Better Work services.

## Country Activities

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### Jordan

At the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Better Work Jordan Project Advisory Committee (PAC), held on 30 March, the PAC reviewed a plan to introduce a training component focusing on improving human resource management and factory occupational safety and health. The status of industry-wide factory participation in the Better Work Jordan programme was also discussed; an announcement on this is expected soon. For more information, please contact: [abuhdaib@betterwork.org](mailto:abuhdaib@betterwork.org)

George Dragnich, ILO Executive Director for Social Dialogue, led a high-level ILO delegation to Jordan to discuss with the government the implementation of a pilot Global Jobs Pact programme of action and to observe firsthand the work of Better Work Jordan. During the visit, Dragnich, who is also a member of the Better Work Management Group, received a detailed briefing from the Better Work Jordan team and visited a QIZ satellite factory that employs Jordanian workers.

### Cambodia

Marking the closing of the annual conference hosted by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, H.E. Men Sam An, Minister, and H.E. Vong Sauth, Deputy Prime Minister, awarded a medal to Mr. Tuomo Poutiainen, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO Better Factories Cambodia, who received it on behalf of all his staff. The medal recognizes Better Factories Cambodia's contribution to the development of the Cambodian economy.

The Cambodian Labour Law radio competition for garment workers is also underway, with 12 finalists being selected from over 150 entries collected in December 2009 and January 2010. The competition, co-sponsored by Better Factories Cambodia and Moha Nokor Radio FM 93.5, matches a different pair of competitors each Saturday to answer questions on national labour laws. The finale will take place on 22 May, with three awardees to be announced. [For more information on this event >>](#)

### Haiti

Following the 12 January earthquake, Better Work Haiti continues to track participating enterprises, workers and post-crisis needs on a factory-to-factory basis. Fortunately, most of the enterprises operating in and around Port-au-Prince withstood the earthquake and its aftershocks with minimal damage. Seven of the 24 participating enterprises were damaged, one of which was completely destroyed. At present, all factories are back in business, though not all are operating at full capacity. Better Work is currently evaluating different crisis response options.

## International Buyer Principles

We are pleased to announce that the following international buyers have recently signed Better Work's International Buyer Principles:

- Pentland Group
- L.L.Bean
- Primark

For more information on the Buyer Principles, including other buyers who have signed, please visit the Better Work web site.

[International Buyer Principles >>](#)

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## Quote of the Month

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"I wanted to see and to understand the industry, as so many of the products we buy are outsourced to foreign countries. I wanted also to see how this was beneficial to workers here in Cambodia and how I can help the campaign to promote better work."

**Patrick Powers, Undergraduate in Accounting, College of William and Mary (United States), participant in student visit to Cambodian garment factories**

## Better Work Jobs

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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.

[See vacancies and tenders >>](#)

## About Better Work

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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 >>](#)

## Vietnam

Better Work Vietnam held its first Buyers' Forum for locally based buyers on 19 January in Ho Chi Minh City. Representatives from 10 international garment buyers based in Vietnam and the region participated, and there was strong consensus that buyers should communicate with their supplying factories directly and ask them to register with Better Work Vietnam if they have not already done so.

To support World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2010, Better Work Vietnam is organizing a Fun Run for Safety that will take place on 25 April for garment factory workers from Ho Chi Minh City and nearby provinces. The campaign will give workers and managers an opportunity to enjoy themselves together, with a focus on joint ways to promote safety inside their factories. Up to 20,000 garment workers are expected to participate and earn prizes, including a grand prize of 1 million dong. [For more information on this event >>](#)



**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.**

