



Programme Update

March/April 2011

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

Over 40 Better Factories Cambodia and Better Work Staff Convene 1st Advisory Services Summit in Cambodia

During the last week of April, Enterprise Advisors (EAs) from five Better Work country programmes and Better Factories Cambodia gathered at a four-day Advisory Services Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Staff reflected on experiences to date and discussed how to move forward with a more effective service model. Sessions on assessments addressed process integrity issues, and EAs laid out a plan for knowledge-sharing platforms to ensure consistency between programmes and enhance



skills in areas such as better worker interview techniques. The advisory services sessions explored Better Work experiences with Performance Improvement Consultative Committees, and agreed to develop action plans for greater management engagement in the continuous improvement cycle as well as self-assessment tools. In addition, participants spent time in detailed discussions about how the programme can more effectively incorporate a management systems approach into current practices.

The final day of the summit involved some of the programmes' more experienced EAs participating in a Training of Trainers workshop on coaching skills. As the country programme teams continue to expand, Better Work and Better Factories Cambodia are helping to ensure sustainability through the mentoring and support of new staff by experienced EAs.

Collaboration on Productivity Issues in the Spotlight at Advisory Service Summit

As part of the Advisory Services Summit, Better Work devoted significant time to productivity issues in garment industry supply chains, with a focus on practical knowledge for Enterprise Advisors. The programme was fortunate to partner with international buyer L.L.Bean in a day-long session on productivity that involved both classroom-based instruction and factory-based training. Among the issues covered were production planning and control, quality assurance and control, and technical and product design.

Country Activities

Haiti

The Better Work Haiti 2nd Biannual Synthesis Report under the HOPE II Legislation was published in April. This report covers findings from Better Work assessments of 28 factories, and provides a detailed presentation of non-compliance issues as well as remediation efforts in the biannual period. Among the findings presented, Better Work Haiti notes that while occupational safety and health challenges persist, there has been some improvement in the payment of overtime wages. To view the complete report, [click here](#).

Better Work Haiti, with the support of the Better Work Global Focal Point for Industrial Relations and in collaboration with the International Trade Union Confederation, has developed a strategy on the establishment of Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCs) in participating factories. The first PICCs will be established in 2011, beginning on a pilot basis. Through the PICCs, Better Work Haiti will encourage the development of a pragmatic model of labour-management cooperation in the Haitian garment sector, by means of capacity building for both worker and management representatives to address gaps in compliance with national labour law and ILO core labour standards. The model also utilizes a credible process for workers to be involved as partners at the workplace, through election of their own representatives on the PICCs.

Indonesia

Better Work Indonesia will hold a Buyers Forum in Jakarta on 27-28 June, to coincide with a rollout of services. The Forum will provide an opportunity for constituents to come together to reaffirm their commitment to the programme and to discuss ways to strengthen stakeholder engagement in the continuous improvement process. In addition, related Better Work Indonesia buyer engagement activities have been underway since April, with a series of meetings, co-hosted by brands, to introduce the programme to suppliers and encourage them to register. Among the buyers who participated in such meetings were adidas Group, Gap Inc., H&M and Wal-Mart. Better Work Indonesia has also met separately with Nike, Puma and Target, and plans to arrange similar suppliers introduction meetings in the coming months. Other buyers interested in the programme are encouraged to contact Josephine Imelda (Josephine@ilo.org) for more information.

Jordan

In March, Better Work Jordan released its Garment Industry: 2nd Compliance Synthesis Report, which examines the findings of assessments carried out between December 2009 and December 2010. The report covers 24 factories that account for over 50% of the workforce in the sector. To view the report, [click here](#).

The Better Work Jordan Project Advisory Committee has issued a statement encouraging the programme to facilitate a process to develop and implement a strategy for increasing Jordanian employment and investment in the garment sector. To help establish a foundation for building this sectoral strategy, the Better Work Jordan has commissioned a study, expected to be published mid-year, on the contribution of the garment sector to the Jordanian economy. Currently, Jordanian workers comprise around a quarter of workers in the industry, and while the government has made efforts to encourage Jordanian employment by subsidizing factories that employ only Jordanians, employers continue to face difficulty in recruitment.



Participants at the Buyers' Forum

On 12–13 April, Better Work Jordan hosted its 3rd Annual International Buyers' Forum. The forum was attended by representatives of the five major international buyers sourcing from Jordan: Gap Inc., JCPenney, Jones Apparel Group, Sears Holdings and Wal-Mart. Among the topics discussed was more effective collaboration between buyers and Better Work to overcome challenges, including improving conditions for migrant workers.

Better Work Jordan has successfully piloted two training programmes targeting the most pervasive non-compliance issues in the sector. Participants from 13 factories and the Ministry of Labour attended the *Introduction to Human Resources Management* training, which addresses issues that account for over 30% of non-compliance findings in assessed factories. And more than 100 workers attended the pilot *Occupational Health and Safety* training, which deals with health and safety issues in the workplace as well as worker dormitories. Occupational health and safety

issues account for over half of non-compliance findings in assessed factories. Both training pilots were developed with support from the Labour Programme of Human Resources and Skills Development, Canada.

Lesotho

Better Work Lesotho is now fully operational with respect to delivering assessment services and generating reports through the STAR online information system. And work to initiate Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCs) and launch advisory services is in process. Currently, 10 factories, representing about one third of all export-oriented garment factories and employing approximately 17,000 workers (40% of workforce in the sector), have registered with the programme. Out of the 10 factories, eight are located in Maseru and produce mainly for the US market. The two other factories have their production sites in Maputsoe and export predominantly to South Africa. Buyers who have expressed their commitment to support Better Work Lesotho—Gap Inc., Jones Apparel Group, Levi Strauss & Co., Primark and Wal-Mart—have been active in following up with their suppliers on their subscriptions (out of the 10 factories who signed up, 7 are producing for buyers supporting the programme).

In April, the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) supported the implementation of a survey to identify key industrial relations issues in Lesotho's garment sector, as well as capacity development needs of garment sector unions in the country. Based on the survey's recommendations, the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation, who is also providing support to survey implementation, will develop a proposal for a union capacity-development strategy, to be submitted to donors for funding. The strategy will address unions' capacity building needs within and beyond the scope of Better Work Lesotho.

Nicaragua

Over the last two months, Better Work Nicaragua has continued to prepare for its rollout of services. The selection process is underway for national staff, as well as a consultant who will adapt the Compliance Assessment Tool to the Nicaraguan context and labour legislation. The Programme Manager has met with Gap Inc., Nike, Wal-Mart and the Levi Strauss Foundation, and has made presentations to suppliers in the country, including members of the Garment Sector Employers' Association, to familiarize stakeholders with the programme.

Vietnam

In order to support participating factories in managing occupational safety and health (OSH), Better Work Vietnam organized the third industry seminar on Risk Assessment, an integral part of OSH management systems. Almost 50 participants from 30 factories were introduced to techniques for assessing OSH risks in the factory. The seminar also provided a platform for participants to share experiences and good practices for reducing risk level through precautionary and control measures. The next industry seminar is scheduled for June 2011.

On 31 March, Better Work Vietnam hosted its first local Buyers' Forum for Vietnam-based representatives of 10 international garment buyers and brands. Better Work Vietnam had the opportunity to update buyers on programme status, while also hearing feedback from participating factories. The buyers and the Better Work Vietnam team also discussed ideas about how to coordinate communications more effectively and to promote Better Work Vietnam's services.

Celebrating the World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2011!

On 28 April, Better Factories Cambodia joined the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training in Kampong Cham province to commemorate the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, whose theme this year was "Promoting Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems." The public event, which aimed to promote a culture of preventive safety and health in the workplace, involved nearly 600 representatives of government, workers and employers. Activities included presentations by Better Factories Cambodia and government officials, an educational role play on the topic of safety at work, and a march in the city center to help raise the awareness of the general public about occupational safety and health. To read more about this event, [click here](#).



In an effort to address non-compliance challenges, and in celebration of ILO's World Day for Safety and Health at Work, on 30 April, Better Work Haiti welcomed over 1600 apparel factory workers for a first-of-its-kind Safety and Health at Work fair at the SONAPI Industrial Park in Port-au-Prince. The event aimed to promote a better understanding of risks and preventive measures that managers and workers can take to ensure a safe and health workplace. Workers had the opportunity to take part in quizzes and workshops, and had access to a variety of health screenings provided by local partners. Sponsors of the event included Better Work Haiti, the Levi Strauss Foundation, Gildan, Astro Embroidery and Screen Printing, and Painson S.A.



Workers participate in activities as part of Better Work Haiti's Safety and Health at Work Fair.

Better Work Vietnam marked World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2011 by hosting the 2nd Safety Run campaign on 17 April. Approximately 3200 garment workers and their managers from factories in Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding provinces participated in the event, which provided an opportunity to learn about good safety and health practices in factories in a fun and relaxed environment. The campaign aimed to raise awareness of safety and health, with a focus on joint efforts for prevention. Workers were able to demonstrate their knowledge about factory safety in a variety of activities, including a slogan contest, skits and quizzes. Sponsors for the event included Abercrombie & Fitch, adidas Group, International Finance Corporation, Levi Strauss & Co., Nike, Phillips-Van Heusen, Sears Holdings, Target, Tesco International Sourcing, Vietnam Singapore Industrial Park and the Walt Disney Company. To view a slideshow of the event, please [click here](#). Or to get more information, visit the Better Work Vietnam web site by [clicking here](#).

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 >>](#)

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 promote 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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