



Better Work, a unique partnership programme of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), brings together government, employers, workers and international buyers to improve labour standards compliance and competitiveness in global supply chains.

The programme aims to make improvements in working conditions and workplace cooperation, combining independent enterprise-level assessments of labour standards compliance with advisory services for improvement activities and training services focused on target audiences and practical skills.

ASSESSMENT SERVICES

The Better Work enterprise assessment questionnaire measures compliance with ILO core international labour standards (child labour, forced labour, discrimination, freedom of association and collective bargaining) and national labour law (wages, working hours, contracts, and occupational safety and health). Questions pertaining to the core international standards remain largely the same in all country programmes. In addition, Better Work undertakes a technical review and consults with the ministry of labour to refine questions pertaining to national labour law to ensure that this section of the assessment is adapted to the specific country context. Assessments identify compliance needs and support proactive improvements.

Better Work advisors are hired locally and receive extensive training from Better Work in conducting assessments and delivering advisory services. As part of Better Work's gender equality policy, and in order to address the high number of female workers in the garment industry in programme countries, assessment visits are conducted by two advisors, usually one man and one woman wherever possible. All Better Work staff are trained to conduct their duties based on a strict ethic of integrity, transparency, diplomacy and respect.

ADVISORY SERVICES

Following an assessment of compliance needs, Better Work advisors work directly with each factory to:

- establish and facilitate a Performance Improvement Consultative Committee (PICC), which includes representatives of workers and management
- create and implement improvement plans, and recommend training services
- increase company performance on subsequent compliance assessments through targeted remediation activities.

Advisory services ensure a tailored approach to working with each factory. The programme will update buyers about steps enterprises have taken to address key non-compliance issues at their facilities. Advisory services may also include assisting factories in tracking the impact of remediation on quality and productivity.

TRAINING SERVICES

As part of Better Work's response to compliance challenges faced by enterprises, a series of practical training courses has been designed to support assessment and advisory services with a strong focus on building capacity and ensuring enterprise engagement in the long term. Better Work offers targeted trainings to managers, supervisors and workers, both in the classroom and at the factory. STAR on electronic recordkeeping of assessment data, remediation plans and agreements between buyers and suppliers supports a scalable solution with global reach.

Training courses cover a range of topics, including:

- ILO core labour standards
- Workers' rights and responsibilities
- Human resources management
- Supervisory skills
- Occupational safety and health

These courses emphasize skills development, building trust and effective workplace cooperation.

As certain aspects of training activities require facilitators with significant international and technical experience, Better Work supports developing the skills of local trainers and training institutions. In addition to factory training offered by its own staff, Better Work identifies and engages with local partners, providing them with the rigorous instruction and oversight needed to deliver Better Work services with a high level of excellence and integrity.

STAR: THE BETTER WORK INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

An important component of Better Work's continuous improvement process involves factories sharing with buyers reports on labour standards compliance and improvement plans. To facilitate the collection and distribution of this information, Better Work has developed an information management platform called STAR (Supply-chain Tracking of Assessments and Remediation), designed specifically to meet the unique requirements of Better Work and its processes. This system helps Better Work ensure that access to factory information is granted only to buyers approved by the factory. The emphasis in STAR on electronic recordkeeping of assessment data, remediation plans and agreements between buyers and suppliers supports a scalable solution with global reach.

Star offers:

- Implementation of country- and industry-specific labour standards compliance questionnaires.
- Production, distribution and storage of compliance data and reports, allowing factories to share information with buyers, including annual reports and remediation updates.
- Reporting on changes in labour standards compliance at the factory level.
- Compilation and aggregation of data on labour standards compliance for all participating factories in a specific industry, by country.
- Cross-country comparison of aggregate compliance data for all participating factories in a specific industry.
- Self-assessment guidance tool prepared by the ILO on how to implement core international labour standards and national labour law.

