



International
Labour
Organization

▶ H&M Group ILO partnership

▶ December 2020

An important partner in the promotion of decent work in the textile and garment industry, H&M has worked with the ILO since 2001. To reinforce and expand this partnership, [H&M and ILO signed a partnership agreement in 2019](#) that emphasized their shared commitment to promoting systemic changes in labour relations by working with governments, trade unions and employers' organizations and a renewed focus on sustainability in H&M's supply chain. H&M supported projects with the aim of facilitating the socially responsible production of garments for global markets through customized training and skills development programmes.

▶ Improving industrial relations for decent work and sustainable development in Ethiopia



Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The textile and apparel industry plays an increasingly important role in its economy by contributing to foreign exchange earnings and creating employment. Despite its rapid economic growth, Ethiopia still faces challenges related to the promotion of social dialogue, safe working conditions and the application of international labour standards for all.

Based on a common vision of Ethiopia as an African hub of socially responsible garment production for both global and domestic markets, H&M partnered with the ILO and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in a three-year project supporting improved labor relations, productivity, wages and working conditions.

Implemented between 2015 and 2018 with a total budget of US\$ 2.8 million, the project helped develop a mutually reinforcing cycle between higher productivity, improved competitiveness, and better working conditions. In addition to policy advice, technical support and coaching, the project convened high-level policy dialogues and delivered demand-driven training programs. More than 20,000 workers from 12 target enterprises benefited from the project's interventions aimed at improving working conditions. Trainings reached an additional 1,300 officials from the regional level government and workers' and employers' organizations; 421 trade union leaders and members; and 200 labor inspectors. OSH trainings resulted in the creation of nine bi-partite OSH committees composed of both management and employees, and tailored trainings for women's committees led to the improved representation of women in union leadership structures. Productivity increases for the targeted factories ranged from 11 to 26 per cent, leading to a subsequent increase in the financial incentives paid out to factory workers.

▶ ABOUT H&M Group

The Swedish Hennes & Mauritz AB multinational clothing-retail company operates in 74 countries with over 5,000 stores and 179,000 employees. The company focuses on using its influence to support positive transformation in the fashion industry by driving innovation, collaborating with others, pushing for greater transparency, and rewarding sustainable actions.

► Enhancing productivity and working conditions in SMEs in Turkey with SCORE



The [Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises \(SCORE\)](#) program uses the best international practices in the manufacturing and service sectors to increase the productivity of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), while promoting respect for workers' rights and improving their working conditions. It consists of in-class trainings and in-factory consultancies on subjects like workplace cooperation, quality management, human resources management, energy efficiency and occupational safety and health.

The SCORE Program has been active in Turkey since June 2014, with H&M's support beginning in 2017. H&M has not only applied the program in its selected supplier enterprises but has also provided financial support as well as undertaken monitoring and assessments in the participating enterprises. This project worked with ten H&M suppliers in the provinces of Istanbul and Izmir and delivered two modules of the SCORE Program: Workplace Cooperation and Safety as well as Health at Work. In 2018, additional support was provided to a SCORE Short program covering four factories recruiting Syrian refugees.

As a result of this project, SCORE training materials were translated into Turkish, and SCORE trainings were successfully delivered to ten H&M supplier enterprises that benefited from a follow-up consultancy. In the participating factories, the project also led to the implementation of 114 improvement ideas for better working conditions and productivity, while also enhancing local capacity to deliver SCORE trainings.

► Improving working conditions and productivity in garment supply chains with Better Work

H&M has been a key [Better Work](#) partner since 2013, supporting Better Work's approach to building factory ownership, promoting effective industrial relations and facilitating factory improvement in over 150 H&M suppliers' factories in the five Better Work countries in which H&M sources. H&M is active at the national policy level in these countries, engaging with Better Work and social partners on issues that support an enabling environment for the industry - from social protection to contracts, OSH to Industrial Relations. H&M and Better Work are collaborating on innovative global initiatives which include: wage management systems and measuring factory progress on workplace cooperation using a new set of indicators and are



exploring opportunities around gender. H&M currently serves as one of the two buyer representatives on the Better Work Advisory Committee, representing the Europe/Asia Buyer group.

► Centre of Excellence for certified training in the garment sector in Bangladesh



With the support of H&M and SIDA, ILO helped establish the Centre of Excellence for Bangladesh Apparel Industry (CEBAI) to improve productivity, occupational safety and quality in the export oriented, ready-made garment industry. The CEBAI promotes an inclusive approach to skills training and certification that enables all jobseekers, including persons with disabilities and marginalized groups, to access skills training and decent employment with increased incomes.

As a result of the project, thirteen ready-made garment factories joined the Enterprise Based Training program and were registered as training organizations, allowing them to begin competency-based training. More than 10,000 new workers were enrolled in the program, including workers living in poverty and those with low literacy and numeracy levels. Thanks to their participation, they were able to access new job opportunities and better pay. The project supported the development of assessment and learning materials as well as the training of 262 industry trainers on competency-based training and assessment.

To accommodate persons with disabilities and promote gender equality, 13 companies received additional support to develop an Inclusive Business Policy. For the first time, these enterprises formally indicated that they wanted to recruit and train persons with disabilities as well as promote more female candidates into supervisory roles.

Contact details

Partnerships and field support

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