



# Promoting Social Dialogue and Harmonious Industrial Relations in the Bangladesh Ready-Made Garment Industry

## AT A GLANCE

### PARTNERS:

#### Government of Bangladesh

- Department of Labour (DoL), Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE)

#### Employers' Organizations

- Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF)
- Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)
- Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA)

#### Workers' Organizations

- National Coordination Committee for Workers Education (NCCWE)
- IndustriALL Bangladesh Council (IBC)

**Donor:** Sweden & Denmark

**Duration:** April 2016 - March 2021

**Geographical Focus:** Bangladesh

## BACKGROUND

The Ready-Made Garment sector in Bangladesh has grown rapidly since the 1980's. It employs an estimated four million workers, of whom the majority are women. This fast paced growth has not been accompanied by similar developments in labour market institutions. This has resulted in a need to ensure improvements in working conditions and labour rights.

Following major garment factory accidents in 2012 and 2013, the ILO developed a comprehensive programme to support the Government's efforts to engage in a much-needed reform process to improve safety, working conditions and rights at work in this sector.

While notable progress has been made, momentum must be maintained and more needs to be done to effectively improve working conditions and rights at work in the garment sector, in line with relevant international labour standards. Effective institutional mechanisms for supporting the implementation of the legislative framework are also required. Furthermore, the level of trust between workers and employers through dialogue at the workplace requires enhancement.

## ACTIVITIES

The project will focus on the development of dialogue mechanisms and relations between employers and workers, particularly at the workplace level as a means of resolving disputes. It will also entail the development of conciliation and arbitration mechanisms into a more credible, trusted and transparent system. In addition, the initiative will seek to intensively build the capacity of workers and employers to engage in social dialogue at the workplace. Given the large presence of women in the lower ranks of the workforce, efforts will be made to fully incorporate their interests and needs.

The project will initially be piloted in the RMG sector, with gradual scaling up within the sector, and expansion beyond the sector.



## PLANNED OUTCOMES

The initiative has three main outcomes

- Outcome 1: Sustainable improvement in social dialogue, workplace cooperation and grievance handling.
- Outcome 2: Sustainable and effective mechanisms for conciliation and arbitration are established.
- Outcomes 3: Enhanced capacities of employers' and workers' organizations to dialogue and prevent and resolve disputes including those of gender concerns.

### ILO Project Office

House # CEN (B) 16 (First Floor), Road 99  
Gulshan -2, Dhaka 1212  
Tel. 09678777456  
Email: [dhaka@ilo.org](mailto:dhaka@ilo.org)  
Web: [www.ilo.org/dhaka](http://www.ilo.org/dhaka)