



BetterWork
Bangladesh

2018 Start of Year Newsletter

Dear Friends, Happy New Year!

We hope your 2018 is off to a great start and that you are gearing up to a 12 months full of new goals to achieve and challenges to overcome. At Better Work Bangladesh, we believe that only with your precious and continuous help, new milestones across the country's garment and footwear sector can be reached.

Inside this newsletter you will find a selection of activities we carried out in 2017 and an initial two-page information leaflet shedding light on the unique value our programme brings to businesses, workers, and the sector at large.

Researches show that with the support of Better Work, improved compliance has the benefit, among others, of reducing absenteeism among employees and decreasing multiple buyer audits. The latter saves management time in preparing for and responding to audits, and also saves costs associated with paying for multiple audits.

BWB had the pleasure of hosting some 300 national and international garment sector representatives at its stakeholders' forum last April, including partners from government, employer associations and unions, as well as 80 international brand representatives.

We would like to see even more actors participating this year to help the sector attain the government's own goals: for Bangladesh to become a middle-income country with good compliance by 2021.

To do so, we must start to see compliance not as a mere obligation, but a business necessity that makes factories more competitive.

Bangladesh's 28 billion USD a year garment export industry has the potential to forge the future of the country's development. Let's write this story together.

Thank you and enjoy the read!

The BWB Team

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Better Work is a partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in collaboration with local and international stakeholders. It unites the expertise of the ILO in labour standards with that of the IFC in private sector development.

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How Better Work can help your factory



Improved
profitability



Reduced cost



Lower staff
turnover



Fewer audits

Get involved

Contact bangladesh@betterwork.org for more detail.

Increased *productivity*

Across all countries training supervisors through Better Work's Supervisory Skills Training (SST) increased the productivity of lines run by trained supervisors, especially women, by 22%



Increase
productivity

Higher *profits*

In Vietnam, the average firm enrolled in Better Work increased its revenue to cost ratio by 25% after four years of participation.



Increase
profitability

Greater *credibility* with buyers

Major Brands and Retailers like GAP, Abercrombie and Fitch, PVH, Levi Strauss & CO and H&M are partners with Better Work Bangladesh

Preferential access to trade *finance*

The IFC is focusing on Bangladesh to help with lower-cost financing solutions for factory safety upgrades in the garment and textile industry

Fewer *audits*

International experience shows that Better Work factories have fewer audits, saving both time and money

Improved *resilience*

Research shows that factories in Cambodia that were Better Work compliant are more likely to survive an economic crisis

About Better Work

Better Work is a global partnership between the United Nations' International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group.

Our approach combines advisory services, assessments and training, aimed at delivering clear and continuous improvements in your factory.

We work with government, employers, workers and international buyers to ensure our approach is both relevant and sustainable

What do factories say?

"Better Work has a development approach rather than an audit or fault finding approach. We wanted to have something like this which look at things on a regular basis and point out where we are falling behind and help us to remedy those faults and finally become better."



Chowdhury A-A Quaseed
Director of Ananta Group
Dhaka, Bangladesh



International
Labour
Organization



IFC

International
Finance Corporation
WORLD BANK GROUP

BetterWork.



BetterWork

Progress and Potential

September 26, 2016

Improved working conditions in the apparel industry make workers' lives better and businesses stronger

An independent review of the Better Work programme shows significant gains in quality of life for workers in factories they advise, as well as enhanced productivity and profitability for those businesses involved.

GENEVA (ILO News) – A joint International Labour Organization and International Finance Corporation programme has dramatically improved working conditions in hundreds of garment factories across seven developing countries, an independent review has shown.

According to the study by Tufts University, the Better Work programme moves factories away from practices leading to long working hours, extremely low pay, dismissal threats, or abuse of probationary contracts. Workers are seeing an increase in their weekly take-home pay and are less and less concerned with excessive overtime and poor wages.

The review also notes progress in closing the gender pay gap, particularly among garment factories receiving Better Work advisory services in Haiti, Nicaragua and Vietnam.

The programme has made significant progress in diminishing coercive labour practices and limiting harassment and verbal abuse. In Jordan reports of sexual harassment fell by 18 per cent and the incidence of workers feeling fearful in the workplace declined markedly as well.

Training women supervisors – a shortcut to big gains

Researchers found that Better Work's Supervisory Skills Training (SST) is a very effective strategy for improving working conditions, and empowering women in the industry. The analysis showed that production lines overseen by Supervisory Skills-trained female line supervisors increased factory productivity by 22 per cent, when compared to lines overseen by supervisors who had not yet received such training.



Crown Wears and Better Work Bangladesh: Taking the industry to the next level

With some 5,000 workers, a six-story building for another 5,000 in the pipeline and a history of upgrading standards, Crown Wears is a company setting the bar higher for the garment sector in Bangladesh.

Belonging to Sparrow Group, which supplies top international brands, the factory joined Better Work in 2015 and improvements to working conditions haven't stopped since.

Located in the country's central region of Mymensingh, some 75km north of the capital Dhaka, the factory provides full terms and conditions of employment, medical services and coverage of rent and living costs included in its workers' salaries, starting from the national monthly minimum of 67 US dollars.

Crown's Human Resources and Compliance Manager Nayim Ahmed said that, based on the factory's reports, the situation inside the facility has improved over the years and, mostly, after the company joined Better Work.

"Since then, we elected participation committees (PC), established a new medical ward and a childcare facility to host up to 35 children," Ahmed said. "Before, the nursery was very small and not well equipped, and the only doctor in the facility was often overwhelmed. We have now a female as well as a male doctor and have built two medical rooms, one for women and one for men. We also bought a fridge to keep vaccinations for the children."

Also, following Better Work's advice, the factory distributes food to breastfeeding mothers and their children twice a day.

Crown Wears is trying to apply the country's legal limits on overtime hours by allowing only two extra hours on top of the worker's eight-hour day.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/2CAJh10>

BWB holds joint summit with major UK buyer

In October, a major UK buyer with significant presence in Bangladesh, introduced 60 of its local suppliers to the Better Work Programme, said BWB Programme Manager Louis Vanegas.

Participants to the summit also included officials from the Ministry of Employment and Labour and existing members factories, who shared their experience with BWB in regards to its core service model, of advisory, assessment and training services, and initiatives beyond its core services.

Bangladesh's Deputy Inspector General, Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan, lauded the programme and called on the factories attending the event to become part of it.

Bhuiyan told the audience that joining the programme was a positive step to help reach an enhanced level of compliance on the factory floor, thus improving the industry as a whole.

Management teams from a string of BWB-partner factories highlighted their experience with BWB, including the initial challenges they faced after understanding some of the policies they had been following needed to change.



BWB continues to expand its reach to factories in Chittagong

BWB organized late in September a tripartite event that saw the attendance of government officials, factory owners, and union leaders in Chittagong, Bangladesh's largest port and financial centre in the country's southeast.

The UN programme is set to expand its services into the thriving ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh's second largest urban centre.

BWB started providing its assessment, advisory and training packages in the area in late 2016. So far, six factories from Chittagong have joined the programme.

But last month's BWB factory outreach meeting and social dialogue session were set to change this and increase the number of partner factories in the region.

Some 60 factories attended the BWB's event in which members of its team outlined the programme pillars, while partner brands explained the importance of its core services for their operations and how both them and their factories benefit from their partnership in Bangladesh.

Members of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers

and Exporters Association (BKMEA) and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), two of the largest trade associations in the country representing the sector, attended the event.

Shahid Uddin Ahmed Azad, Director of the BKMEA, told the audience about the needs of his affiliated factories and how they were expecting BWB to meet them. Shahid also called on the UN programme to focus on small and medium enterprises whose lack of resources makes compliance extremely low.

Both members of trade associations and brands highlighted the uniqueness of the BW assessments across the audit market in Bangladesh, due to its advisory-based, solution-oriented strategy and calls for continuous improvement.

BWB also conducted a workshop on social dialogue with the participants, stressing the pivotal role social dialogue plays on work inside the factory. Unregistered factories from Chittagong showed interest in joining the programme at the end of the event, while BKMEA-affiliated factories called for additional meetings with BWB to further pin down and tackle the industry's challenges.

BWB launches its first seminar on Human Resources Development

BWB kicked off late in September its first seminar on Human Resource Development aimed at prompting an easier and faster recruitment process across the country's ready-made garment industry.

Dubbed "Industry Seminar on Human Resources: Easy and Faster Worker Recruitment Process in the RMG Factories," the one-day meeting is set to show participants ways of improving recruitment processes, which ultimately would save factories time and help lower costs.

14 management members from eight BWB-affiliated factories attended the seminar discussing challenges of the existing worker recruitment process and opportunities to ease and speed up its mechanisms and policies.

But the BWB programme showed that following its advice on how to improve the recruitment process would significantly lower the recruitment cost per worker. Money saved could be then diverted into staff training, incentives to increase compliance and benefits for the production team.



IFC/BWB bring skills to workers via women empowerment programme

Better Work Bangladesh and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) are implementing a project funded by Japan and the World Bank Group, providing 240 female garment workers in Bangladesh with the training they need to reach their full potential inside their factories.

Known as the “Women productivity toolkit,” the project covers 30 factories enrolled with the ILO/IFC Better Work programme and offers technical training, as well as soft skills coaching, to the factories’ best machine operators interested in occupying supervisory positions.

The training also aims to raise the workers’ knowledge of the different processes carried out inside the factory, which eventually reflects on their task and leads to an overall increase in productivity.

“In Bangladesh’s RMG sector, four out of every five production line workers are female whilst only one in ten supervisors is a woman,” said Eleonore Richardson, IFC’s Programme Manager.

“This means 90 percent of the managerial talent in factories emerges from 20 percent of the workforce, resulting in the inability to fully exploit the potential of its workforce. This training will allow factory managers to tap into the full potential of the workforce by allowing greater career progression opportunities for women.”

BWB’s Sexual Harassment Prevention training sparks changes in attitudes and behaviour.

Four hundred employees spanning factory managers, supervisors and workers have so far received Better Work Bangladesh (BWB) sexual harassment prevention (SHP) training.

In line with the programme’s philosophy of creating a snowball effect of better practices across its affiliated factories, more programme participants are expected to follow.

“We started delivering SHP training in two pilot factories in August last year through December,” said BWB’s training officer Shipra Chowdhury, who conducted the seminars. “So far we’ve reached all the factories managers, half of the supervisors and one quarter of the workers. We are here to build capacities so that they can

continue on their own, thus making the training and its teachings sustainable.”

The Human Resources and Compliance General Manager at the company said they had always had a zero-tolerance policy concerning sexual harassment, but that BWB’s work was really helping to spread awareness of guidelines many workers and management members were unaware of.

He said he had started noticing large improvements following BWB’s training. In the past few months, only a few cases were reported instead of the previous five to six a month.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/2tZwzFt>



Healthy Mother Healthy Child advocacy project brings good nutrition practices to the factory floor

Under a project dubbed “Healthy Mother Healthy Child,” Better Work Bangladesh(BWB) Enterprise Advisors use their regular factory visits to call on management to distribute food among pregnant workers and mothers who breastfeed in the workplace, as well as provide time and space to do so.

Based on the premise that pregnant women and mothers who breastfeed need special protection in a factory, the UN programme unfolded an action plan in July spanning policies and procedures that plants should follow to guarantee the health of workers and their babies. Eventually, these measures should contribute to lower maternal and infant mortality rates across the country.

The project emphasizes nutritional needs, maternity protection and childcare assistance. It also organises trainings for the factory clinic’s staff, welfare officers, managers, line supervisors and childcare specialists.

Five months into the project, 11 BWB-affiliated factories—making up a roughly 40,000-person workforce—started to provide 49 pregnant women and 149 breastfeeding mothers with energy-boosting food like bananas, milk, eggs, biscuits and cake.

Read more:<http://bit.ly/2EjTBbl>

Better Work Bangladesh in Numbers

- 167 affiliated active factories employing 344, 572 workers, 188245 of whom are women making up around 55 percent of the workforce.
- There are currently 21 international buyers sourcing from Bangladesh and who are engaged with Better Work.
- 229 assessments were conducted
- 1,438 advisory visits were conducted.
- 190 Trainings and Industry Seminars (72 Industry Seminar and 118 Training sessions)
- 4740 individuals, among them workers, mid-management staff and senior management members, had received training.
- 1678 women received trainings.
- BWB Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was set up in June 2016. This includes 4 government members, 4 representatives from employers’ associations and 4 trade unions members.
- BWB has so far facilitated the procedure of 48 Participation Committees Elections according to the international labour standards and Bangladesh’s Labour Law. 35 Participation Committees Elections were elected in 2017.
- 474 worker representatives were elected, of which 203 are women
- BWB started working in June with Fair Wear Foundation, an international multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at improving working conditions in the garment industry, to streamline factory-level operations and offer business partners new benefits.
- BWB and UNICEF started working on the Mothers@Work joint project in August, a national initiative to support maternity rights and promote breastfeeding in the garment sector. The initiative will help protect the wellbeing of mothers and ensure that their children receive the early nutrition they deserve.

Our affiliated factories

Sl. No.	Factory Name	Location
1.	Ananta Jeanswear Ltd.	Gazipur
2	Crown Wears (Pvt) Ltd.	Mymensingh
3	Dada (Dhaka) Ltd.	Tongi
4	Mahmud Jeans Ltd.	Gazipur
5	Romo Fashion Today Ltd.	Gazipur
6	Sparrow Apparels Ltd.	Gazipur
7	SQ Birchina Ltd.	Mymensingh
8	SQ Celsius Ltd.	Gazipur
9	SQ Celsius Ltd (Unit-2).	Mymensingh
10	Sterling Styles Ltd.	Savar
11	IRIS Fabrics Ltd.	Gazipur
12	Esses Fashions Ltd.	Gazipur
13	International Knitwear and Apparels Ltd.	Gazipur
14	Ananta Denim Technology Ltd.	Mymensingh
15	Colossus Apparel Ltd. (Unit 1)	Gazipur
16	Colossus Apparel Ltd. (Unit 2)	Gazipur
17	Cortz Apparels Ltd.	Gazipur
18	Masihata Sweaters Ltd.	Gazipur
19	Sharmin Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
20	S.F. Denim Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
21	International Trading Services Ltd. (Wash Unit)	Gazipur
22	Shams Styling Wears Ltd.	Savar
23	Standard Group Ltd.	Gazipur
24	The Civil Engineers Ltd. (Woven Unit)	Savar
25	The Civil Engineers Ltd. (Unit 2)	Savar
26	Indesore Sweater Ltd.	Gazipur
27	Fakir Apparels Ltd.	Narayanganj
28	Kazipur Fashions Ltd. (Unit-1)	Dhaka
29	Crazy Fashions Ltd.	Dhaka
30	Tip Top Fashions Ltd.	Dhaka
31	Wear Mag Ltd.	Dhaka
32	Adhunik Poshoak Shilpa	Dhaka
33	Bestwool Sweaters Ltd.	Gazipur
34	Natural Denims Ltd.	Savar
35	That's It Sports Wear Ltd.	Savar
36	Euro Jeans Ltd.	Gazipur
37	Zaheen Knitwears Ltd.	Narayanganj
38	Fakir Fashion Ltd.	Narayanganj
39	Birds RNR Fashions Ltd.	Dhaka
40	The Civil Engineers Ltd.	Dhaka
41	Creative Collection Ltd.	Gazipur
42	Creative Wash Ltd.	Gazipur
43	Cotton Zone Ltd.	Dhaka
44	Esquire Knit Composite Ltd.	Narayanganj
45	Arabi Fashion Ltd.	Gazipur
46	Novel Hurricane Knit Garments Ltd.	Gazipur
47	Vintage Garments Ltd.	Savar
48	Standard Stitches Ltd. (Unit 2)	Savar
49	Cotton Club (BD) Ltd.	Gazipur
50	Raquef Apparels Washing & Packaging Ltd.	Dhaka
51	Ananta Casual Wear Ltd.	Gazipur
52	Dekko Readywears Ltd.	Dhaka
53	Jinnat Knitwears Ltd.	Gazipur
54	Dekko Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
55	Mascot Fashions Ltd.	Dhaka
56	Mascot Garments Ltd.	Dhaka

Sl. No.	Factory Name	Location
57	Mascot Knits Ltd.	Dhaka
58	Birds Fadrex Ltd.	Dhaka
59	Birds Garments Ltd. (Unit 2)	dhaka
60	International Trading Services Ltd.	Gazipur
61	Hannan Fashions Ltd.	Gazipur
62	Fancy Fashion Sweaters Ltd.	Gazipur
63	Knit Asia Ltd.	Dhaka
64	Garib & Garib Co. Ltd. (Unit-2)	Gazipur
65	Knit Plus Ltd.	Gazipur
66	JM Fabrics Ltd.	Gazipur
67	S.B. Style Composite Ltd.	Narayanganj
68	Barnali Fabrics Ltd.	Munshigonj
69	MM Fashions & Composite Ltd.	Joydebpur
70	Hannan Knit and Textiles Ltd.	Gazipur
71	Safaa Sweaters Ltd.	Savar
72	Mega Yarn Dyeing Mills Ltd.	Gazipur
73	Essential Clothing Ltd.	Gazipur
74	Crescent Fashion and Design Ltd.	Gazipur
75	Pioneer Knitwears (BD) Ltd	Mymensingh
76	Zyta Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
77	Jeans Culture Ltd.	Dhaka
78	Columbia Apparels Ltd	Gazipur
79	Ananta Garments Ltd.	Savar
80	AKH Fashions Ltd.	Savar
81	Genesis Denim Ltd.	Gazipur
82	That's It Garments Ltd.	Gazipur
83	Modern Washing & Dyeing Ind Ltd	Gazipur
84	Sajid Embroidery & Printing Ltd	Gazipur
85	Arunima Sportswear Ltd.	Savar
86	Four Design (Pvt) Ltd.	Narayanganj
87	Hannan Knitwears Ltd.	Gazipur
88	AKH Shirts Ltd.	Savar
89	Apparel Gallery Ltd	Savar
90	Next Collections Ltd	Savar
91	Express Washing & Dyeing Ltd	Savar
92	Refat Garments Ltd	Savar
93	Clifton Apparels Ltd.	Chittagong
94	That's It Sweater Ltd.	Savar
95	Apex Footwear Ltd.	Gazipur
96	Sinha Knitting Ltd.	Narayanganj
97	Viyellatex Ltd.	Gazipur
98	Mawna Fashions Ltd.	Gazipur
99	Global Shirts Ltd	Chittagong
100	Men's Fashion Ltd.	Chittagong
101	Dress Shirts Ltd.	Chittagong
102	Azim Mannan Garments Ltd.	Chittagong
103	Eco Couture Ltd.	Gazipur
104	Sawftex Ltd.	Gazipur
105	Ayesha Clothing Company Ltd.	Savar
106	Ayesha Clothing Company Ltd-02 (Printing Unit)	Savar
107	Interfab Shirt Manufacturing Ltd.	Gazipur
108	Leatherex Footwear Industries Ltd.	Gazipur
109	Ayesha Washing Ltd.	Savar
110	Aboni Fashions Ltd.	Savar
111	Columbia Garments Ltd.	Gazipur
112	Visual Knitwears Ltd.	Chittagong

Sl. No.	Factory Name	Location
113	Angshuk Ltd.	Savar
114	AKH Apparels Ltd.	Savar
115	Armana Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
116	Armana Fashions Ltd.	Dhaka
117	Denimach Ltd.	Gazipur
118	Denimach Washing Ltd.	Gazipur
119	Denitex Ltd.	Savar
120	Chorka Textile Ltd	Narsingdi
121	Debonair Ltd.	Savar
122	Karim Textiles Ltd.	Gazipur
123	IRIS Design Ltd.	Gazipur
124	Ananta Sportswear Ltd.	Savar
125	Orbitex Knitwear Ltd.	Savar
126	Global Fashion Garments Ltd.	Savar
127	Global Outwears Ltd.	Savar
128	Columbia Washing Plant Ltd.	Gazipur
129	Tunic Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
130	The Well Tex Ltd.	Gazipur
131	MEDLAR APPARELS LTD.	Savar
132	Active Composite Mills Ltd.	Savar
133	Tex Zone Knit Wear Ltd.	Gazipur
134	Southern Services Limited	Savar
135	Fakhrudin Textile Mills Ltd.	Gazipur
136	Aman Graphics & Design Ltd.	Savar
137	Supti Sweater Ltd	Mymensingh
138	Manami Fashions Ltd.	Savar
139	Paradise Washing Plant Ltd.	Gazipur
140	Dird Composite Textiles Ltd.	Gazipur
141	N.A.Z Bangladesh Ltd.	Gazipur
142	Hamza Clothing Ltd.	Savar
143	Nafa Apparels Ltd.	Gazipur
144	Tex Town Ltd.	Savar
145	Ornate Knit Garment Ind. Ltd.	Savar
146	Elegance Orientale Limited	Gazipur
147	Winter Dress Limited	Savar
148	Needle Drop Ltd.	Gazipur
149	Radiance Fashion Ltd	Savar
150	Radiance Jeans Ltd	Savar
151	Radial International Ltd. (unit-1)	Gazipur
152	Radial International Ltd. (unit-2)	Gazipur
153	Crystal Industrial Bangladesh Private Ltd.	Gazipur
154	Ever Smart Bangladesh Ltd.	Gazipur
155	Valmont Sweaters Ltd	Gazipur
156	Sayem Fashions Ltd.	Gazipur
157	AKH Eco Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
158	Savar Sweaters Ltd.	Chittagong
159	Orchid Sweater Ltd.	Chittagong
160	Sqaure Fashions Limited	Mymensingh
161	Purbani Fashions Ltd.	Sirajganj
162	Energypac Fashions Ltd.	Gazipur
163	Northern Fashion Ltd.	Gazipur
164	M/S Standard Group Ltd. (Embr.)	Gazipur
165	Ratul Knitwears Ltd.	Savar
166	Shin Shin Apparels Ltd.	Dhaka
167	Shyms Fashions Ltd.	Chittagong

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