

**STATEMENT FROM THE PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF BETTER WORK JORDAN ON THE RELEASE OF *BETTER WORK JORDAN ANNUAL REPORT 2018: AN INDUSTRY AND COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW***

1. On April 18, 2018, the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) of the ILO-IFC *Better Work Jordan* programme met in Amman to review the programme's public annual report – *Better Work Jordan Annual Report 2018: An Industry and Compliance Review* (hereafter Report).
2. The PAC comprises representatives from the government (Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Industry, Trade & Supply), employers (Jordan Garments, Accessories & Textile Exporters' Association, Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments, Foreign Investors Association and Jordan Chamber of Industry), and workers (General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries and the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions).
3. The PAC welcomes the release of *Better Work Jordan's* Report. This Report presents important information and observations based on findings from 74 factory compliance assessments conducted by *Better Work Jordan* between January and December 2017. *Better Work Jordan's* Annual Report continues to help highlight areas of improvements as well as issues that need to be addressed. Observations presented in the Report will help lead public discourse in a productive manner.
4. As the garment exports continue to increase, the PAC wants to reemphasize the importance of decent work and inclusive growth. Decent work principles remain of utmost importance to the PAC and its members
5. The PAC recognises the abrupt yet timely brokering of the latest Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in March 2017 to override any wage discrimination that could arise from the tiered minimum wage increase in early 2017. The PAC hopes any shortcomings in negotiation and implementation will be acted upon in the upcoming CBA. The PAC also acknowledges the continued difficulty that firms are facing in implementing all requirements within the CBA.
6. The PAC notes the industry improvement in recruitment practices and importantly, recruitment fees. As discussed in the Report, the industry has seen a decrease in the average recruitment fees paid as well as lower incidence of excessive recruitment fees among migrant workers. Although an improvement, more work remains to be done. Following the PAC's meeting with the ILO's FAIR project in January 2018, the PAC agreed to start implementing 'zero-recruitment fees' policy starting January 2019. The PAC would like to reiterate its commitment to following the ILO's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment and achieving 'zero-recruitment fees' in Jordan's garment industry.
7. The PAC recognises continued issues in areas related to occupational safety and health, including building safety and lack of management systems. The PAC encourages the industry and pertinent stakeholders, including buyers, to further advance and align their efforts to identify and remediate compliance issues.

8. The PAC recognises the importance of a systems-based approach to identify and address root causes. The PAC encourages *Better Work Jordan* to continue and expand its efforts to help develop better management systems to uphold strong practices around human resources and occupational safety and health.
9. The PAC also recognises important issues that are beyond those reported during compliance assessments and the Jordanian Labour Law. This includes challenges related mental health support for migrant workers in Jordan's garment industry. Incidents related to psychological and psychosocial concerns in the past years have highlighted the industry's need to acknowledge and address such issues. These cases have also emphasized the need to build the capacity of factories and management personnel to appropriately address mental health issues and to implement measures to avert or curtail them. The PAC supports *Better Work Jordan's* recent discourse on exploring this issue. The PAC encourages *Better Work Jordan* to continue its efforts in identifying relevant partners to help in this area.
10. The PAC recognises *Better Work's* new country strategy (2017-2022) for Jordan. The increased focus on partnerships and collaborations is key to our efforts and sustainability going forward. The members also appreciate *Better Work's* five-year Global Gender Strategy, which calls for increased efforts to empower women, reduce sexual harassment and close the gender pay gap in the global garment industry. The PAC is looking forward to *Better Work Jordan* developing its implementation plan for Jordan.
11. The PAC commends the continued collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and *Better Work Jordan*. This collaboration is crucial for ensuring any sustainability of efforts and improvements in labour standards and working conditions in Jordan's garment industry.
12. The PAC welcomes *Better Work Jordan's* new collaborations with the Social Security Corporation and the Jordan Chamber of Industry. Both efforts are key to improving compliance and competitiveness of the sector. The PAC also welcomes *Better Work Jordan's* collaboration with the garment sector Union and looks forward to the implementation of their recent two-year memorandum of understanding.
13. The PAC encourages buyers and the international community to continue to support *Better Work Jordan's* work and Jordan's garment industry. It is a positive step that the industry has adopted Public Reporting, but there remains scope to make the industry and sourcing practices even more transparent and effective.
14. The PAC appreciates the progress with satellite units and encouraging employment of Jordanians, especially female Jordanians in rural areas of the country. The industry must remain committed to increases decent work opportunities throughout Jordan.
15. The PAC recognises that the committee and its members have important responsibilities to ensure sector-wide improvements. This includes widespread advocacy efforts, testing partnerships, establishing strong enforcement mechanisms and leading important discussions.
16. The PAC would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its support for *Better Work Jordan* and call upon all stakeholders to advance their efforts to further improve labour standards and working conditions in Jordan's garment industry.

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