

# The Effectiveness of Better Work Training

May 2015



## BETTER WORK

Training of workers and factory staff is a key component in Better Work's (BW)'s strategy to improve working conditions for garment workers and increase business performance in factories. This brief presents the findings of initial research evaluating the effectiveness of BW training, encompassing direct training evaluations and indirect evaluations that focus on the impact within factories. Its recommendations highlight whether Better Work should invest more in the development and delivery of training programmes.

This research is based on the following questions measuring the quality of trainings, training materials and trainers, and the impact on job satisfaction, trust between workers and their direct supervisors, and civic engagement:

- Was the content of the BW training valued and retained by training participants?
- How well were the BW training courses delivered and received?
- What was the impact of BW training on factories and beyond?

## METHODOLOGY

This research is based on two main datasets. To measure the impact and effect of BW training, a significant random sample of workers, supervisors and managers were surveyed between June 2013 and May 2014, in each case before and after a training provided by Better Work. A follow up survey, three months after the course, provided data on the longer term effect of the respective training.

In addition, a second set of data was drawn from the Training Course Evaluation Forms that are completed by all participants at the end of each Better Work training session. Training Course Evaluation data was collected in the same period.

Survey results were compared to a control group of workers from participating Better Work factories who have not received Better Work training. These were drawn from those surveyed in the context of Better Work's broader impact assessment framework led by Tufts University<sup>1</sup>.

As of August 2014, 1,345 participants have completed the post course evaluations. The Supervisory Skills Training (SST) survey is the most common across countries.

Other surveys are more country specific (for example, the specific Occupational Safety and Health training was only given in Lesotho). The relatively high number of responses overall increases the confidence in the survey results.

Of the 1,345 trained managers, workers, and supervisors, a random group of learners were asked to complete the pre- and post- Better Work training survey. At the end of July 2014, 266 participants completed these surveys. Pre and post survey data are collected from courses with a duration of one day or more. As most courses for workers are shorter, a larger number of surveys are completed by managers or supervisors.

These data provide an in-depth picture of the Better Work training programme from opinions collected from participants in different training sessions.

## KEY FINDINGS

Two key measures were used to evaluate the overall perception of training: 1) whether or not the participant would recommend the training; and 2) participants' rating of the training course on a five point scale ranging from very poor to very positive. 98.62% of the responses are positive or very positive from overall course rankings pooling all survey

## BETTER WORK TRAINING

Training is one of the key services offered by Better Work. Sessions are led for managers, supervisors and workers in individual factory settings or off-site which may include participants from multiple factories. The training sessions cover the following subjects:

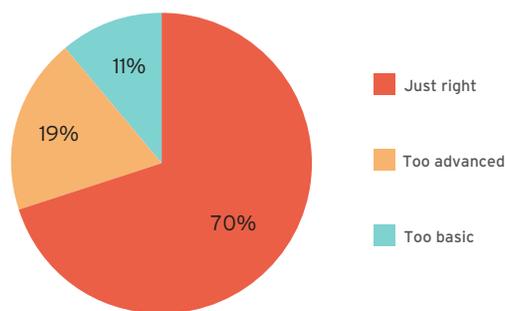
1. Compensation Benefits
2. Fire Safety
3. Human Resources Management Training
4. Labour Law Training
5. Occupation Health and Safety training
6. Performance Improvement Consultative Committee training (PICC)
7. Factory Specific training for Indonesia
8. Quality Control
9. Supervisory Skills training (SST)
10. Worker Induction Training of Trainers for HR Managers
11. Workplace Cooperation

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see Brown, Dehejia, Jacobs, Mukand, Rappaport, Robertson, Rosenberg, Rosenthal (2011). Measuring the impact of Better Work.

responses from each country. 90% of the responses indicate that participants would recommend the training to others in each survey area. Results from the Supervisory Skills Training show that 100% of participants in Cambodia and Lesotho would recommend the training, and over 98% reporting the same in Nicaragua and Vietnam. Again, the clear message from these results is that participants have extremely positive feelings about the training at the time the course is completed.

Overall (Figure 1), participants are also satisfied with the knowledge and information gained during training, with most of them stating that the training was “just right”. Very few considered it “too basic,” while others felt training “too advanced”.

**Figure 1. Overall rating of Better Work training**



In terms of individual trainings, the Workplace Cooperation training was considered “too basic” by most respondents. About 16% of participants believed the Supervisory Skills Training was “too advanced” as did about 20% of respondents of the Occupational Safety and Health training.

**Table 1. Overall rating of the BW programme by type of training**

| Type of Training                     | Based on my knowledge and experience this course was: |              |           | Total      |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
|                                      | Just right                                            | Too advanced | Too basic |            |
| Human Resources Management           | 1                                                     | 3            | 0         | 4          |
| Negotiation skills                   | 7                                                     | 1            | 0         | 8          |
| Occupational Safety and Health       | 13                                                    | 4            | 0         | 17         |
| PICC Training                        | 4                                                     | 1            | 0         | 5          |
| Supervisory Skills Training          | 73                                                    | 15           | 6         | 94         |
| Worker Induction ToT for HR managers | 1                                                     | 1            | 0         | 2          |
| Workplace cooperation                | 4                                                     | 3            | 11        | 18         |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>103</b>                                            | <b>28</b>    | <b>17</b> | <b>148</b> |

## RELEVANCE OF THE TRAINING

With respect to the relevance of the training received (Figure 2), a strong majority believe the content of the BW courses were relevant to their work. More than 60% of respondents strongly agreed that the trainings in Occupational Safety and Supervisory Skills to be relevant for their job.

**Figure 2. The content of the course was relevant for my Job**



Post-training surveys also include the question “Will this training experience be useful in your job?” Over 98% of respondents replied either “yes” or “strongly yes” for this question. The results are also relatively uniform across training category.

## GAINED KNOWLEDGE

The majority of learners strongly agree that they have gained knowledge through BW trainings. For Worker Induction ToT for HR Managers, Workplace Cooperation and Supervisory Skills Training courses; more than 60% of participants state that the information provided was excellent. The only course where “average” as a grading for the course information surpasses 20% is the Human Resources training.

Participants were asked whether or not the knowledge that they gained in the course was valuable both for their job as well as for other operations in the company. More than 98% of the respondents replied either “yes” or “strongly yes”. No one in the countries taking the SST (Supervisory Skills Training) survey replied negatively. This is important given the relevance and influence of this course on both managerial as well as operational decisions.

## TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The quality of training materials, the knowledge of the trainers and the teaching methods used can heavily influence the training provided. The research shows that most participants think that the materials used, which include

handbooks, activity handouts, templates and videos, were excellent or of good quality.

**Trainers:** 95% of respondents found the trainer to have an excellent or good knowledge of content of the training provided.

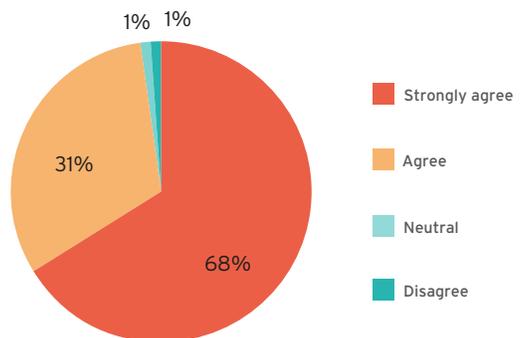
**Instruction and Participation Methodology:** Responses to questions on the levels of participation in trainings, the opportunities to raise opinions and to practice the learned knowledge and material in class were overwhelmingly positive.

### IMPACT OF TRAININGS IN AND OUTSIDE THE FACTORY

It is evident from the findings that respondents value the training received and its relevance for their job highly. It is theorized that the knowledge acquired during BW training will help to improve the lives of workers as well as the broader community surrounding the factory. As an example, workers or managers trained on occupational safety and health are expected to use the gained knowledge to improve the conditions in their workplace they may also use it to influence health and safety issues outside of factories.

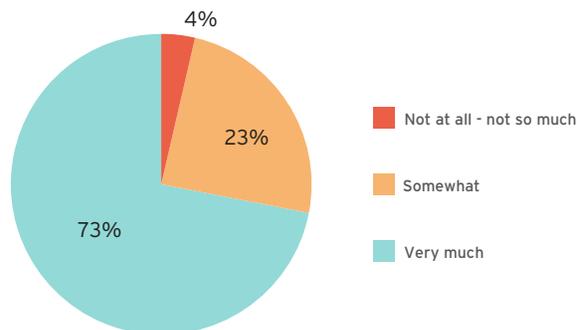
Several aspects are considered in this analysis. The first is whether participants believe BW trainings are helpful for their future activities. An overwhelming majority of participants (Figure 3) are convinced that the course will help them in their future work and other activities. Moreover, due to the acquired information from the course, participants will do their job differently.

**Figure 3. What I learned from this course will help me in my future**



The findings denote that BW training is having a positive impact on relations within factories. A majority of respondents (Figure 4) note that, as a consequence of training, they now value their co-workers more.

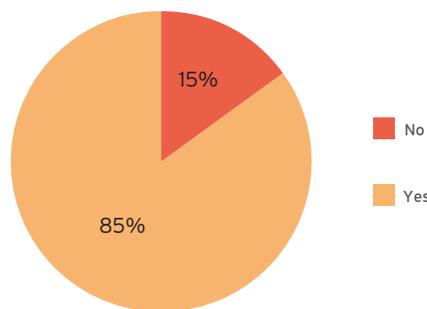
**Figure 4. As a consequence of training, do you value your co-workers more? (%)**



The programmes with the highest gains on valuing more coworkers as a consequence of BW training are PICC training and Supervisory Skills Training. Only the programme on Workplace Cooperation has a somewhat (close to 10%) unfavorable opinion of the effects of the training.

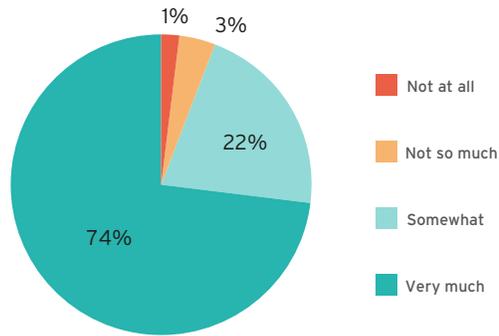
85% of workers acknowledge that training has impacted their life outside the factory (Figure 5). 73% of these state they have a greater sense of responsibility for their community as a result of the training.

**Figure 5. Has training affected your life outside the factory?**



One of the effects from the BW training on life outside the factory is on the sense of community or on their understanding on the role communities have on development. Participants were asked if the course material and the learned lessons influenced their view on their community. They were also asked if due to the training they increased their engagement in their community. As Figure 6 shows, most participants consider that the training has very much helped them to believe that a strong community is good. Thus, identifying the potential of reaching them through training at the factory level can have important consequences for assessing the comprehensive benefits of training.

**Figure 6. Has this training helped you to believe a strong community is good?**



## CONCLUSIONS

This research clearly finds that Better Work training is effective and very useful for factories. As a result, Better Work is offering training courses as part of its bundled service delivery package to all factories from January 2016 onwards. All factories will have assessment, advisory services and up to 25 participant days of training available. Factories can also still participate in other training courses at additional expenses. The research covered a wide-range of training courses presenting an overview of impact with some limitations on whether the training intervention was the sole factor resulting in behavior change by survey respondents.

Moving forward, Better Work is currently conducting experimental research on the Supervisory Skills Training (SST). This will measure the short and long-term impacts of SST across all countries. In addition, a revision of the Workplace Cooperation Training materials is underway.

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