Covid-19 in Jordan
Confirmed cases of Covid-19 increased dramatically in Jordan this fall after virtually no cases throughout the spring and summer thanks to aggressive government policies such as complete lockdowns, restricted international travel, and closure of businesses. While these early government policies constrained the spread of the virus early-on, they also had a large impact on the economy – GDP contracted by 3.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2020, and the unemployment rate rose to 23 per cent.

This fall, Better Work Jordan has been in contact with over 400 workers and managers from 76 different factories. These calls were used to monitor the Covid-19 situation in factories and formalized the ongoing communication that BWJ has with employers and workers. The sample of workers is not representative of the sector, and mostly reflects the experiences of Bangladeshi workers in the industrial zones.

Mask-wearing is widely adopted, but workers have found it difficult to maintain social distance
Managers and workers both state that mask wearing, hand washing, and taking temperatures happens regularly in the factories. However, while 92 per cent of managers say that workers in their factory practice social distancing, only 20 per cent of workers say that they can maintain social distance on a regular basis.

Most workers surveyed reported reduced hours and income and greater mental stress
Through supervisors
Through committees
Through posters

Workers report learning about Covid-19 mostly from social media, family and friends, and less from their employers

Most factories have consistent engagement with the government and the union
Managers were asked if they had interacted with a representative from the Ministry of Health (MoH) the Ministry of Labour (MoL), and the union in the last two weeks. MoH officials conducted PCR tests in many factories, while MoL officials followed up to ensure that all OSH guidelines were being followed. Ten factories reported that the union convened worker-management committee meetings, while in other factories the union was in touch for factory updates.

The data gathered here is from publicly available sources and through Better Work interaction with workers and managers as of 15 November and subject to change. Data on Covid-19 cases in Jordan was downloaded from ourworldindata.org. Data on mobility in Jordan comes from the Google Covid-19 Community Mobility Reports. Data on garment exports comes from the Jordanian Department of Statistics. Information on worker and manager opinions was gathered during phone calls throughout the fall.