



BetterWork

JORDAN

Annual Report 2025

An Industry and Compliance Review

Reporting Period: Jan 2024 – Jan 2025



International
Labour
Organization



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Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities

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List of Abbreviations

ARDD	Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development
BOESL	Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited
BWJ	Better Work Jordan
CAT	Compliance Assessment Tool
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CP	Compliance Point
EMV	Economic Modernization Vision
EU	European Union
FAP	Factory Ambassador Programme
FLA	Fair Labour Association
FoA	Freedom of Association
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GoJ	Government of Jordan
GFJTU	General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organization
JCI	Jordan Chamber of Industry
JD	Jordanian Dinar
J-GATE	Jordan Garment, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association
JTGCU	General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoL	Ministry of Labour
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
RoO	Rules of Origin
SSC	Social Security Corporation
TVPRA	Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act
ULC	Union Labour Committee
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
USJFTA	United States Jordan Free Trade Agreement
ZTP	Zero-Tolerance Protocol

Preface: Fifteen Years of Better Work Jordan

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) was established in 2008 at the request of the Government of Jordan (GoJ) and the U.S. government in response to widespread labour rights violations in the country's garment sector. Since its inception, Better Work Jordan has worked in close collaboration with the Government of Jordan, employers' and workers' organizations, development partners, international brands and retailers, to promote decent work and strengthen competitiveness in the sector. Over the past seventeen years, the programme has contributed to meaningful improvements in working conditions, social dialogue, and labour market governance. As of 22 June 2025, BWJ has paused its operations due to a cut in funding.

While Better Work operations are currently paused, the ILO is in ongoing discussions with constituents and stakeholders and remains committed to supporting the sector and is engaging in dialogue on potential opportunities for future collaboration. Better Work continues to strive for an export-oriented garment sector in Jordan that lifts people out of poverty, empowers women, and drives business competitiveness and inclusive economic growth.

In 2010, Better Work Jordan was made mandatory for all garment factories exporting under the United States Jordan Free Trade Agreement (USJFTA). Over the years, the programme has worked to strengthen the capacity of tripartite constituents – government, workers, and employers – to fulfil their mandates in promoting decent work outcomes. BWJ has driven tangible improvement in occupational safety and health, human resource management, gender representation, social dialogue, and migrant workers' rights. It has played a key role in supporting sectoral stakeholders in negotiating multiple Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) – a significant milestone in the development of industrial relations in Jordan. In 2016, garments produced in Jordan were removed from the TVPRA list, with the programme's contributions recognised as a key factor in this decision.

In 2018, Better Work Jordan expanded its reach beyond the garment industry to include factories in the plastics, chemicals, and engineering sectors – industries that can export to the European Union (EU) under the Relaxed Rules of Origin (RoO) framework. This expansion aligned with Jordan's broader economic diversification goals and positioned BWJ as a model for labour reform in other industries.

As a first for Better Work, Better Work Jordan successfully tested an innovative labour inspection secondment programme to build the capacity of labour inspectors to conduct high quality inspections. As its mandate has grown, BWJ became more than a factory-level compliance

programme. It evolved into a broader development initiative supporting structural reform, institutional capacity building, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

In 2022, the programme entered its fourth strategic phase, with a renewed focus on national ownership and long-term sustainability. Phase IV prioritised strengthening the capacity for national stakeholders – government, employers’ and workers’ representatives – to take the lead in monitoring and improving working conditions. It also supported stronger labour market institutions, inclusive economic growth, and the use of data-driven approaches to inform policy and interventions.

During its tenure, Better Work Jordan made important strides in improving working conditions and industrial relations in the country’s manufacturing sector, with a focus on the garment industry. Over this period, the total value of Jordanian garment exports doubled, and the number of jobs created in the sector increased significantly despite the challenging operating environment in the region. At close, the programme had 97 participating factories, of which five were non-garment factories in the plastics, chemical and engineering sectors, reaching 26 brands and retailers.

Better Work Jordan worked to build on its achievements while simultaneously equipping the tripartite constituents to take a leading role in supporting and advancing these achievements. With migrants comprising a large majority of garment workers in Jordan, BWJ encouraged stakeholders to uphold migrant workers’ rights by tackling the issues of pay discrimination, living conditions in worker dormitories and deficient recruitment processes.

In recent years, Better Work Jordan has also worked with other technical teams within the ILO, including experts on occupational safety and health, to equip Ministry of Labor (MoL) inspectors with the skills, tools, and knowledge to undertake factory assessments using Better Work methodology. This initiative resulted in the creation of a Better Work Unit at the MoL tasked with conducting joint inspections with Better Work Jordan staff in the garment, chemical and engineering industries.

Executive Summary

After the launch of the programme in 2008, factory operations began in 2010. In its fifteen years of operation, Better Work Jordan has continued to drive improvements in working conditions and industrial relations across Jordan's garment industry. Over this period, the industry's export value has more than doubled, reaching US\$ 2.4 billion in 2024, and employment has grown to more than 84,000 workers, with women comprising three-quarters of the workforce. At close, BWJ works with 97 participating factories, including non-garment factories in the plastics, chemical, and engineering sectors, reaching 26 global brands and retailers.

Considerable progress has been made in key areas of compliance. Forced labour practices, once widespread in the sector, have been largely eradicated. Unified contracts are now applied sector-wide, and all factories adhere to the sector-specific minimum wage. Recruitment practices have also improved, with reduced pregnancy testing and lower incidence of recruitment fees for migrant workers. BWJ has also advanced efforts to reduce workplace discrimination, address sexual harassment, foster a more supportive environment for female workers, including working mothers, and promote women's leadership.

Building on this foundation, BWJ has increasingly moved beyond the factory level interventions to address systemic challenges shaping working conditions across the sector. Guided by its Phase IV strategy, the programme increasingly focused on working closely with national stakeholders to strengthen institutional frameworks for decent work. By building the capacity of national constituents and supporting them to take greater ownership, BWJ aims for long-lasting improvements and more resilient, rights-based employment practices across the sector.

In 2024, this long arc of progress was tested by a combination of operational, geopolitical, and reputational challenges. The ongoing conflict in Gaza and disruptions in Red Sea shipping routes placed significant pressure on supply chains and impacted production timelines across Jordan's export sectors. While the local garment industry demonstrated resilience, recording a 24 per cent increase in export value, these gains were accompanied by rising scrutiny. High-profile cases involving illegal retention of workers' documents and tragic suicides triggered public concern, particularly around the treatment of migrant workers. BWJ's factory assessments also revealed a concerning increase in Zero Tolerance Protocol (ZTP) violations, including forced labour, sexual harassment, and unlawful termination, pointed to risks in grievance handling, investigation, and law enforcement.

The year also brought significant policy developments. A revised national minimum wage of Jordanian Dinar (JD) 290 was introduced in 2024; however, the garment sector was excluded from this decision, prompting negotiations of a new sectoral Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The

new CBA set the minimum wage for all workers at the garment sector to be JD 230, updated transport allowances and several other clauses. However, the negotiation process did not fully adhere to the principles of social dialogue or negotiating with workers' representatives in different factories and geographical areas, raising concerns about transparency and workers' representation.

BWJ's assessments in 2024 captured both the scope of progress and the fragility of certain gains. Reports of forced labour increased, particularly concerning the confiscation of personal documents and bonded labour. CBA implementation remained inconsistent, with widespread factory-level non-compliance, particularly on overtime, mental health provisions, and health clinic requirements. Improvement in recruitment practices slowed under stricter assessment criteria, which flagged continued third-party involvement in problematic practices, even where factories were not directly engaged in violations. While non-compliance rose compared to 2023, rates remain well below pre-2021 levels. Sexual harassment and verbal abuse remained persistent concerns, with multiple cases identified in different factories. Excessive working hours also continued to be a challenge, particularly during peak production periods.

In 2024, Better Work Jordan intensified its efforts to promote well-being in the workplace. The Mental Health Project expanded to 48 factories across all major industrial zones, covering 78 per cent of the garment workforce. The third edition of BWJ's Mental Health and Well-being Policy was launched, which catalysed a renewed factory-level commitment, and BWJ continued to support implementation through monthly follow-up visits. The importance of this work was highlighted by a rise in critical incidents, which brought additional international attention to mental health challenges in the sector. In response, BWJ engaged factory management in targeted discussion and conveyed a dedicated seminar with senior stakeholders to explore a collaborative approach to suicide prevention.

Beyond mental health, BWJ delivered trainings on other pressing priorities. To strengthen grievance redress, the programme delivered a dedicated training for factory HR and compliance officers on implementing the sector's grievance Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in daily operations. To facilitate more transparent recruitment and smoother onboarding – especially for migrant workers – BWJ launched a multilingual induction package, offering practical information on life and work in Jordan, including rights, responsibilities, and available support systems. In parallel, the programme rolled out its digital training modules on topics such as sexual harassment prevention and supervisory skills, which were delivered via WhatsApp and adapted to multiple languages, enabling broader, more flexible access to learning. The Factory Ambassador Programme (FAP) also continued to grow, reaching 41 factories and 83 per cent of the sector's workforce, and remains a key tool for fostering shared ownership of compliance.

BWJ further advanced the implementation of its Phase IV strategy through stronger institutional engagement. At the national level, the programme supported the MoL, employer organizations, and

the trade union through targeted training, on-the-job coaching, and capacity building. Throughout 2024, labour inspectors independently conducted almost half of factory assessments. BWJ also supported the development of the first-ever business plan for Jordan Garment, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association (J-GATE), and helped the union to expand its field presence by training new representatives to strengthen worker engagement and increase factory-level visibility.

A major priority in 2024 was fostering stronger sectoral collaboration. BWJ supported the formation of a tripartite-technical committee to draw lessons on recent factory closures and develop preventive measures. To assist the committee, BWJ also appointed a legal advisor to prepare a legal study on existing cases and endorsed the development of an early warning system to help prevent future disruptions and protect workers' rights. Serious labour rights violations were identified in several small-sized factories operating in Aqaba – including forced labour, excessive recruitment fees, weak collective bargaining, and high worker turnover driven by low wages – which spurred coordinated action. At BWJ's 53rd Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting, the union committed to a structured workplan to raise worker awareness, improve access to grievance mechanisms, and ensure interpretation support for migrant workers. BWJ also organized a legal awareness session for local stakeholders, highlighting the importance of regulatory compliance and protections for workers. At the global level, BWJ deepened its coordination with international buyers through regular strategy calls to align responses to sector-wide risks and foster constructive dialogue.

Finally, Better Work Jordan expanded its research and analytical capacity to better target persistent issues. Using advanced statistical methods, the programme integrated its survey and assessment data to identify underlying drivers of issues such as verbal abuse, sexual harassment, long working hours, mental health risks, grievance obstacles, and social dialogue challenges. These analytical advances revealed important links between workplace well-being and factors such as grievance system effectiveness, trust in management, and gender-based inequality, allowing BWJ to move beyond surface-level symptoms to tackle root causes more effectively.

Looking Ahead: Leveraging Evaluation Insights for Future Impact

As BWJ pauses its operations in the context of recent funding cuts, a comprehensive evaluation is being conducted to assess the effectiveness, relevance, and impact of its interventions. The findings from this evaluation will provide valuable insights into the programme's successes and areas for improvement, offering guidance for future planning of similar initiatives and projects. These insights will help inform strategies for addressing sectoral challenges, optimizing resource allocation, and strengthening partnerships, ensuring that future efforts continue to advance labour rights and improve working conditions in the garment sector.

The results of this evaluation will be available on the ILO website, offering a resource for stakeholders to draw upon in the planning of future activities.

Fifteen Years of Better Work Jordan

Number of participating factories	
2009	2025



20 factories —————> 97 factories

Garment export worth	
2009	2024



\$836 million —————> \$2.4 billion

Workers in registered factories	
2009	2024



43,000 workers —————> 84,600 workers
56% women —————> 75% women

International buyers	
2009	2025



10 international buyers —————> 20 international buyers

Introduction

Better Work Jordan is a partnership between the ILO and the IFC. The ILO flagship programme brings together stakeholders from all levels of the global garment manufacturing industry to improve working conditions, enhance respect for labour rights, and boost competitiveness. BWJ was established in 2008 at the request of the Government of Jordan and the US government. BWJ regularly prepares public reports synthesising industry updates and highlighting non-compliance findings and trends to increase transparency and to communicate observations to a wider audience. As the garment sector in Jordan has matured, BWJ and its stakeholders have moved beyond compliance with existing laws, regulations, and international labour standards to tackle gaps in laws and regulations through sectoral policies. This is BWJ's **Sixteenth Annual Report**.

The report is structured as follows: the *Introduction* provides an overview of the country context, the garment and non-garment sectors covered by BWJ with an emphasis on developments in 2024. The *Compliance Overview* gives an overview of the progress made in addressing compliance gaps over BWJ's 15 years of operation, while also identifying persistent challenges in the sector. Its subsequent section *2024 in Focus* presents key findings and analysis based on non-compliance issues identified in 76 factory assessment reports. The section on *Better Work Jordan's Responsive Mechanisms* outlines BWJ's interventions at the factory, national, and global levels, with a focus on activities and priorities in 2024. It also details BWJ's collaboration with key stakeholders in the sector and presents the most recent research findings. Lastly, the *Reflection and Looking Ahead* section highlights lessons learned over BWJ's fifteen-year journey and outlines priorities for the continued advancement of Jordan's garment sector.

Country Context

Jordan is a middle-income country with a population of 11.7million. The economy of Jordan is among the smallest in the Middle East, with insufficient supplies of water, oil, and other natural resources. The structural limitations contribute to the government's heavy reliance on foreign assistance and creates persistent economic vulnerabilities, including a high unemployment rate, budget and trade deficits, and rising public debt.

Over the past five years, the country's fragile economic situation has been further strained by a series of external shocks, beginning with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The pandemic triggered widespread disruptions to key sectors such as tourism, trade, and manufacturing. Restrictions on movement, global supply chain breakdowns, and reduced international demands had direct consequences for the garment sector, resulting in suspended production, cancelled orders, and economic hardship for both enterprises and workers.

The brief economic recovery that followed was quickly offset by new challenges. The war in Ukraine in 2022 caused a spike in global energy and food prices, placing additional pressure on household budgets and increasing production costs across industries. More recently, the ongoing conflict in

Gaza has had additional ripple effects on regional trade, investor confidence, and consumer spending, further clouding the country's economic outlook. Meanwhile, by late 2023 and into 2024, instability in the Red Sea had disrupted major international shipping routes, delaying the import of raw materials and raising freight costs – adding yet another layer of difficulty for Jordan's manufacturing and export-oriented sectors, including its garment industry, which depends heavily on timely inputs and competitive export logistics.

Despite these ongoing challenges, Jordan's economy has shown signs of resilience. In 2024, the real GDP of the country grew by 2.5 per cent, and total exports increased by 3.8 per cent. The leather and garment sector played a significant role in this recovery, recording a 24 per cent growth in exports.

Legislative Updates

New Workplace Safety and Health Regulations and Instructions: In 2023, the MoL introduced three important regulations aimed at enhancing OSH standards in workplaces. These regulations address the prevention of occupational hazards, the provision of preventive and curative medical care for workers, and the formation of OSH committees along with the appointments of dedicated supervisors at workplace. To facilitate their implementation, the MoL also issued supporting instructions on risk assessment, classification of economic activity based on risk levels, and identification of workplace hazards alongside the necessary preventive measures. Further guidance was published to ensure safe working conditions for pregnant and breastfeeding women, persons with disabilities, and night-shift workers.

Although these regulations took effect in 2023, BWJ incorporated them into its assessment tools in 2024. In the same year, the MoL issued four additional decisions concerning workplace OSH practices, including reporting procedures for accidents and occupational diseases, standards for first aid and medical units, requirements for institutional OSH policies, and the types of OSH records employers must maintain - all of which BWJ used to evaluate factory compliance in 2024. Together, these legal developments represent a significant step toward strengthening institutional accountability and worker protection across the sector.

Minimum Wage Decision: In December 2024, the Labour Tripartite Committee approved an increase in the national minimum wage for private sector workers, raising from JD 260 to 290, effective January 2025. However, the garment sector, along with non-Jordanian domestic workers, were excluded from the decision. For the garment sector, the Tripartite Labour Affairs Committee retained the sectoral minimum wage of 220 JOD, in line with the provisions of the 2023 collective bargaining agreement and referred the matter to the sector's social partners to determine wage adjustments through subsequent bipartite negotiations. In response, the parties concluded a new collective bargaining agreement in early 2025, supplemented by an annex specifying the implementation modalities.

2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement

The 2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) introduces several key amendments to the terms established in the 2023 agreement. One of the most significant changes is the adjustment of the minimum wage for all workers in the sector. **Under the 2025 CBA, the minimum wage for all workers is set at JD 230 per month including seniority bonus. For migrant workers, this amount is divided into two components: a minimum of JD 130 in cash as take-home wage and JD 100 as in-kind (covering accommodation and food).** This reflects an overall increase of JD 10 per month for both Jordanian and migrant workers.

Importantly, the 2025 CBA was initially concluded without adhering to social dialogue processes between employers and workers' organizations. The union signed the agreement without consulting with their members, raising concerns about transparency and worker representation. Furthermore, the new CBA contained ambiguous terms and clauses that may lead to misinterpretations and potential discrimination among workers related to wages. **In response, a "clarification" was issued as an annex to the agreement.**

The annex provides that Jordanian workers, whose current salaries are between JD 230 JD – 400, are entitled to a JD 10 as seniority bonus to be added to their 2025 wage for one time during the year 2025. Starting on 1 January 2026, workers who have completed one year of service from their hiring date will be entitled to an additional JD 5 wage increase. However, migrant workers earning JD 230 or more, are excluded from any rise in pay, leading to a wage disparity between migrant and Jordanian workers. While Jordanian workers benefited from a wage increase, migrant workers remain at the same wage level, raising concerns about wage discrimination.

The 2025 agreement further includes provisions to support women's participation in the sector. Employers must now comply with existing regulations related to institutional nursery alternatives. This follows the 2023 guidelines, but it is now explicitly incorporated into the CBA.

Changes to occupational safety and health requirements are also featured in the new CBA, where employers are mandated to provide a medical unit in accordance with the Labour Law, replacing the health clinics stipulation in the 2023 agreement. This revision may impact the scope and quality of healthcare services available to workers.

Finally, the 2025 CBA increases the transportation allowance for Jordanian workers from JD 15 to JD 25 per month, but only when employers are unable to provide safe transportation. While this reflects a change in the transportation policy, it may still leave gaps for workers in certain areas.

Industry Updates

The Jordanian economy benefits from several free trade agreements. The most important agreement for the garment sector is **the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (USJFTA)** which was signed in 2000 and went into full effect in 2010. The USJFTA allows Jordan to gain preferential duty and quota-free

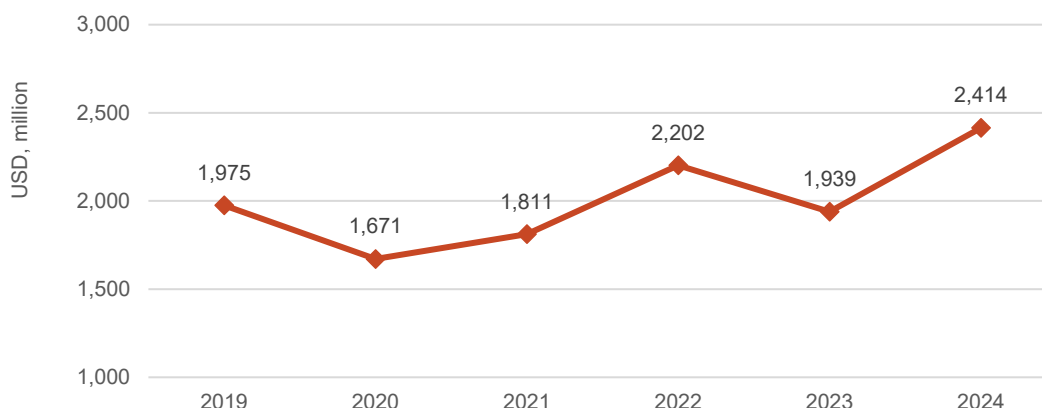
access to the US market. The Jordanian garment industry has been one of the primary beneficiaries of this agreement.

BWJ primarily worked with the exporting garment industry in Jordan. While the following sections focus on the exporting garment industry, it is useful to contrast this sector with two other groups. First, there are many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that produce garments but do not export their products and are, therefore, not part of the Better Work programme. While there are many of these factories, they are relatively small and employ around five per cent of the garment sector workforce. Second, BWJ has expanded its services to non-garment factories that export to the EU under the relaxed rules of origin.

Garment Industry

The garment industry in Jordan is primarily driven by large exporting factories that export to the US under the USJFTA. By the time of reporting, the exporting garment employed some 84,100 workers. Migrant workers accounted for three-quarters of the workforce, most of whom are from South Asia and typically work in Jordan on two- to three-year contracts, often with the option for renewal. Over half of all migrant workers are from Bangladesh, followed by those from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar. The sector also employs around 450 Syrian workers. Jordanian workers make up the remaining 25 per cent of the workforce. The majority of workers are women – more than 75 per cent of the production workforce – while men continue to dominate management roles.

The sector has weathered multiple shocks in recent years. Following a 15 per cent drop in exports in 2020 due to the impact of the pandemic, the industry began a modest recovery in 2021, followed by a strong rebound in 2022. This momentum was interrupted in 2023, driven primarily by weak global demand and the outbreak of the Gaza conflict, leading to a 12 per cent decline in exports. Nonetheless, the sector showed its ability to recover. In 2024, exports surged by 24 per cent, reaching a record high of US\$2.4 billion, as shown in **Figure 1** below. While these fluctuations highlight the sector's vulnerability to external shocks, it also reflects its ability to rebound quickly. Despite the recent growth, the garment industry's share of total national exports has declined – from 28 per cent in 2019, to 20 per cent in 2024. The US continues to be a major export market for Jordan, with 21 per cent of all exports going to the US, although this has also dropped in recent years.

Figure 1: Jordan garment exports

Source: Department of Statistics, Government of Jordan

Alongside its economic contributions, the sector continues to face challenges related to working conditions and labour rights. A particularly high-profile case that surfaced in late 2023 drew national and international attention, with media reports and video footage alleging illegal retention of workers. The incident raised serious concerns globally and cast a spotlight on systemic risks within the industry. In early 2024, further unsettling developments emerged, following reports of worker abuse and suicides. These events have underscored the vulnerability of migrant workers and posed significant reputational risks for the sector. At the same time, **BWJ documented 14 zero-tolerance labour violations throughout 2024, up from three cases in 2023.** These included incidents reported to the MoL under the mutual MoU, particularly concerning forced labour, sexual harassment and verbal abuse, and unlawful termination. The cases were identified during factory assessment visits and through the BWJ team, who engaged with migrant workers after working hours. Together, these issues point to the urgent need for more effective labour inspections, stronger enforcement of labour laws, improved grievance mechanisms that are accessible to all workers, and more robust protection systems that ensure both worker safety and accountability across the sector.

In response, the ILO dispatched a senior official to lead a comprehensive internal assessment. The mission sought to develop a sustainability roadmap that addresses challenges at the factory, sectoral, and national levels. As part of the mission, the ILO consulted a broad range of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply, Ministry of Investment, Ministry of Interior, the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU), the General Trade Union for Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries (JTGCU, or the union), the National Centre for Human Rights, and civil society organizations, such as Tamkeen. These discussions focused on identifying the root causes of sectoral issues and gathering recommendations for constructive changes. **Box 1** highlights the key findings and recommendations from the assessment.

Box 1. Realizing the Economic Modernization Vision in Jordan's ready-made garment sector

The ready-made garment (RMG) sector in Jordan is central to the country's export economy and employment strategy under the Economic Modernization Vision (EMV). While the sector holds potential for expansion and transformation, it continues to face structural and institutional challenges that must be addressed to ensure inclusive, sustainable growth. The ILO identifies several key problem areas and proposes recommendations and interventions, including:

Industrial Development: Establish a high-level inter-agency task force to lead EMV implementation, with clearly defined roles and communication channels. Incorporate labour compliance into national strategies. Promote diversification by aligning production with EU sustainability standards.

Employment: Phase out the sector-specific minimum wage and improve working conditions. Strengthen the vocational training systems and incentivize private providers to deliver tailored, accessible training. Expand access to childcare and transport, and launch targeted campaigns to promote garment sector jobs to Jordanians.

Labour Inspection Services: Improve coordination, establish clear inspection protocols, and conduct regular training for inspectors. Strengthen response mechanisms to violations and ensure transparent communication with the employers, workers, and other stakeholders.

Dispute Prevention and Resolution System: Institutionalize fair, accessible grievance mechanisms at the factory level through the CBA. Enhance the Hemayeh platform's accessibility and establish protections for workers who file complaints. Formalize the Workers Centre's role in dispute resolution.

Migrant Worker Mobility: Amend the CBA and relevant policies to allow migrant workers to change employers and leave Jordan with full dues if obligations are met, reducing dependency and improving protection.

Collective Bargaining Agreement: Improve migrant worker representation in CBA negotiations. Revise the CBA to support fair wages, clear employer obligations, and migrant worker mobility. Use the CBA as a mechanism to formalize key compliance and mobility provisions.

Better Work Jordan and Workers Centre: Align BWJ's Phase IV strategy with EMV priorities and expand support for factory-level due diligence. Clarify and strengthen the Workers Centre's role in grievance handling and develop a sustainable model for its expansion and long-term funding.

Mental Health: Integrate mental health services into national plans and introduce health access points in industrial zones. Expand awareness and training for both workers and supervisors, and establish clear referral systems for support and crisis response.

Transparency: Develop and implement a transparency and communications plan to clearly convey sector priorities, timelines, and responsibilities to all stakeholders, including buyers, workers, employers, and government entities.

Source: ILO Report: Economic Modernization Vision: Ready-made garment sector goals- The promise of change. Unpublished.

Non-garment Industry

Better Work Jordan expanded to several non-garment sectors – chemical, engineering, and plastic – in 2018 to monitor working conditions in factories exporting to the EU under the relaxed Rules of Origin (RoO). Better Work Jordan collaborated with the MoL, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply (MoITS) and the EU delegation to Jordan to develop inspection instructions to help Jordanian companies exporting under this scheme abide by the country's labour laws and meet international labour standards. The programme delivers advisory and assessment services to these sectors through a collaborative inspection committee alongside the MoL.

By the time of reporting, 24 factories are registered with Better Work Jordan under the RoO scheme, with 12 of them are non-garment factories. In 2024, five non-garment factories were assessed by BWJ. These factories ranged in size from 45 to 140 workers and employ a total of 420 workers, of whom 130 are Syrians. Unlike in garment factories, most workers in non-garment factories are men (84 per cent). Jordanians make up the majority of the workforce, with Syrian workers at 31 per cent of the workforce.

The assessment found that the main areas of non-compliance in these non-garment factories fall under the OSH cluster, mostly related to chemicals and hazardous substances management, emergency preparedness, and health services and first aids. While early evidence suggests that participation in the programme can lead to improvements in compliance, such progress largely relies on the willingness of factory management to implement changes and engage constructively with workers. In the garment sector, factory managers are often motivated to improve working conditions due in part to pressure from international buyers. However, this incentive is largely absent in non-garment factories, where few international buys are sourcing. Consequently, there has been slow progress in closing compliance gaps.

Promoting Well-being and Inclusion

Mental Health Programme

In 2024, BWJ continued to expand the reach and impact of its Mental Health Project. The project extended its coverage to include factories in Aqaba industrial zone, increasing its footprint to 14 factories across four major industrial zones in the country. At the time of reporting, the mental health project covered 48 factories employing approximately 61,000 workers with diverse nationalities and backgrounds, representing 78 per cent of the total workforce in Jordan's garment industry.

As part of its efforts, BWJ launched the third edition of its *Mental Health and Well-being Policy* at an industrial seminar held in April 2024. This policy serves as a practical guide for garment factory employers to improve worker well-being and support mental health at the workplace. It outlines the needs, multilevel interventions, roles and responsibilities, and implementation guidelines,

complemented by annexes that facilitate factory-level adoption. The seminar brought together 49 participants (38 women) from 26 garment factories—collectively employing approximately 79 per cent of the sector's workforce—alongside representatives from the MoL. During the session, factory representatives began drafting action plans to roll out the policy in their respective factories. BWJ followed up with monthly factory visits to participating factories, offering tailored guidance and practical support. The policy aims to contribute to broader programme objectives while promoting a sustainable, factory-owned approach to worker well-being that extends beyond the life of the project.

The urgency of BWJ's mental health work was underscored by a rise in critical incidents in the last year. Since the beginning of 2024, BWJ documented 13 critical cases in the sector, including two suicides and 11 suicide attempts. These cases, which attracted international media attention, led to the growing focus on mental health challenges in Jordan's garment sector. In response, with the support of BWJ mental health project, several factories took proactive steps by appointing psychologists, counsellors, and mental health focal points. While these measures reflect a growing awareness, gaps and needs remain severe and more attention need to be given to workers' mental health.

As part of its efforts to continuously expand project's outreach, Better Work Jordan has worked to strengthen the involvement of key sector stakeholders, with a focus on factory leadership. As part of its monthly factory visits, BWJ requested meetings with senior management to ensure that decision-makers are directly engaged in shaping mental health strategies. In September, BWJ organized a seminar on suicide prevention targeted specifically at major investors and factory senior management, highlighting the importance of prioritizing mental health in the workplace and the need for collective, sustained efforts to address this issue. For more details about the seminar, see *Factory Level Interventions*.

In parallel, the mental health project also sought to deepen engagement with international actors to strengthen the sector-wide response. Quarterly meetings with all buyers, alongside targeted discussions with brands, were held, focusing on emerging mental health concerns and offered recommendations for improving worker well-being. In October, in collaboration with the Fair Labor Association (FLA) and Adidas, BWJ delivered two trainings on *Effective Internal Monitoring for Labour and OSH Compliance* — one for factory personnel and another for labour inspectors. As part of the trainings, BWJ led targeted sessions on mental health at work and psychosocial risks management, emphasizing the growing relevance of mental health and the importance of integrating it into broader compliance frameworks.

Disability Inclusion

In 2024, BWJ strengthened its support of promoting inclusive workplaces, with a focus on persons with disabilities and workers facing intersecting forms of discrimination. Key efforts focused on institutional engagement and targeted follow-up with factories that had participated in the disability inclusion Training of Trainers, delivered in collaboration with the Phenix Center.

Participating factories had begun embedding inclusive values into internal systems and taken concrete steps to align recruitment, evaluation, and workplace practices with national disability inclusion standards. Progress was also evident in human resource policies, including the adoption of inclusive job criteria, the integration of reasonable accommodation language into hiring procedures, and increased internal awareness on non-discrimination principles. Although full infrastructural accessibility remains a long-term goal, several factories initiated upgrades to improve the physical work environment to support greater mobility and ease of access for workers with disabilities.

These factory-level outcomes were further supported by the sector's first dedicated assessment on the employment of workers with disabilities. Drawing on its findings, the programme developed and disseminated practical *Guidelines for Employers*, offering clear, actionable steps to advance inclusive employment in the garment sector.

Advancing Compliance in Jordan's Garment Sector

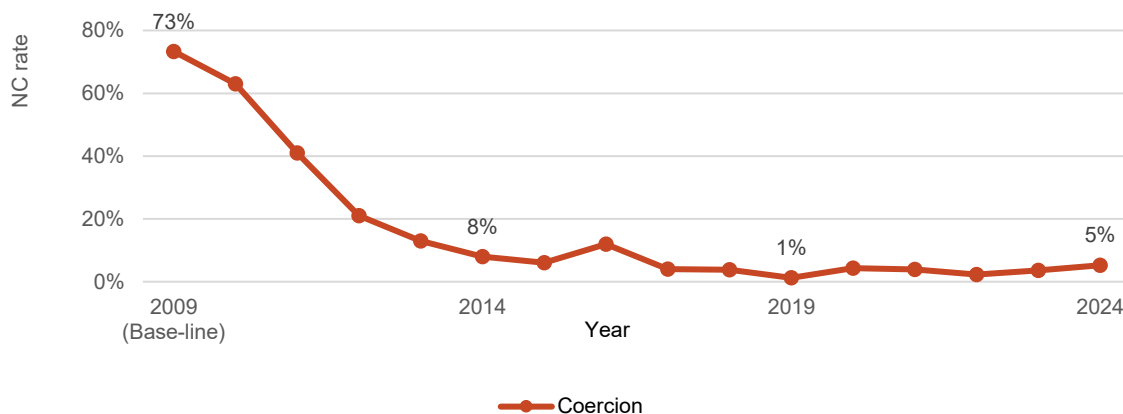
A Retrospective Review of Earlier Years

Over its fifteen years of operation, BWJ has played a vital role in improving working conditions and promoting compliance with national labour laws and international labour standards in Jordan's garment sector. While significant progress has been made in reducing some of the most critical violations, persistent gaps remain in key areas, underscoring the need for continued attention and sector-wide collaboration.

Key Achievements in Improving Labour Standards and Working Conditions

Forced labour has been systematically reduced across the sector, particularly regarding coercion. Under the Kafala system, it was once common for factories to restrict workers' freedom of movement. In 2009, two-third of factories were cited for non-compliance with this. Since the launch of BWJ, the programme has consistently worked to address this issue. By the end of Phase I (2008–2013), no cases of restricted movement were reported. Nonetheless, coercion has not been entirely eliminated. It continues to appear in the form of unlawful confiscation of workers' personal documents by some factory management, although such cases remain limited (see **Figure 2**).

Figure 2. Non-compliance rate on coercion (2009-2024)



Significant progress has been made in the area of compensation practice, particularly concerning wage information, use and deduction. BWJ's first compliance report found that the majority (73 per cent) of assessed factories did not properly inform workers about their wages due to complex payroll systems and language barriers. Over time, BWJ supported factories through its advisory services to adopt simpler and more transparent wage systems. A significant step was the introduction of mandatory payslips under the CBA, requiring employers to provide clear wage statements in a language understood by workers. By 2023, non-compliance on wage information,

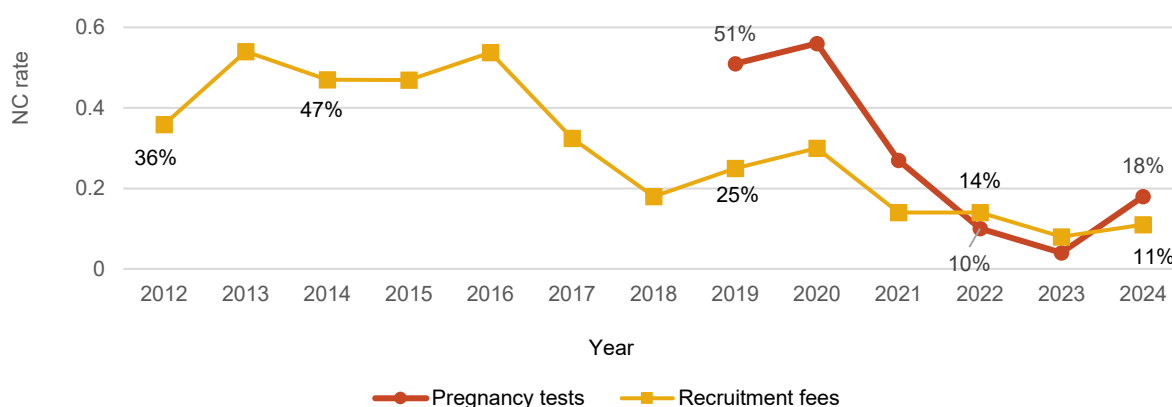
use and deduction had dropped to just 10 per cent. However, this figure rose to 29 per cent in 2024, largely due to inappropriate deduction from daycare allowance when working mothers were absent (see **Figure 3**).

Figure 3. Non-compliance rate on wage information, use and deduction (2009-2024)



Recruitment practices for migrant workers have also improved, particularly regarding pregnancy testing and recruitment fees. Following stakeholder discussions at the 2016 Buyers' Forum and the PAC meeting in April 2018, stronger accountability measures were introduced. In 2019, BWJ began citing factories as non-compliant if newly recruited workers had undergone pregnancy testing or paid recruitment fees, regardless of factory policy. This led to a spike in non-compliance findings, with 51 per cent of factories cited non-compliance for pregnancy testing and 25 per cent for recruitment fees.

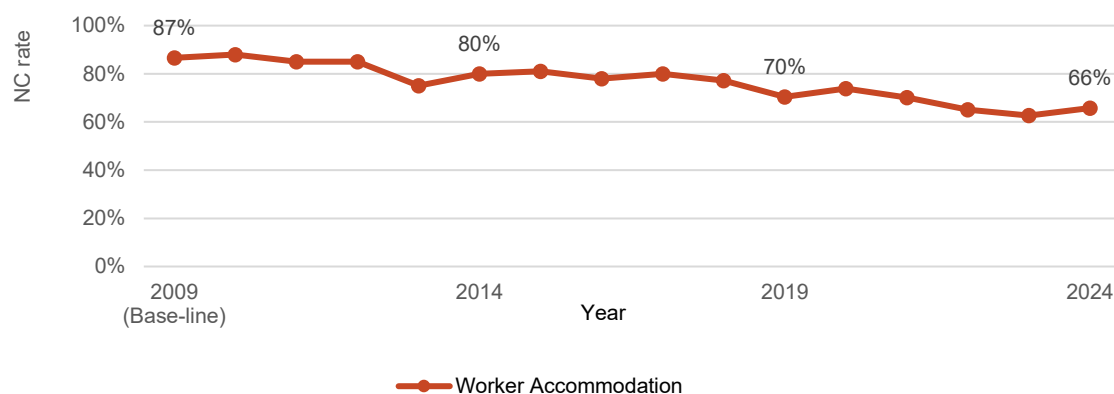
In response, stakeholders collaborated to address the issue. At the sectoral level, J-GATE formally requested the Bangladesh Embassy and Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL) to end these practices. At the factory level, many employers revised contracts with recruitment agencies to explicitly prohibit pregnancy testing and fee charging. As a result, non-compliance dropped significantly: by 2024, 18 per cent of factories were cited for non-compliance with pregnancy testing, while just 11 per cent were cited for recruitment fees (see **Figure 4**).

Figure 4. Non-compliance rate on recruitment practices (2012-2024)

Persistent Gaps Requiring Continued Attention and Actions

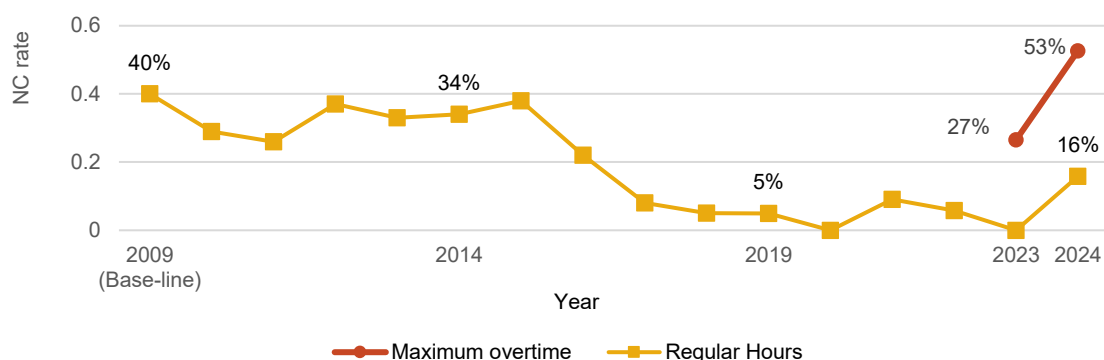
Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) compliance has remained the largest cluster of compliance gaps since the inception of BWJ in 2009, with workers accommodation consistently ranking among the highest areas of non-compliance. In 2009, 87 per cent of factories failed to meet accommodation standards, often due to inadequate space, ventilation, privacy, and sanitation. By 2019, driven by reputational pressures and increased engagement from BWJ and brand partners, some employers had made concerted efforts to upgrade accommodation facilities, leading to a decline in non-compliance from 87 per cent to 70 per cent. Nevertheless, key issues such as overcrowding, poor sanitation, and limited emergency preparedness remained prevalent.

In 2024, the overall non-compliance on worker accommodation stood at 66 per cent (see **Figure 5**). While notable progress has been made in addressing space-related issues, with only 13 per cent of factories falling short of minimum space standards, sanitation is still a critical issue, with 37 per cent of factories failing to meet basic hygiene requirements.

Figure 5. Non-compliance rate on workers accommodation (2009-2024)

Long working hours is another persistent issue in the sector. The non-compliance figures for working hours were not dramatically high in the past, primarily due to gaps in the national law. Historically, Jordanian law imposed no clear limits on daily or weekly overtime, allowing excessive hours if workers gave consent. As a result, excessive working hours were common and often normalized, with high daily production targets and pressure on workers to meet them. Additionally, many migrant workers prefer to work longer hours due to the strong link between their earnings and hours worked.^{i, ii} Data gathered through assessments show that while Jordanian workers average fewer than 42 hours per week, migrant workers average over 58 hours.ⁱⁱⁱ

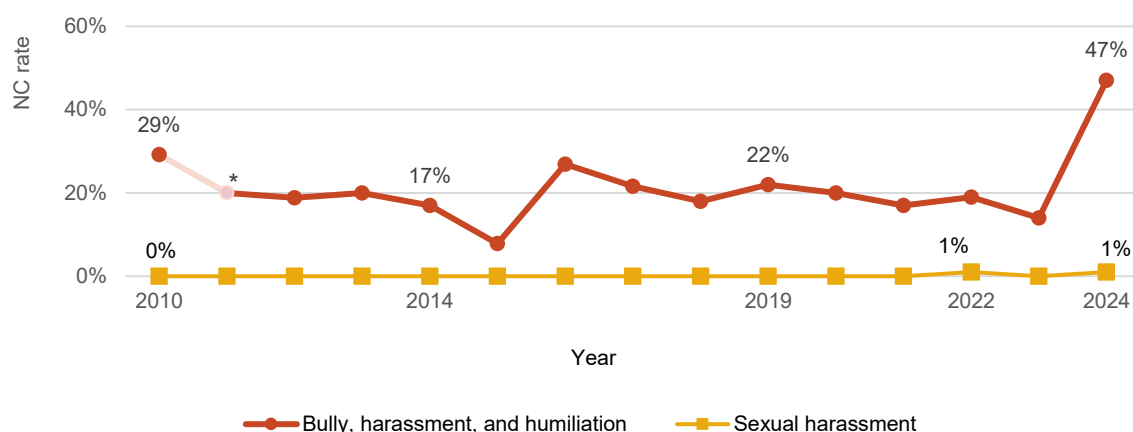
The 2022 CBA introduced a cap on maximum working hours at four hours of overtime per day. This equates to 12 hours per day and 72 hours per week over a six-day work week. BWJ began monitoring compliance with this provision in 2023, when 27 per cent of factories were non-compliant. Notably, this was during a year of relatively low order volumes due to external factors. By 2024, as demand rebounded, the non-compliance rate for maximum working hours rose significantly to 53 per cent (see **Figure 6**).

Figure 6. Non-compliance rate on working time (2009-2024)

Garment workers in Jordan continue to face violence and harassment in the workplace, with verbal abuse being one of the most widespread and persistent issues on production floors.

High production pressure and tight deadlines often lead to shouting, public scolding, and demeaning language from supervisors, particularly when workers fall short of targets or make mistakes. The initial BWJ assessments in earlier years showed 33 per cent of factories engaged in such practices. While the issue appeared to decline over time, in 2024, non-compliance in this area resurged, with 47 per cent of factories found to have ongoing verbal abuse (see **Figure 7**). Workers also shared their hesitancy to file complaints, citing fear of retaliation and a lack of trust in available reporting channels especially within the factory.

Sexual harassment is a significant concern, though it is harder to identify and report through assessment visits. Cultural and educational differences can shape how workers perceive such behaviour and influence their willingness to report it. While only two cases were formally documented through compliance assessments over the years, BWJ became aware of three more incidents in 2024 alone, through alternative reporting channels. Acknowledging the limitation of standard assessments in uncovering these issues, BWJ also relies on annual surveys of workers, supervisors, and managers as a key tool for identifying and triangulating information related to sexual harassment. According to these surveys, more than 18 per cent of workers have reported concerns about sexual harassment in the workplace over the years. BWJ continues to seek to explore different approaches, including efforts to strengthen the grievance channels that allows workers to report such incidents safely and confidentially.

Figure 7. Non-compliance rate on violence and harassment (2010-2024)

*: data unavailable for the 2011 NC rate on bully, harassment and humiliation.

Finally, workers' voice and representation continue to pose significant challenges in the sector. Jordan has not ratified ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, and under the current legal framework, only a single trade union structure is permitted. Consequently, all factories assessed by BWJ have consistently been found non-compliant with requirement on Freedom of Association.

At the factory level, BWJ has supported the establishment of Union-Labour committees (ULCs) in all participating factories. However, not all ULCs are functioning effectively. According to BWJ's annual workers survey, approximately 7 per cent of workers have expressed doubts about the effectiveness of their ULCs, while another 20 per cent reported being unfamiliar with the committees altogether. Additionally, more than a quarter of surveyed workers said they did not feel comfortable approaching ULC members or trade union representatives to raise workplace concerns or resolve conflicts.

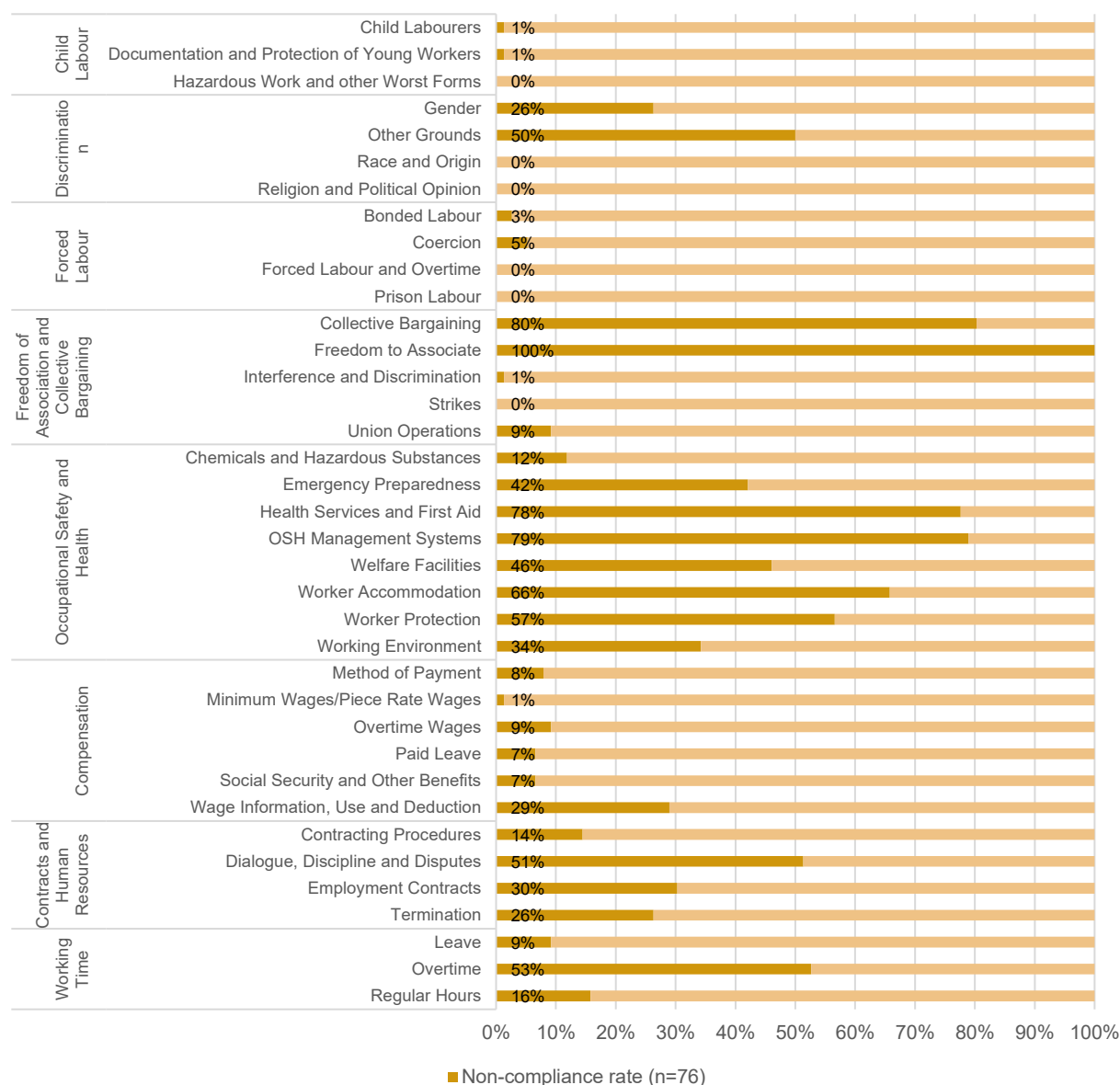
This reluctance was echoed in 2024 factory assessments, where workers – particularly those who had experienced verbal abuse – reported being unwilling to seek help from with ULCs due to fear of retaliation. (See *Contract and Human Resources* for details.) Taken together, these findings highlight persistent concerns about the accessibility and effectiveness of current workers' representation mechanisms in the sector.

2024 in Focus: Compliance Assessment Results and Key Findings

The following section presents the key findings from the compliance assessment between January 2024 and January 2025¹, shedding light on areas of considerable progress as well as persistent gaps that must be addressed to safeguard workers' rights and foster sustainable development in the sector.

Figure 8 summarises the percentage of factories found in non-compliance with at least one question within each of the 38 compliance points (CPs) under eight clusters for the 76 garment factories assessed in 2024. A discussion of these findings and detailed observations for a subset of compliance areas follows.

¹ All assessments were initially planned for 2024; however, due to delays at four factories, their assessments were postponed to January 2025. For consistency, they are referred to as 2024 assessments throughout this report.

Figure 8. Non-compliance rate by Compliance Point, 2024 assessment cycle

Child Labour

According to the Jordanian Labour Law, the legal minimum age for employment is 16. Workers under 18 are considered juveniles and may legally work in factories but only within a limited range of tasks and hours. Although not explicitly stated, the law applies to both Jordanian and non-Jordanian workers. The recruitment of migrant workers under 18 is treated as human trafficking under the rules of the Anti-Trafficking Unit. Additionally, employing children under 16 is a zero-tolerance issue

under BWJ's agreement with the Ministry of Labour (MoL), and such cases must be reported for follow-up by relevant authorities.

The overall non-compliance rate under child labour has remained relatively stable over the past three years – around 1 per cent. **During the current reporting period, BWJ identified three suspicious cases of child labour.** Two incidents were found in the same factory, through regular assessment visits. Additionally, a separate case of child labour was identified through an advisory visit to another factory in 2024. In all these cases, the workers' passports contained falsified dates of birth. Following BWJ's Zero-Tolerance Protocol (ZTP), these cases were reported to the MoL.

Discrimination

Freedom from discrimination is a fundamental human right. **ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention No. 111, 1958** defines discrimination as any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of prohibited grounds (i.e., race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin), which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equal opportunity or treatment in employment and occupation.^{iv} The Convention also allows for countries to identify additional grounds for discrimination requiring protection.

Non-compliances under Discrimination rose significantly in 2024. Similar to the previous year, these non-compliances are related to the CPs Gender (26 per cent) and Other Grounds (50 per cent). The overall non-compliance rates for discrimination based on Gender and Other Grounds have risen by some 14 and 34 percentage points from the previous year, respectively.

The primary driver of gender-related non-compliance in 2024 was the practice of conducting pregnancy tests on female workers. Fourteen factories (18 per cent) were cited, compared to just three in the previous year. All identified cases involved migrant women; no Jordanian workers were found to have undergone such tests. In most cases, factories did not mandate the tests and provided documentation showing they explicitly instructed recruitment agencies that pregnancy tests were not required as a condition of employment. BWJ recorded these cases as non-compliance whenever workers were found to have undergone such tests. Despite the increase in 2024 compared to 2023, the overall incidence of pregnancy testing remains significantly lower than levels recorded prior to 2021.

Sexual harassment is a persistent issue in the sector. However, such cases are usually difficult to detect and substantiate during the standard two-day assessment visits. **In 2024, one factory was cited non-compliant for sexual harassment of workers. Additional incidents were brought to BWJ's attention outside the regular assessment process – through direct reports from workers to BWJ or MoL, and during advisory visits conducted by the trade union – across three factories.** As these cases were identified outside the assessment visits, they are not reflected as non-compliance findings in the assessment report. In response, BWJ worked with the MoL, the trade union, buyers, and the affected workers to seek appropriate remedies. Measures included terminating and deporting perpetrators, pursuing legal proceedings resulting in legal action against them, supporting victims in resuming work if desired, and imposing sanctions on factories. For more information on BWJ's interventions on sexual harassment, see *Factory Level Interventions*.

Under Other Grounds of discrimination, 38 factories (50 per cent) did not comply with legal requirements with regards to the hiring of workers with disabilities. It is worth noting that legal requirements for the employment of disabled workers are quite stringent in Jordan. While all factories cited employed disabled workers, they either did not meet the quota set by the MoL or failed to provide the required Ministry of Health (MoH) documentation verifying the workers' disability status. In the last year, BWJ has taken steps to go beyond the quota system for persons with disabilities to monitor whether they are being effectively included in the sector. For a broader discussion of BWJ's work on disability inclusion, see *Promoting Well-being and Inclusion*.

Forced Labour

Forced labour used to be an endemic problem in the garment industry in Jordan, mainly driven by the *Kafala* system, which ties the migrant workers to their employer with limited opportunities to switch employers or leave the country without repercussions. Over the last decade, the sector has made substantial progress in reducing both the frequency and severity of such cases.

In the last three years, non-compliance against forced labour had been limited to not more than three cases per year. **However, in 2024, the programme recorded a rise in forced labour incidents, with six cases of non-compliance identified across five BWJ factories involving various forms of forced labour.** These included two factories with cases of passport confiscation, one with bonded labour, one with both passport confiscation and bonded labour, and one additional factory with denial of contract termination. All cases were identified as zero-tolerance issues and reported to the MoL.

BWJ noticed that half of these forced labour cases occurred in Aqaba region, particularly in some smaller factories. Alongside these incidents, the programme saw other labour rights issues in the region, such as high recruitment fees, weak collective bargaining, low wages, and high worker turnover. These conditions have contributed to instability, with some migrant workers seeking informal employment outside the sector.

To address these concerns, the 53rd PAC meeting was held in Aqaba on December 8, 2024, where key stakeholders came together to discuss compliance with labour standards, recruitment practices, and migrant workers' freedom of movement. The union committed to developing a work plan to raise awareness about workers' rights, enhance grievance reporting systems, and improve access to effective communication channels, including interpreters to bridge language barriers. BWJ also facilitated an awareness-raising session for stakeholders, focusing on the legal and regulatory frameworks governing the sector, while emphasizing the need for stronger worker protections and improved industry compliance.

Freedom of Association & Collective Bargaining

Jordan has yet to ratify ILO Convention No. 87 on the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize. The Jordanian Labour Law stipulates a single trade union structure, which

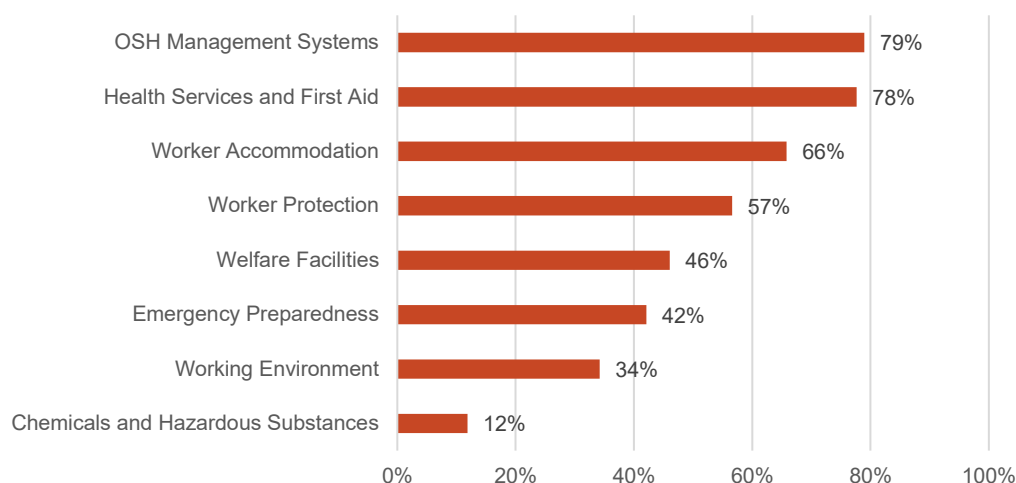
restricts workers from forming unions of their choosing, therefore, **all factories assessed continue to be non-compliant on workers' ability to freely form and join unions.**

In 2024, a new area of non-compliance emerged related to the question “Does the employer require workers to join a union?” Previously, factories were deemed compliant if workers had signed a union membership form along with their unified contract. However, in 2024, BWJ applied a more rigorous standard. Under the new approach, factories were found non-compliant if workers did not fully understand that they had the choice to either join or not join the union when signing the contract. Based on this stricter interpretation, 74 per cent of assessed factories were found non-compliant on this issue.

Stakeholders in Jordan have successfully ratified a series of sector-wide CBAs that set industry standards relating to wages, working conditions and industrial relations. Factories in this report were assessed against the 2022 CBA and 2023 CBA. **In the 2024 assessment cycle, 80 per cent of factories failed to implement at least one of the provisions of the CBA, up from 71 per cent in 2023.** As in the previous year, the most common areas of non-compliance included exceeding maximum overtime hours per day, the absence or inadequate on-site health clinics, and failure to meet the CBA provisions related to mental health.

Occupational Safety and Health

Occupational Safety and Health is the largest cluster in BWJ's compliance assessment tool (CAT) and, as in previous years, continues to show some of the highest non-compliance rates among factories. In 2024, OSH-related assessment questions in the CAT were revised to align with the international labour standard (ILO Convention 155) and incorporate regulatory updates introduced since 2023. These revisions were primarily reflected in the areas of *OSH Management System, Health Services and First Aids, Workers Accommodation, and Workers Protection*, and have contributed to increased non-compliance rates in affected categories. **Figure 9** presents the eight compliance points ranked by the highest rates of non-compliance.

Figure 9. OSH non-compliance rates by compliance point

Worker accommodation is a critical OSH component, as factories are required to provide housing for all migrant workers. The quality and safety of these accommodations, mostly dormitories, form a large part of the experiences of migrant workers in Jordan. In 2024, 66 per cent of factories were cited for non-compliance with OSH standards in worker accommodation. However, the nature of these violations has shifted over the past three years (see **Table 1**). The most common issue remains cleanliness, with 37 per cent of factories non-compliant, although this marks some improvement since 2022. Conditions related to the overall living environment—such as exposure to heat, cold, and dampness—also showed progress, with the non-compliance rate dropping to 20 per cent, down from around 40 per cent in the past three years. In contrast, violations related to cooking facilities increased, with 36 per cent of factories failing to provide adequate cooking spaces. As a result, workers were forced to cook inside their rooms, which can lead to insects and animals in the dorms and increased risk of fire. It is worth noting that the widespread practice of cooking in rooms is also linked to worker dissatisfaction with the food provided by factories. Emergency preparedness was another concern, with 26 per cent of factories cited for inadequate measures, placing workers at considerable risk in case of emergency.

Table 1. In Focus: OSH requirements in Accommodations

Compliance Question	NC Rate by Question		
	2024 (n=76)	2023 (n=83)	2022 (n=86)
Is the accommodation clean and protected against disease-carrying animals or insects?	37%	48%	52%
Does the accommodation have adequate cooking facilities?	36%	12%	9%
Has the employer adequately prepared for emergencies in the accommodation?	26%	18%	17%

Compliance Question	NC Rate by Question		
	2024 (n=76)	2023 (n=83)	2022 (n=86)
Is the accommodation adequately protected against heat, cold, dampness and noise, and is it adequately ventilated and lit?	20%	37%	42%

Since 2023, BWJ started to track factory compliance with mental health provisions introduced in the 2022 CBA. The CBA requires employers to adopt the workplace mental health policy, complete with SOPs, to ensure the provision of mental health and psychosocial support services at the factory level, in line with the Better Work Jordan programme. Employers are also obligated to refer workers to specialized psychological healthcare centres in Jordan upon request. Additionally, employers are required to provide mental health training to all employees, including factory floor workers, focusing on the importance of mental well-being and methods of care. Factories are cited as non-compliant if they fail to meet any of these requirements. **In 2024, 34 per cent of factories were cited as non-compliant for mental health provision, up from 27 per cent in 2023.** While most of these factories had endorsed a mental health policy, nearly all lacked clear referral procedures and had not provided mental health training to workers.

Compensation

Better Work Jordan monitors many aspects of compensation beyond basic wage payments. Workers are entitled to several different aspects of compensation per the CBA and their individual contracts, including overtime wages, annual leave and sick leave, and in-kind payment for food and accommodation in the case of migrant workers. It is also important that workers are paid accurately and on time, and that they are properly informed about their wage deductions.

Non-compliance related to compensation remained relatively low. **The most common issues were related to wage information, use, and deductions and overtime wages, with non-compliance rates of 29 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively.** Additionally, one factory was found non-compliant for failing to pay the minimum wage—a new finding for this year, as no such violations had been recorded in the last three years.

Contract and Human Resources

Contracts and Human Resources is one of the key clusters within the Jordanian context, particularly because of the majority migrant workforce. Employers must not only have contracts that comply with the basic laws, but they must also make a genuine effort to ensure that workers understand their contracts. At a bare minimum, this means translating contracts into the appropriate languages for workers. In addition, contracting procedures also include how workers are recruited to jobs. Moreover, worker-manager dialogue and treatment of workers on the factory floor are integral to working conditions. Issues in these areas not only affect workers directly (e.g., self-esteem, value in the workplace) but a lack of dialogue between workers and managers can lead to other issues and

compliance violations. In contrast, factories with robust dialogue and grievance handling mechanisms can proactively address worker concerns and create a better workplace.

Non-compliance under Contracting Procedures in 2024 was mainly attributed to unauthorized recruitment fees, with eight factories cited for this issue. Most of these factories were subcontracting factories, and Indian workers were by far the most likely to have paid such fees. Over the years, BWJ has worked with stakeholders to improve the recruitment practices in the sector, including tackling recruitment fees. BWJ implements a zero-recruitment-fee policy, which was endorsed by national stakeholders and went into effect on 1 January 2019. Since then, notable progress has been made in reducing the incidence of recruitment fee payments, with the non-compliance rate in this area falling from 25 per cent in 2019 to 11 per cent in 2024. For more information on progress made on unauthorized recruitment fees, see *A Retrospective Review of Earlier Years*.

Verbal abuse, including bullying, harassment, and humiliation, is one consistent issue in the sector. **In 2024, the non-compliance rate in this area surged, with 47 per cent of factories found non-compliant, compared to no more than 19 per cent over the previous three years** (see Table 2). The increase coincided with targeted efforts to better capture workers' experience: the assessment team conducted additional interviews specifically focused on verbal abuse, including off-site discussion with workers in the dormitories and nearby communities. This more comprehensive approach offered a clearer and more accurate picture of the prevalence of verbal abuse in the sector.

In the factories where non-compliance was found, workers reported practices such as shouting, public scolding, inappropriate language, and demeaning comments – often occurring when production targets were missed, or mistakes were made. Workers also expressed reluctance to report these issues to HR, management, or ULC because they were afraid of retaliation. Additionally, using more advanced analytical methodologies, BWJ's recent analysis – triangulating assessment and survey data – found that the issue of verbal abuse was correlated with broader decent work deficits, suggesting that such mistreatment is often not an isolated issue, but part of a wider environment where workers lack a voice and support systems. For more insights on this analysis, see *Research for Evidence-based Interventions*.

Table 2. In Focus: Dialogue, Discipline and Disputes

Compliance Question	NC Rate by Question		
	2024 (n=76)	2023 (n=83)	2022 (n=86)
Have any workers been bullied, harassed, or subjected to humiliating treatment?	47%	14%	19%
If a Union Labour Committee is formed, does the employer meet worker representatives on a regular basis?	9%	6%	1%
Did the employer resolve individual grievances and disputes in compliance with legal requirements?	0%	1%	0%

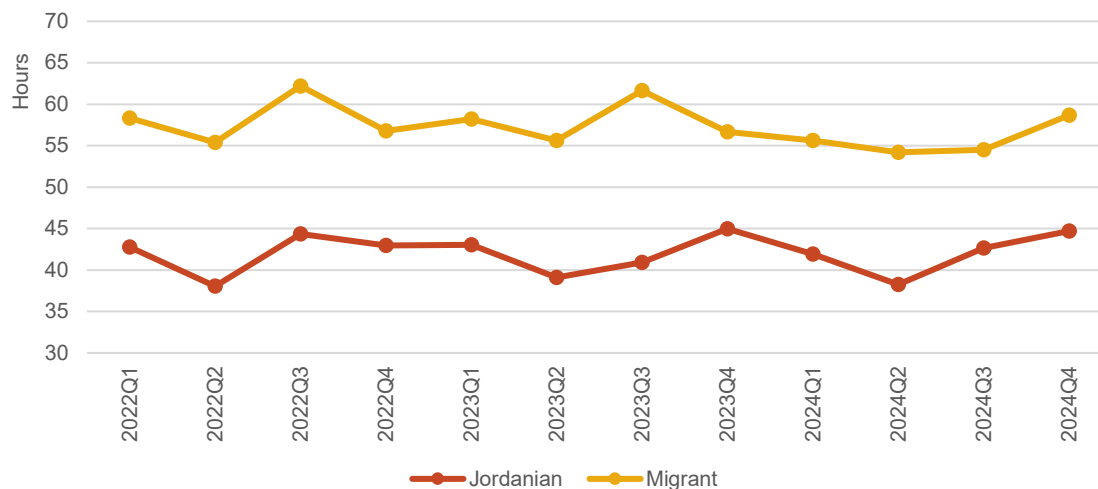
Dialogue is a cornerstone of the ILO's approach to resolving workplace problems. Setting up systems for transparent and open dialogue is particularly important in contexts with imbalanced power relations between workers and management. **As per the CBA, if the union has formed an enterprise level ULC, the employer is required to meet regularly with the ULC to discuss workplace concerns and deliberate potential solutions.** In recent years, BWJ has supported the union in establishing ULCs in each factory. While all factories have formed a ULC, 9 per cent failed to hold management meetings with the ULCs regularly or failed to present minutes of these meetings (see **table 2**).

BWJ also tracks whether factories have adequate grievance handling mechanisms and dispute resolution procedures. Through document review, the assessment team checks if factories have procedures for handling worker grievances. In the last three years, BWJ only identified one non-compliance case. However, it is important to note that this is a minimum standard. **The limited non-compliance finding does not necessarily mean that grievance handling procedures are functioning effectively.** In fact, BWJ's 2024 workers' survey data found that 10 per cent of workers were dissatisfied with existing grievance handling mechanisms. Concerns about effectiveness are further underscored by workers' fear of retaliation, especially for issues such as sexual harassment. Survey results showed that, over the years, more than 20 per cent of workers felt it would be extremely risky to file a formal complaint in the case of quid-pro-quo sexual harassment.

Finally, in the area of Termination, 20 per cent of factories were found non-compliant with legal requirements in 2024, compared to just 2 per cent over the last three years. The key issues included not preparing the termination documentation in workers' native language and providing incorrect or missing final financial settlements. In addition, outside the regular assessment process, BWJ became aware of one case in which a factory management forced migrant workers to resign and repatriated them, even though these workers held valid fixed-term contracts of three years. As this case was identified outside the scope of formal assessment visits, it is not reflected as a non-compliance finding in this report.

Working Time

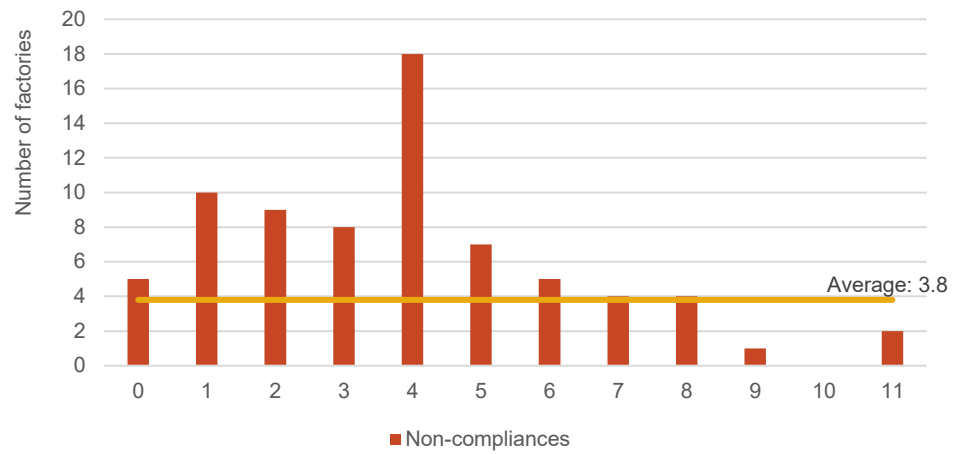
Excessive working hours is a significant concern in the sector. While the Jordanian labour law does not place limits on daily or weekly overtime, the 2022 sectoral CBA introduced a provision capping overtime at four hours per day. This equates to 12 hours per day and 72 hours per week over a six-day work week. **In 2024, BWJ found 54 per cent of factories failed to comply with the limits on overtime hours, a significant increase from 27 per cent in 2023.** Data from the latest assessment show that workers on average worked 52 hours per week in 2024. Migrant workers reported an average of 59 hours, while Jordanian workers averaged 41 hours. This reflects an increase in working hours for migrant workers compared to 2023, when they averaged 56 hours per week, while the average for Jordanian workers remained relatively stable (see **Figure 10**).

Figure 10: Average weekly hours

Publicly Reported Issues

Greater transparency is expected to increase accountability and consequently, compliance. The Better Work Transparency Portal currently posts compliance on selected issues from five countries (in addition to Cambodia, which posts compliance information on a separate site).^v A factory's compliance findings remain on the portal until a new assessment report is published.

Public reporting was introduced in Jordan in July 2017 with support from the Jordanian government and the World Bank. The transparency portal currently covers 29 compliance questions across different clusters for factories that are in Cycle 2 and above. Of the 76 factories included in this report, 73 fall into this category and are therefore subject to public reporting. Among these, only 7 per cent had no non-compliance findings with publicly reported issues – a significant decline from 27 per cent in 2023. On average, factories recorded 3.8 violations (see **Figure 11**). Same as the last year, the most common public reporting violation was not fully implementing the collective bargaining agreement.

Figure 11: Number of non-compliances on Transparency Portal for 2024 assessments

Better Work Jordan's Responsive Mechanism

Since its inception, BWJ has worked to enhance decent work, expand opportunities for women, and strengthen business competitiveness in the Jordanian garment industry. In 2022, the programme entered its fourth phase (2022-2027), making a strategic shift towards sustaining and deepening the impact of its earlier achievements. Under the current strategy, BWJ continues to deliver its core in-factory services, while strengthening the capacity of tripartite constituents and other key stakeholders in Jordan to take a leading role in maintaining and advancing sector-wide progress. In 2024, the programme also collaborated closely with global partners to help the industry navigate a particularly challenging year.

Factory Level Interventions

BWJ offers a comprehensive package of factory-level services that combine assessment and learning to improve working conditions and labour standards in registered factories. Through its assessment services, BWJ conducts independent evaluations of factories using a standardized tool that measures compliance with national labour laws and international labour standards. These assessments help identify areas of risk and guide the development of tailored improvement plans for each factory. The learning component supports long-term capacity building through advisory visits, where BWJ advisors work with management and workers to implement these plans; industrial seminars that bring together stakeholders across the sector to share knowledge, experiences, and address common challenges across the sector; and training courses which designed to build practical skills and improve workplace relations. Together, these integrated services aim to address the root causes of compliance issues, promote sustainable improvements in working conditions, and strengthen the overall competitiveness of Jordan's garment industry.

In its current strategic phase, BWJ has shifted focus toward strengthening the ability of tripartite constituents to take greater ownership in promoting decent work and sustaining compliance across the sector. As part of this transition, BWJ has been gradually reducing its direct delivery of factory-level assessments and advisory services, with national stakeholders increasingly taking on these responsibilities. This shift is designed to foster national ownership and long-term institutional sustainability in governing labour standards within the garment sector.

Despite this shift, BWJ continues to play a key role in sector-wide learning and capacity building. In 2024, the programme remains actively engaged in delivering training on supervisory skills, human resource management, mental health, and the prevention of sexual harassment, while also facilitating regular industrial seminars to address emerging workplace challenges and promote peer learning across the sector.

Training and Workshops

In 2024, the programme continued to advocate for improved access to grievance redress mechanisms as a foundational element of responsible and rights-based workplaces. Building on the development of **SOPs for grievance management** in the previous year, BWJ worked to sustain their visibility and relevance across the sector. In collaboration with the Arab Renaissance for Democracy

and Development (ARDD), the programme organized a dedicated training for factory HR and compliance officers to introduce the SOPs and offer practical guidance on integrating the SOPs into daily operations. The SOPs also featured in stakeholder discussions, including a buyer-led meeting with a supplier factory, where the project team emphasized the role of effective grievance systems in ethical sourcing and worker protection.

In addition, BWJ introduced a pre-departure and post-arrival **induction package** in 2024 aimed at promoting more transparent recruitment practices and ensuring a smoother onboarding experience for newly recruited workers, especially migrants. The package offers comprehensive information to help workers prepare for life and work in Jordan's garment sector, while also strengthening their awareness of rights vs. responsibilities, available protections, mental health, and access to grievance mechanisms once on the job. To ensure accessibility, the materials are available in multiple languages, including English, Bangla, Hindi, and Sinhalese.

In response to growing attention on mental health issues in the sector and the urgent need to engage senior factory leadership, BWJ organized a seminar on **suicide prevention** in September 2024. The session was specifically targeted at major investors and factory senior management. It highlighted the importance of prioritizing mental health in the workplace and the need for collective, sustained efforts to address this issue. This seminar was the first of its kind elevate mental health as a strategic priority at the leadership level. While participants were cautious in making public sector-wide commitments, the seminar succeeded in breaking the silence around mental health and suicide in the workplace. It sparked meaningful dialogue and led to tangible follow-up at the factory level, including the revision of internal procedures, new awareness initiatives, and strengthened coordination with mental health focal points. The seminar marked a pivot shift in how mental health is perceived and addressed across the sector.

Advancing Training through Digitalization

As part of its ongoing efforts to expand access to learning, BWJ made significant strides in digitalizing its training in 2024. A key milestone was the launch of a WhatsApp-based Sexual Harassment Prevention (SHP) training platform, specifically tailored to Jordan's garment sector. The interactive module was made available in multiple worker languages to ensure broad accessibility. The implementation was carried out in partnership with J-GATE and the union, with co-branded outreach materials disseminated across factory networks. By the end of 2024, the training had reached approximately 4,000 workers, reinforcing core messages of respect, safety, and non-discrimination in the workplace.

In parallel, BWJ digitized a complementary SHP module targeting supervisors and middle management, aimed at strengthening institutional accountability and equipping factory leadership with the tools to prevent and address workplace harassment. Engagement with international buyers further amplified the initiative's reach, as brands were encouraged to promote participation across their supplier networks – underscoring the link between ethical sourcing and safe workplace practices.

In addition, BWJ continued to invest in workforce development through the digitization of supervisory skills training. This training offers factory-based supervisors with flexible environments to learning module to improve supervisor-workers relationship and improve compliance with labour standards. By enabling broader and more adaptable access to training, this initiative is expected to improve the quality supervisor and more consistent application of fair labour practices.

Together, these digitalization efforts represent a significant step toward more accessible, scalable, and sustainable training delivery, in alignment with BWJ's Phase IV strategy.

Factory Ambassador Program

BWJ continues to implement the FAP to develop the capacity of key factory representatives, empowering them to take greater ownership of the compliance process. FAP is a long-term investment that is delivered in three main phases over a duration of up to 12 months to ensure the successful transfer of skills and Better Work tools to potential leaders at factory level. In early 2024, BWJ completed the FAP phase one training of the second batch of 19 factory ambassadors, who represent 14 factories and workers' trade unions. BWJ completed the second phase of on-the-job coaching for the factory ambassadors to apply the learned skills and knowledge to enhance factory compliance performance by mid-2024.

Since the initial launch in February 2022, the programme has engaged a total of 41 factories, including both direct and indirect exporting factories, which cover approximately 83 per cent of the sector's workforce.

National Level Interventions

In line with its Phase IV strategy, BWJ's sustainability plans focus on strengthening the capacity of national stakeholders. The strategy emphasizes empowering tripartite constituents to take a leading role in sustaining and advancing improvements in working conditions in the garment industry. Each stakeholder already holds a key mandate, and BWJ is focused on enhancing the partners' capacity, effectiveness, and ownership in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Government

In 2024, BWJ deepened its partnership with the MoL to promote and monitor decent work principles across both garment and non-garment sectors. A central focus of this collaboration was strengthening the capacity of the Ministry's Better Work Unit within the Inspection Department. With funding support from the European Union (EU), BWJ delivered intensive on-the-job coaching and targeted training to labour inspectors throughout the year.

Through this initiative, labour inspectors gained practical tools and solid knowledge of international labour standards, enabling them to more effectively advise employers on compliance with both national legislation and global labour conventions.

The capacity-building initiative contributed to meaning, long-term institutional improvement within the Ministry. Trained inspectors now demonstrate a deeper understanding of international labour standards and are better positioned to advise employers on compliance, fostering more constructive and informed engagement between the inspector and factories. Additionally, a total of 14 labour inspectors from cities including Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Karak, Tafileh, and Aqaba participated in the on-the-job coaching programme. Among them, five inspectors led factory assessment visits and independently produced comprehensive assessment reports, marking a milestone in the programme's efforts to institutionalize technical skills within the MoL.

Throughout the year, BWJ and the MoL conducted 76 assessment visits. Of these, 39 were carried out by trained labour inspectors independently. In addition, labour inspectors completed 187 advisory visits to factories registered with the programme, covering a range of sectors, including garments, engineering, plastics, and chemicals.

To further enhance the Ministry's technical and communication capacity, BWJ supported 20 inspectors to complete specialized OSH training in 2024, earning the internationally recognized National Examination Board for Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) certification. This investment aimed to boost technical expertise and strengthen engagement with both employers and international stakeholders. Meanwhile, advisory led by labour inspectors have increasingly focused on OSH topics. Complementing these efforts, BWJ collaborated with international stakeholders to deliver trainings to labour inspectors, focusing on international monitoring frameworks and compliance strategies for internal OSH and labour practices. For more details on this seminar, see *Strengthening Global Partnership*.

Employers

In 2024, BWJ continued its collaboration with two key employer organizations in the country: the Jordan Garment, Accessories & Textiles Exporters' Association (J-GATE) and the Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI). J-GATE is the primary representation of garment-exporting factory employers and advocates for policies to improve the economic and business environment of employers in the garment industry. JCI, which represents all industrial sectors in Jordan including the garments, focuses on delivering technical services to its members. BWJ engages with these two organizations to build their capacity and promote decent working conditions at the enterprise level, as well as working to improve the sector's competitiveness.

Following in-depth discussions with JCI on ways to strengthen its institutional role, BWJ supported efforts to strengthen the Chamber's network capacity and better aligns its activities with Jordan's EMV. BWJ also aims to bolster JCI's ability to support the garment sector by expanding its influence, increasing organizational viability, and contributing to the sector's long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

BWJ also maintains active collaboration with J-GATE throughout 2024 to support the association's growth and development. This collaboration culminated in the finalization of J-GATE's first-ever Business Development Plan. This plan outlines key actions to enhance J-GATE's ability to support its members, strengthen its marketing efforts, and improve overall business practices.

In November 2024, BWJ convened a meeting with J-GATE and TAMKEEN, a civil society organization focused on legal aid and human rights, to address labour standards in subcontracting companies within the exporting garment sector. The discussion emphasized the importance of protecting workers' rights in subcontracting factories drew on findings from recent research.^{vi} The meeting laid the groundwork for a joint initiative that includes the development of a draft set of SOPs for subcontracting companies based on current practices observed in factories operating in the sector. BWJ reviewed the document and provided technical input to support the next stage of development.

Union

In 2024, the programme expanded its efforts to strengthen worker representation across Jordan's garment sector by supporting the recruitment and capacity-building of trade union representatives. As part of the collaboration with the JTGCU, four Jordanian representatives were appointed – one in each of the sector's main industrial zones: Sahab, Dulayl, Aqaba, and the northern satellite units. This model aimed to deepen grassroots worker engagement and enhance the union's presence at the factory level.

To ensure their preparedness, BWJ launched a structured induction programme for the newly appointed representatives in November 2024. The programme included thematic sessions on the union's mandate, the sectoral collective bargaining agreement, grievance mechanisms, negotiation skills, industrial relations, and the roles and responsibilities of trade union representatives. These classroom sessions were complemented by field visits to factories and industrial zones, where representatives were introduced to factory management, workplace committees, and local union structures.

The initiative emphasized practical learning and accountability. Representatives were supported through on-the-job coaching, regular timesheet reporting, and mentorship provided by a designated focal point. Post-training assessments indicated a high level of engagement, teamwork, and a shared commitment to advancing workers' rights. Many of the representatives brought prior sectoral experience to their roles, further enhancing their credibility and ability to connect with workers on the ground.

This approach laid the foundation for a more responsive and structured model of representation, rooted in continuous engagement and field-level presence. The initiative also underscored the value of equipping worker representatives with both the institutional knowledge and soft skills necessary to facilitate dialogue, address grievances, and promote inclusive representation in a diverse workforce.

Crisis Response and Governance Tools

In response to recent factory closures – including the widely publicized Aseel Factory case – supported by BWJ, the garment sector has taken steps to strengthen its institutional oversight and crisis management.

A major milestone came in March 2024, when the 52nd PAC meeting of BWJ resulted in the **formation of a tripartite-technical committee**. Comprising representatives from the MoL, JGATE, JCI, the

union, and BWJ, the committee was mandated to conduct a comprehensive review of recent factory closures. Its aim is to extract key lessons learned, develop actionable recommendations, and help prevent future setbacks in the sector. To facilitate this work, BWJ supported the committee in hiring a legal consultant to conduct a legal study. The study examines cases of factory failures in Jordan's garment sector and explores existing mechanisms for worker protection. It recommends establishing an early warning system and using current laws to enhance the protection of workers' rights, while encouraging strengthened coordination and legal support to ensure workers receive their wages during factory closures.

This initiative represents a significant step forward in strengthening the capacity of social partners to respond collectively to complex sectoral challenges. Through active engagement in the committee, partners are applying their skills and knowledge to develop practical, forward-looking solutions—reflecting BWJ's efforts to empower stakeholders and support a more sustainable and accountable garment sector.

Complementing this effort, in September 2024, the tripartite-technical committee met to review recent developments and assess current priorities and sectoral risks. During the meeting, the MoL introduced a **new early warning system** to monitor the financial and operational health of factories. This system integrates data from multiple government agencies and tracks key indicators such as delays in salary payments, social security contributions, and export activity. Initial tests of the system have demonstrated its reliability; however, further clarification is needed on how it will be operationalized and how identified risks will trigger enforcement actions.

Strengthening Global Partnerships

During a challenging 2024, BWJ and BW Global leadership and buyer relations team had regular collaboration calls to discuss sector-wide concerns and severe industry level cases. Those discussions helped shape strategic engagement with stakeholders, supported decision-making, and enabled reflection on lessons learned. Engagement with global brands was further reinforced through high-level buyer visits in Jordan during the year, contributing to continued dialogue on sector priorities and challenges.

In October 2024, BWJ and MoL's OSH Directory co-organized a two-day industrial seminar *Effective Internal Monitoring for Labour and OSH Compliance for Suppliers* in collaboration with FLA and Adidas. Facilitated by experts from FLA and Adidas, the training is designed to improve compliance and safety practices in factory operations, covering key aspects of international labour rights standards and OSH, with an emphasis on practical approaches to internal monitoring during factory assessments. This course was also delivered to 23 labour inspectors.

Research for Evidence-Based Interventions

BWJ has consistently invested in data collection and research efforts to understand and improve working conditions in the local garment sector. Since 2019, BWJ has conducted seven rounds of annual surveys with workers, supervisors, and managers in participating factories. These surveys complement BWJ's compliance assessment data, enabling a more holistic and triangulated understanding of workplace realities.

Survey findings have informed programme priorities, enhanced monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and contributed to a range of ad hoc studies. Survey summaries are publicly available on the BWJ website. Importantly, these surveys have helped uncover sensitive issues that normally go underreported during factory assessments. Sexual harassment and verbal abuse, for example, are rarely disclosed during compliance visits due to concerns around confidentiality and fear of retaliation. To date, only two sexual harassment-related non-compliance cases have been officially documented. Acknowledging this limitation, the confidential surveys serve as a critical tool for identifying and validating concerns that may otherwise go underreported.

In 2024, the workers, supervisors, and managers' survey findings revealed that 16 per cent of workers had concerns about sexual harassment, while another 16 per cent selected "I don't know" or "I don't want to answer" – responses that may also reflect discomfort or fear of disclosure. Additionally, 5 per cent of workers reported experiencing quid-pro-quo sexual harassment. Jordanian workers were far more likely to raise concerns about sexual harassment, with 31 per cent doing so, compared to just 9 per cent of migrant workers. However, migrant workers reported higher rates of quid-pro-quo harassment. These patterns suggest that perceptions of harassment may be shaped by cultural and educational backgrounds, which influence both the understanding of the concept and the thresholds for reporting. Gender differences were minimal, with 16 per cent of women and 15 per cent of men expressing concerns.

Verbal abuse emerged as another prominent concern in 2024, with 30 per cent of workers reporting related issues. Jordanian workers consistently reported higher rates: over half reported verbal abuse, compared to fewer than one-quarter of migrant workers. This discrepancy may reflect both fear of retaliation and cultural differences in how verbal abuse is perceived. For instance, migrant workers might have a higher tolerance for such behaviour, while Jordanian workers may be more likely to voice concerns.

While BWJ's longstanding investment in survey data has been instrumental in revealing workplace issues that are often missed during compliance assessments, these findings have also raised deeper questions. Why do certain risks cluster in particular factories or demographic groups? What conditions enable abuse to go unreported or unresolved? And which early indicators might signal more serious problems ahead? These questions became central to BWJ's work in 2024, when the programme formalised a **new research agenda** to move beyond surface-level monitoring. The agenda prioritises six thematic areas – Jordanian employment, labour productivity, industrial relations, managing retrenchment and insolvency, OSH, verbal abuse and harassment – not only for their relevance to ongoing challenges in the local sector, but for their potential to shed light on systemic drivers of poor working conditions.

This agenda reflects a clear intention to shift from documenting issues to fully leveraging BWJ's rich data assets to explore patterns, trends, and potential correlations across variables. The goal is to better understand potential root causes of persistent challenges, identify early indicators of risk, and formulate sharper, more targeted research questions. In support of this shift, 2024 marked the introduction of more advanced analytical methods, laying the groundwork for a new phase of data-driven learning and strategic decision-making.

Advancing Data Integration and Predictive Analysis

In 2024, BWJ took a step forward in its data analysis capabilities by integrating two of its most critical yet previously siloed datasets: factory-level compliance assessment data and survey data collected from workers. While these two data sources have long been pillars of BWJ's monitoring and learning work, they were traditionally analysed in isolation, limiting the ability to identify underlying patterns or correlations that might indicate systemic risks.

For the first time, BWJ merged a cross-section of these datasets for the year 2024, enabling a more holistic view of working conditions and laying the groundwork for a predictive, data-driven approach to factory oversight. While the panel nature of both datasets was not yet fully leveraged in this initial analysis, future rounds will build on this work to exploit the longitudinal potential of the data.

The integrated analysis employed a sequence of complementary quantitative methods: exploratory correlation analysis and machine learning algorithms were used for pattern detection, followed by multivariate regression models to confirm and interpret key relationships. This multi-step methodology allowed the team to go beyond surface-level compliance scores and isolated survey indicators, identifying deeper, often hidden, predictors of poor workplace conditions.

By analysing more than 250 variables across both datasets, BWJ aimed to:

- Improve analytical accuracy by cross-referencing individual-level and factory-level data to generate deeper insights.
- Uncover structural and relational patterns that influence workers' perceptions and experiences.
- Identify leading indicators of risk that can inform the design of an early warning system to flag high-risk factories and areas, enabling BWJ to proactively address potential crises before they escalate.

This deeper analysis focused on issues such as **verbal abuse, sexual harassment, OSH, working hours, stress and mental health, grievance systems, and social dialogue**. Preliminary findings are summarised below.

Verbal abuse: Concerns about verbal abuse tend to cluster with broader concerns around physical safety, financial insecurity, and overwork. This suggests that verbal abuse may be one manifestation of a wider set of poor working conditions and possibly a dysfunctional workplace culture. Notably, after controlling for other variables in the regression model, Jordanian nationality was no longer a significant predictor, implying that nationality-based differences observed in the descriptive statistics are likely attributable to demographic or factory-level factors rather than nationality alone.

Sexual harassment: Younger, Jordanian workers were more likely to express concerns about sexual harassment. Being a member of an OSH committee was found to be a statistically significant predictor of reporting concerns about sexual harassment, possibly reflecting greater awareness or willingness to speak up. A strong positive correlation between concerns around verbal abuse and sexual harassment suggests overlapping root causes, such as dysfunctional workplace environment. Furthermore, the presence of gender pay discrimination, as identified through factory assessments,

was also a significant predictor, suggesting that concerns about harassment are prevalent in environments where structural indicators of gender inequality (i.e. unequal pay) are present.

OSH: OSH-related concerns were often linked to broader anxieties about workplace mistreatment, indicating that workers perceive safety risks as part of a larger set of poor working conditions. Indian workers were more likely to report OSH concerns. Interestingly, factories with higher promotion rates saw lower levels of OSH-related concerns, pointing to a possible connection between upward mobility and perceptions of safety.

Working hours and overtime: Concerns about overtime were more common among men, non-Indian workers, and those with higher education, likely reflecting different levels of awareness, expectations, or willingness to report. The link with education suggests that more educated workers may be better informed about their rights or hold different views on job autonomy. As with other indicators, this outcome appears driven more by individual characteristics than by factory-level practices, pointing to the need for further qualitative research into gaps in empowerment or access to redress.

Fatigue: Concerns about exhaustion from working hours were closely intertwined with economic insecurity, unpredictable work schedules, and production pressure. Interestingly, younger workers expressed greater concern than older ones, possibly because they are less experienced or productive and thus face higher expectations. Employers may also place greater pressure on younger workers, viewing them as more resilient or less likely to resist. Overall, exhaustion appears less about long hours alone and more about the broader context of job insecurity and performance demands, conditions that may be particularly acute for women and younger workers.

Workplace stress: Psychological well-being was strongly correlated with workers' perceptions of acceptable stress levels. Women were more likely to suffer from workplace stress, possibly reflecting gendered differences in workload, exposure to risk, or access to support. Trust between workers and management also emerged as a major determinant of stress level, reinforcing the broader insight that workplace culture plays a central role in shaping workers' well-being.

Mental health: Workers' perception of support from supervisors and trust in management were predictors of mental health outcomes. These findings highlight the importance of vertical workplace relationships in promoting mental well-being. Moreover, the positive association with location in the Dulayl industrial zone is notable and may reflect distinct management practices, working conditions, or community-level factors in that zone that merit further investigation. Given the attitudinal nature of these drivers, additional qualitative research is recommended to better understand how trust and support are cultivated in higher-performing factories.

Grievance channels: Perceptions of grievance system effectiveness were shaped by overall well-being and the alignment between job expectations and reality. This may reflect an attitudinal spillover, where workers' overall satisfaction influences their perceptions of specific workplace mechanisms, regardless of their actual performance or accessibility. Notably, union members were more likely to express satisfaction with grievance systems, potentially due to greater awareness, stronger support networks, or better familiarity with formal procedures.

Social dialogue: Workers' perceptions of factory-level social dialogue were strongly associated with broader indicators of the quality of industrial relations within the factory. Importantly, these perceptions are not mirrored in the objective assessment data, suggesting a potential disconnect between factory-level compliance indicators and individual-level experiences. This divergence raises important questions about the scale and nature of worker experiences: it is possible that perceptions of institutional effectiveness are shaped more by individual interactions and informal processes than by formal factory-wide practices as captured in assessments. Further qualitative research is needed to explore how trust in factory-level ULC is developed (or undermined) through daily workplace dynamics and social networks.

Toward a Proactive, Risk-Based Monitoring Approach

The findings from this integrated analysis mark a major step toward a more strategic use of data in improving workplace conditions. By analysing survey and compliance data in combination, the programme can identify patterns and correlations that normally remain obscured when the datasets are viewed in isolation. This analysis not only revealed how multiple concerns (e.g. verbal abuse, harassment, OSH risks) often cluster within the same environments, but it also shed light on key determinants of worker wellbeing, such as trust in management and relational dynamics.

Importantly, this approach is not an endpoint, but a starting point. As an exploratory and diagnostic exercise, this analysis can serve multiple purposes. For example, it helps identify potential early warning signs of poor workplace conditions, laying the groundwork for a more predictive, risk-based monitoring system that can flag high-risk factories and environments before problems escalate. Second, it helps generate sharper and more targeted research questions, especially around the root causes of workers' perceptions, behaviours, and experiences, which could be better unpacked through complementary qualitative studies.

In this sense, the analysis opens up new possibilities for both learning and action. It marks a shift from retrospective compliance checks to forward-looking risk detection. Importantly, this approach aligns well with international human rights due diligence principles, which call for proactive risk identification and the meaningful inclusion of workers' voices. If sustained and scaled, this approach can help the wider sector – respond more strategically to evolving risks.

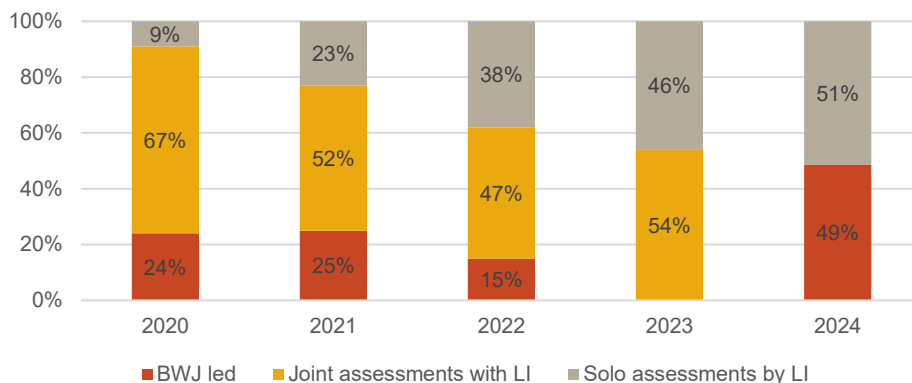
Annexes

Annex A. Methodology and Data Limitation

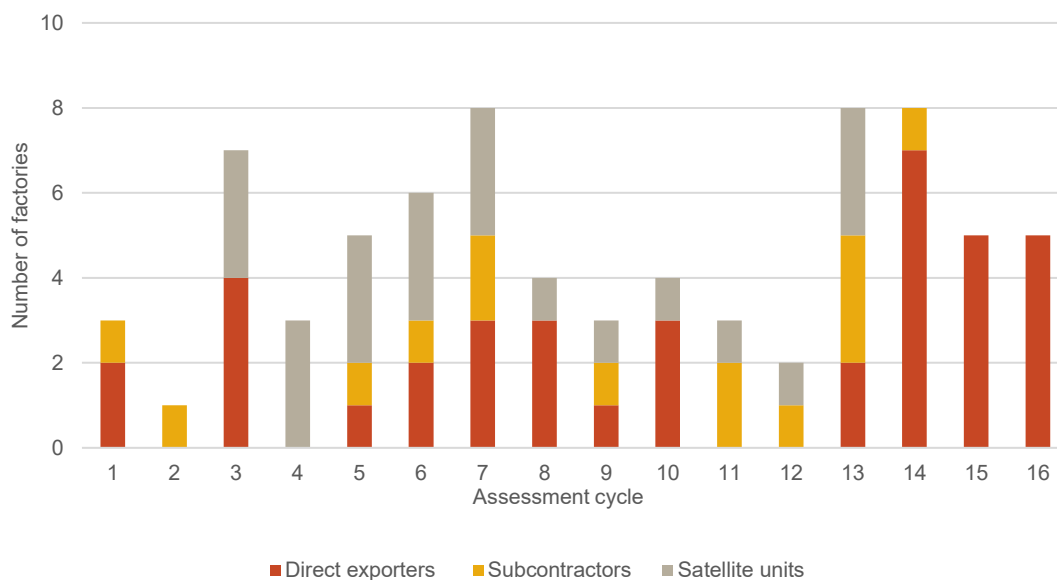
This BWJ Annual Report focuses on non-compliance data to summarise working conditions in garment factories in the previous year. This report also includes findings and takeaways on the working conditions in the Jordanian garment sector that are broader than the non-compliance data and include observations from field visits throughout the year, interactions with factories, and responses from the BWJ annual worker, supervisor, and manager surveys.

Better Work's enterprise assessment – a two-day unannounced onsite visit – is a key component of the programme's core services. During this assessment, factories are marked as non-compliant if the assessment team finds that they do not adhere to specific components of Jordanian national labour law or core international labour standards. The compliance data is divided into eight clusters: five designated as core labour standards (assessed against international labour standards) and three falling under working conditions (assessed according to national law and regulations).^{vii} While individual assessment reports allow Better Work, the factory, and buyers to identify and understand non-compliance in factories, the annual report presents an opportunity to analyse sectoral trends and put them in context.

This report covers assessment findings from 76 factories, which had undergone BWJ's assessment between January 2024 and January 2025. All assessments were conducted jointly between BWJ, the Ministry of Labour and the Social Security Corporation. BWJ works to systematically transfer factory assessment delivery to the Ministry of Labour and the Social Security Corporation. Since the end of 2019, all assessments have been conducted with Labour Inspectorate presence. Over the past years, labour inspectors have taken an increasingly larger role in assessments, with 51 per cent of assessments were carried out solely by labour inspectors in 2024 (see **Figure 12**). Meanwhile, BWJ continued to play a key role in quality assurance and quality control. In 2024, the programme led all assessments of direct exporting factories to ensure that assessment standards were consistently upheld.

Figure 12. *Distribution of assessments by assessor type.*

The factories with assessments in this report fall into three types – 38 direct exporters, 14 subcontractors and 23 satellite units. Three factories in the sample completed Cycle 1 of the Better Work model and the average was Cycle 9 (see **Figure 13**). Overall, the compliance data in this report covers 76 (of 86) garment factories and 95 per cent of workers currently participating in the programme.

Figure 13: *Distribution of Factories per Cycle and Type in Annual Report 2025*

In addition to the non-compliance data, this report draws on data from the following sources:

- **Representative survey of workers** in BWJ participating factories in July 2024. This survey aggregates perspectives from over 1,600 workers across 78 factories. The July data collection was the seventh collection using the same survey instrument since 2019.
- **Survey of line supervisors** conducted in conjunction with the worker survey. A total of 440 supervisors completed the 2023 supervisors' survey.
- **Survey of managers** conducted in conjunction with the aforementioned surveys. One manager from each of the 78 factories completed the survey in 2024.
- **Data gathered by advisors over the course of advisory visits.** The advisory log has rich information, such as the number of visits and the topics discussed.
- And finally, **team observations from factory visits** and conversations with tripartite stakeholders and buyers.

Calculating Non-Compliance: Better Work calculates non-compliance rates for each factory and reports them in individual factory reports. The non-compliance rate is reported for each compliance point (CP), and a CP is reported as non-compliant if one or more of its questions show evidence of non-compliance. In public annual reports, Better Work uses the average compliance rates across all participating factories within the reporting period. For instance, an average non-compliance rate of 100 per cent under a question indicates that all participating factories had violations in that area.

Limitations of Better Work Assessment: Detailed factory assessment reports are based solely on what is observed, investigated and analysed during assessment visits. Before the reports become official, factories are given five working days to provide feedback and clarifications, which in some cases impacts the language in the final report. Certain issues remain difficult to assess and verify independently. The low literacy level of a large percentage of workers can affect the integrity of documentation related to workers' consent for overtime work, storing personal documents, disciplinary procedures, and employment rights. To overcome such limitations, information provided by workers and management is crosschecked through representative interview samples and various documents maintained at the factory.

Limitations of Better Work Jordan Assessments: In the context of Jordan, limitations in the assessment process can also arise when monitoring issues specific to migrant workers. It is beyond the scope of the programme to thoroughly investigate contracting procedures in the workers' country of origin. Age verification for migrant workers can be challenging as birth dates in national passports, the primary document available to verify workers' age, can be falsified with fake birth certificates.

Detecting violations of workers' entitlements upon termination of their contract has been difficult, especially in cases where no proper documentation is maintained to indicate the amount paid to workers. Furthermore, in some cases where the paperwork may show that the worker received all their entitlements, whether the worker had actually received the stated amount cannot be verified once the worker has left the country. Unlawful terminations are also difficult to justify through multiple sources and are usually dependent on cross-checking workers' statements following incidents such as work stoppages or strikes. In such cases, the management may maintain

paperwork to show that the worker had wilfully resigned or may not maintain any termination-related documents at all.

Assessing compliance with FoA in Jordan has been challenging for Better Work Jordan for several reasons. The existing Jordanian Labour Law does not adequately protect freedom of association, and the single union structure prevents workers from forming a labour union of their choice. Factories de facto become non-compliant on questions related to freedom of association. Better Work Jordan continues to monitor other aspects of union operations, including union access to factories and facilities, anti-union discrimination, compliance with the sector-wide CBA, and strikes at the enterprise level. At the same time, the trade union for the Jordanian apparel sector does not fully represent the majority migrant workforce. The union also has limited capacity in adequately communicating with the migrant workforce due to language barriers.

Limitations of Calculating Non-Compliance: The binary ‘yes or no’ structure of the answers to compliance limits the ability of Better Work to numerically present the severity of non-compliance and is not conducive to capturing the ‘levels of non-compliance’. For example, a factory may significantly improve in a particular area but may still not qualify as compliant. While an aggregate and strict indicator, the non-compliance rate is useful for Better Work to compare data across countries and have a general idea of areas of non-compliance in the industry. It is often beyond the capacity of such numbers to fully capture the specific issues observed during factory assessments. Accordingly, it is important to examine the Clusters and CPs in further detail to create a more comprehensive understanding of the industry and the overall non-compliance rates, and to understand the specific reasons for violations (as presented).

Annex B.

Garment factories covered in this report

Al Areen wear Ltd.	Haifa Apparel
Al Hanan for Cloth Mfg. Est.	Hi-Tech Textile L.L.C – Orjan Branch
AL Masera Textile	Hi-Tech Textile L.L.C.
Al Mohandes Company for Manufacture Ready Made Garments	Indo Jordan Clothing LLC
Al Mustamerah for Tex	International Elegance Garment Mfg. Co. Ltd.
Ark Garments Manufacturing Industries Company LTD	Ivory Garments Factory L.L.C.
Atateks Foreign Trade Ltd.	Ivory Garments Factory L.L.C. (Satellite)
Atlanta Garment Mfg. Co. Ltd. (Unit 2) - Satellite	Jerash Garments and Fashions Manufacturing Co. Ltd (Al – Hasa Unit)
BIA Textiles	Jerash Garments and Fashions Mfg. Co. Ltd (Unit 2)
Cady Garments Company	Jerash Garments and Fashions Mfg. Co. Ltd. (Unit 1 & 3)
Casual Wear Apparel - Satellite (Sama Al Sarhan)	Jerash Garments and Fashions Mfg. Co. Ltd. (Unit 4)
Casual Wear Apparel L.L.C.	Kanzen Sewing Industries Company L.L.C
Century Miracle Apparel mfg. Co. Ltd.	MAS AL SAFI Apparel Manufacturing LLC – MAS KREEDA Al Safi Dulayl
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co - Satellite Unit Aljunaid	MAS AL SAFI Apparel Manufacturing LLC – MAS KREEDA Al Safi Madaba
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. - Printing	MAS AL SAFI Apparel Manufacturing LLC – MAS KREEDA Al Safi Sahab
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. - Satellite Unit Al Azmaliah	Mustafa & Kamal Ashraf Trading (Jordan) Garment Ltd.
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. - Satellite Unit Bussairah	Needle Craft (Al Mafrag – Sarhan)
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 01)	Needle Craft for Clothing Industry
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 11)	New Century For The Clothing Industry Co.
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 12)	Noor Seen Apparel
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 3 / Laundry)	Peace Gate Garment
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co. (Unit 8)	Pine Tree Co. for textile Mfg. P.S.C (TWJ)
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd Co.(Unit 4 / Embroidery & Laser Cutting, Sampling Unit & 2)	Premium Clothing Industry LLC
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co – Satellite Unit Al Tafilah	Prestige Apparel Mfg. Ltd. Co.
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. - Satellite Unit Ajloun	Rainbow Textile L.L.C.
Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. - Satellite Unit Fagua	Samad Wear Manufacturing Company Ltd

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. -
Satellite Unit Moab

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. (Unit
10)

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. (Unit 2)

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. (Unit 6)

Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Ltd. Co. (Unit 7)

El Zay Ready Wear Mfg. Co.

Elegant ProSports Fashion Co., Ltd

Fashion Curve Mfg. Apparel Co.

Fine Apparel Ltd.

Friends Apparels L.L.C

Galaxy Apparel Industry

GIA Apparels Industry

Sana Garment Co. (Irbid City)

Sana Garments Co.

Saysaban Textile Factory

Sidney Apparels LLC.

Southern Garment Mfg. Co. Ltd.

Straight Line for Apparel Co.

Tusker Apparel Ltd. Co.

Tusker Apparel Ltd. Co. Satellite (Jerash)

Tusker Apparel Ltd. Co. Satellite (Rusaifa)

United Creations L.L.C.

United Creations L.L.C. (Satellite Al Azraq)

Victorious Apparels Mfg. Co. Ltd.

Annex C.**List of participating buyers**

Abercrombie & Fitch

Adidas

American Eagle Outfitters, Inc.

Ascena Retail Group Inc.

Columbia Sportswear

DICK's Sporting Goods Ltd.

Disney Worldwide Services

GAP Inc

G-III Apparel Group

Gymshark Ltd

J.Crew

Knitwell Group (Ascena)

Li & Fung (Trading) Limited

New Balance Athletics, Inc.

Newtimes Development Ltd

NIKE, Inc

PVH Corp

Target Corporation

Under Armour, Inc.

VF Corporation

Endnotes

ⁱ Better Work Jordan, “[Working Hours and Wages in the Jordanian Garment Sector: Legal Context and Historical Trends](#)”, October 2022.

ⁱⁱ Better Work Jordan, “BWJ: Worker, Supervisor and Manager Survey Results,” November 2023.

ⁱⁱⁱ Better Work Jordan assessment data

^{iv} For more information, see International Labour Standards on equality of opportunity and treatment, ILO.

^v To access the Transparency Portal, visit: <https://portal.betterwork.org/transparency/compliance>.

^{vi} TAMKEEN, “[The Nature of Work in Qualified Industrial Zone Factories Operating under Subcontracting Systems, Small Sewing Workshops, and the Rights of Workers](#)”, November 2024.

^{vii} OSH was declared a fundamental principle and right at work in 2022. Starting in 2024, BWJ started to assess OSH cluster against the international labour standard (ILO Convention 155).



International
Labour
Organization



IFC

International
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WORLD BANK GROUP

Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities