

Gender Equality and Returns (GEAR)

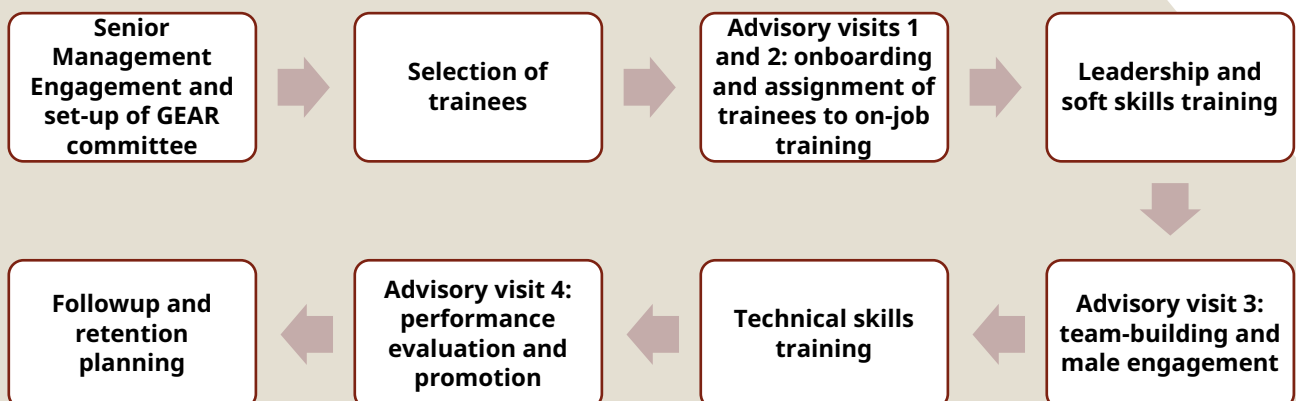
Advancing Leadership, Gender Equality and Productivity

The Gender Equality and Returns (GEAR) initiative aims to equip women with skills and a supportive environment, promote career progression, and integrate gender equality in the supply chain. GEAR enhances factory management's knowledge of selecting, supporting, and retaining female talents. Additionally, it improves working conditions, promotes equal opportunities, and empowers women in leadership, social, and economic aspects at both household and enterprise levels. Gender Equality and Returns (GEAR) is a special joint initiative of ILO Better Work the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Specific objectives



Key interventions



Where is GEAR implemented

Even though supervisory skills training is part of Better Work's standard capacity-building offer to factories in all Country Programmes, and it is often gender-targeted and adapted to women-only cohorts, the more holistic GEAR programme is currently implemented in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, Jordan and Madagascar.

'Standard' and 'Advanced' GEAR

GEAR was first piloted in 2016 with the objective of building skills and capacities of women employed as machine operators to be promoted as supervisors. However, in many contexts over the years the need emerged to continue investing on the same cohorts of graduates to advance even further. Pilot programmes were launched in 2024 to coach and promote female supervisors to become line chiefs and above.



Progress and impact from Bangladesh

Trained	Promoted	Efficiency improved	Defects reduced	Absenteeism reduced	Salary Increased
799	528	5%	6%	16%	39%

- Implemented in 101 factories

If you want to know more about our GEAR programme and where it is available, please reach out at BETTERWORK@ilo.org

