

SLCP and ILO-Better Work Shared FAQs: 2021 Operations

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Section 1: General FAQs - Launch of SLCP in Better Work countries

1. How do Better Work and SLCP engage?

Better Work and SLCP's have found common ground in promoting credible and actionable data to be shared between a broad range of industry actors. Better Work and SLCP have collaborated on the development of the Tool v1.4, the Law Overlay and introduction of the Tool (v1.4 and future versions) in Better Work countries.

As an ILO programme, Better Work cannot be a signatory to SLCP. As such, Better Work engages with SLCP in the development and use of the Tool (Step 1) without being bound to its protocols or to mirroring SLCP roles for verifier bodies, accredited hosts and verification oversight organisations.

2. When will the SLCP Converged Assessment Framework (CAF) become available in Better Work countries? Which countries will be included in the 2021 launch?

Throughout 2020, ILO-Better Work and SLCP collaborated to review and update Step 1 of the Tool under the Converged Assessment Framework (CAF) v1.4. As a result of this process, and after approval from their constituents, Better Work uses the Step 1 of the SLCP Data Collection Tool, which captures data from the Better Work Compliance Assessment Tool (agreed with national constituents in each Better Work country) and includes essential data points to determine compliance with national laws and international labor standards. It is possible for facilities to share their data from a Better Work assessment through the SLCP Gateway to share with business partners on other platforms.

In Better Work countries, the SLCP Converged Assessment Framework (CAF v1.4) has been launched with a 'Law Overlay' developed with Better Work, following national constituents (government, employers and workers) signing off on the Tool. As agreed with SLCP, brands will not introduce CAF v1.4 in Better Work enrolled factories until the tool is formally approved by constituents in that country. In 2021 the Better Work platform has been enhanced to enable factories to initiate data sharing via SLCP and to allow for the SLCP self-assessment to populate the Better Work online platform. Data sharing is currently possible in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam for Better Work enrolled factories wishing to do so. In these countries, the CAF v1.4 is available for implementation in all factories in the country, including non-Better Work-registered facilities.

Better Work will continue to work with SLCP to bring Step 1 of the Data Collection Tool (under CAF) into full alignment with the data sharing needs agreed upon with national constituents. This will include reducing questions in Step 1 and including data points related to social dialogue, management systems and other compliance areas. The updates will be incorporated in v1.5 of the Tool (launch 2022 TBD). These revisions will also be based on constituent feedback upon review of the data collected through the Tool.

Once the CAF is launched and available in a Better Work country, Step 1 includes a Law Overlay, which is a guide containing information on core international labor standards,

national laws and ILO norms, to support compliance determinations in each particular country.

Both Better Work and non-Better Work facilities have access to the national Law Overlay, which is also available via SLCP's Accredited Hosts.

SLCP launched the CAF v1.4 in all of the non-Better Work countries where the CAF v1.3 was available at the end of March 2021. For a list of countries where SLCP is active and further information, see the [SLCP Gateway](#).

Better Work will review learnings from roll-out in the first three countries before making a final decision on rollout in new countries.

3. When will the SLCP Converged Assessment Framework v1.4 become available in non-Better Work countries?

SLCP has launched the CAF v1.4 in all of the non-Better Work countries where the CAF v1.3 was available at the end of March 2021. At the same time, SLCP launched operations in approximately twenty additional countries. For a list of countries where SLCP is active and further information, see the [SLCP Gateway](#).

4. What is the overlay and when will it be available for SLCP assessments in non-Better Work countries?

To promote credible and actionable data to be shared between a broad range of industry actors, Better Work and SLCP have collaborated on the development of Step 1 of CAF v1.4, including a Law Overlay to support compliance determination with national laws and international labour standards. Better Work will support the development of overlays for other countries where Better Work has a programme. Better Work will explore with the ILO how to support overlay development for non-Better Work countries in the next iteration of Step 1 of the Tool.

The Law Overlay raises awareness of applicable legal requirements for the facility and enhances the quality of the final verified assessment report by ensuring that laws and labour standards are consistently applied and that areas of non-compliance are captured. The Law Overlay information has been provided by Better Work for the following countries for Step 1 only (also accessible offline):

- Bangladesh
- Indonesia
- Vietnam

The Law Overlay is used in the Better Work assessment process, but also available on Accredited Host platforms (i.e., Higg, FFC). More information on how the Law Overlay works on each Accredited Host platform can be found at FFC and Higg.

Once Step 1 of the Tool (under CAF) is optimized through this initial implementation period, Better Work anticipates it will be more manageable to support updates and scaling of the Tool to other Better Work countries. At that point, the ILO may be in a position to support

development of Law Overlays in non-Better Work countries, on the condition that such a future version of the Tool (v1.5/v1.6) reflects its needs in relation to laws, ILS and social dialogue data.

5. How can a facility in a Better Work country complete their assessment and share its data through SLCP?

Participation in the SLCP will depend on which category a facility falls into:

- **Facilities that are enrolled in the Better Work program:** can complete a Better Work assessment and share their data through the SLCP Gateway. Section 2 of these FAQs apply to facilities in this category.
- **Facilities that are not enrolled in the Better Work program:** can follow the standard SLCP assessment process explained on the [SLCP Helpdesk](#) and share data with the Gateway consequently.

Factories wishing to enroll in Better Work for the purposes of data sharing via SLCP will be able to do so according to the agreed rollout schedule in each Better Work country. In such cases they should contact the relevant Better Work country programme.

6. Can non-Better Work facilities share their SLCP-verified assessment data to the Better Work program?

This is not possible at this point. Only assessments conducted by Better Work are available on the Better Work platform. Facilities have the option to share this assessment data with SLCP Accredited Hosts via the Gateway. If a future version of the Tool reflects ILO and constituent requirements—in relation to law, social dialogue and management systems data-- Better Work will assess if it can accept data from SLCP approved Verifiers.

7. Will other SLCP-approved Verifiers operate in Better Work factories and countries?

SLCP-approved Verifiers will not operate in Better Work factories. The Better Work assessment replaces any other verification at the facility. SLCP is approving other organizations as Verifier Bodies in Better Work countries, in order to cover factories not enrolled in Better Work. Factories located in countries/regions where Better Work is active are strongly recommended to contact Better Work to determine if they can be enrolled.

Please see below table for further information.

1. Is the factory enrolled in Better Work?	2. Is the factory in Better Work scope and can it be enrolled subject to country programme capacity?	Based on 1+2, the Assessment will be done by	Note

Yes	Yes	Better Work	
No	Yes	Better Work	Factory to register with Better Work in next cycle. Better Work will register factories based on capacity and eligibility criteria. In case Better Work cannot take factories they can obtain verification via an SLCP Verifier Body.
No	No	Verifier Body	

Section 2: FAQs for facilities that are enrolled in the Better Work program and would like to share their Better Work assessment data via the SLCP Gateway

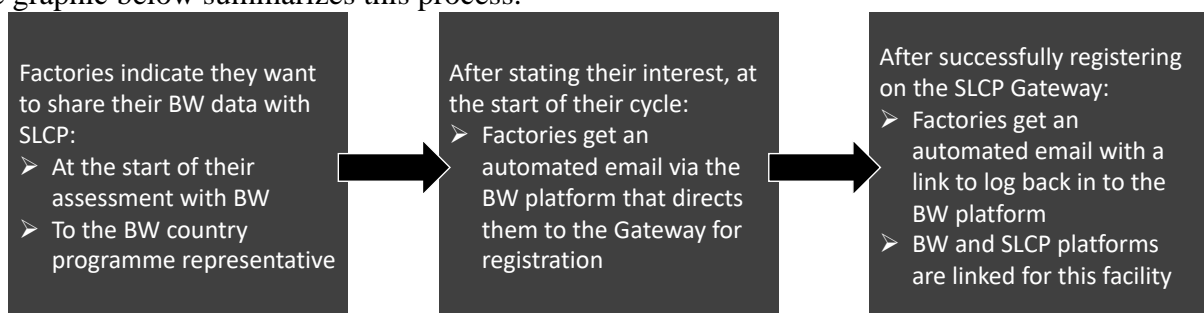
8. How does a facility register with both SLCP and Better Work?

Factories wishing to enroll in Better Work should contact the relevant Better Work country programme. Better Work is progressively introducing data sharing based on v1.4 in Indonesia, Bangladesh and Vietnam for facilities that are already registered in the Better Work programme and which have requested that their assessment data is shared via SLCP. Instructions for factories that would like to share their Better Work assessment data via the SLCP Gateway are available [here](#).

9. What does the Gateway registration process look like for Better Work factories?

Better Work enrolled factories that are interested in sharing their assessment data via SLCP must proactively inform Better Work that they would like to do so. The Better Work country programme factory registration focal point will then set up the factory registration accordingly on the Better Work platform.

The graphic below summarizes this process.



After registration on the new Better Work platform, factories that indicated they want to share their Better Work data will receive an automated message from the Better Work platform. The message will include a link that will redirect them to the Gateway registration

page. These factories can register and submit their Facility Profile for approval by SLCP.

Find tips on how to complete your facility profile [here](#).

Once approved by SLCP, the factory will receive a Gateway Facility ID followed by an email with instructions and a link to access the Better Work platform and log in. A connection will then be established between the Better Work platform and the SLCP Gateway. Find more information [here](#).

Important: Better Work enrolled factories that want to communicate their interest in sharing data via SLCP must reach out to their Better Work country programme **before** their assessment takes place.

Note that Better Work factories will follow their current service plan, so it will take 12 months until Better Work has registered all enrolled factories that are interested in data sharing via SLCP.

10. What if a facility already has an SLCP Gateway profile and becomes a new Better Work factory? How does the linking between Better Work and the Gateway occur when the facility already has a Gateway profile?

The facility must first register with Better Work and create an account on the Better Work platform. The facility will then need to contact the Better Work country programme, provide their Gateway ID and request that their existing SLCP Gateway profile be linked to their new Better Work platform account. Better Work will then manually add their SLCP facility Gateway ID in its the system to support data sharing.

11. How can Better Work factories share data from the Better Work assessment with other business partners via SLCP?

If a factory wants to share data from the Better Work assessment, it must link with the Gateway on the Better Work platform and complete the SLCP self-assessment on the Better Work platform before the unannounced Better Work assessment takes place. Once the factory has created its profile on the Gateway and their unannounced assessment has been completed, Better Work enrolled factories can share the data with their business partners through the standard Gateway mechanisms:

- Directly share a link via email from the Gateway
- Share to an Accredited Host

12. How can a buying brand encourage a Better Work factory to share their assessment data via SLCP?

Brands can encourage their suppliers by contacting the facilities and requesting that they inform Better Work that they would like to share their data via the SLCP Gateway. Facilities need to do this prior to the start of the next Better Work services cycle.

13. What if a Better Work factory wants to complete a Higg vFSLM?

Better Work factories are required to complete their assessment through Better Work. At the end of the Better Work assessment process, Better Work enrolled factories can share assessment data with the Gateway and from there share it with Higg. The data will automatically complete the vFSLM.

14. Does the facility have to pay to register with both SLCP and Better Work?

Factories continue to pay for their regular factory service from Better Work. There is no fee for facilities to register in the SLCP Gateway. Some SLCP Accredited Hosts may charge a fee to facilities who wish to share a verified assessment on their platform.

15. What will the assessment process look like for Better Work facilities that wish to share data via the SLCP Gateway?

Better Work will continue to follow its existing assessment process, which guarantees the program's credibility and has been accepted by the ILO and national constituents.

After registering with both Better Work and SLCP Gateway, the facility can complete the SLCP self-assessment of Steps 1, 2 or 3 if their buyers request it. Better Work will encourage bipartite committees to contribute to completing SLCP self-assessments. Better Work will support the committees to build their capacity and, where possible, support on key questions related to OSH, social dialogue, industrial relations and grievance systems, and on ensuring worker perspectives are incorporated.

Better Work will conduct factory assessments to provide data regarding the Step 1 questions that the facility has used for their self-assessment. They will have access to the factory self-assessment response on Step 1 as a source of information during the assessment.

16. What type of data will be collected during the Better Work assessment and how will it differ from what has previously been collected during a Better Work assessment?

Better Work will continue to collect the same information and will keep its current process and approach intact. Step 1 of the SLCP Data Collection Tool covers all the areas (both compliance and basic information) covered in Better Work's existing Compliance Assessment Tool. At a technical level, changes have been made to Better Work's tool to support data sharing. Some questions have been worded slightly differently; some questions have been broken down into more granular data points for enhanced data usability by SLCP, partner brands, constituents and other actors. In this current version of the Tool, Better Work will collect some additional data in relation to national labor laws or social dialogue and management systems that are not yet accommodated in the SLCP Tool. This data will be available on Better Work advisory reports and will be mapped and included in the next iteration of the Tool.

17. Why does Better Work only assess SLCP's Step 1?

As an International Labour Organization (ILO) programme, the Better Work unannounced assessment assesses compliance with International Labour Standards, National Labour Laws

and other national/international instruments as agreed to with national constituents. Better Work therefore only assesses Step 1 and share assessment data for Step 1 of SLCP's CAF v1.4.0.

The data received for Step 1 of the CAF v.1.4.0 includes factory self-assessed data, in addition to data from a Better Work unannounced assessment of Step 1, which has been implemented in line with its assessment approach and protocols under the ILO.

Further information on the Better Work factory service model can be found on the Better Work [website](#).

18. How will the assessment be done in Better Work facilities using Tool v1.4?

Better Work follows its existing process and keeps its general service model intact. SLCP and Better Work have jointly concluded that Better Work's assessment process and quality assurance framework is at minimum on par with SLCP's verification protocol and oversight mechanism. In this context, the Better Work assessment data and SLCP verification data can be considered comparable, regardless of unique processes. While Better Work teams have visibility over the self-assessed data during the assessment, they conduct an independent assessment. Better Work does not verify self-assessments and does not act as a Verifier Body.

Better Work has not contributed to the content of Step 2 and Step 3, and does not assess against Steps 2 and 3 of CAF v1.4. For Steps 2 and 3, the Better Work system allows factory self-assessed data to be entered on the Better Work platform and transmitted to the SLCP Gateway (should the factory wish).

19. How can Better Work assessment data be accessed by Better Work and SLCP users?

Better Work continues to post assessment reports on the Better Work portal. If the facility wishes, Better Work facilitates submitting data from its assessment to the SLCP Gateway. Manufacturers participating in the SLCP can determine in the Gateway which Accredited Hosts and other SLCP users they would like to share the data with. While Better Work does not formally take the role of an Accredited Host, they have adapted their IT systems to support data sharing.

20. Reports submitted by Better Work contain “enhanced self-assessment data”, what does that mean?

The data received for Steps 2 and 3 is self-assessed facility data completed on the Better Work platform and transmitted to the SLCP Gateway. Better Work does not conduct an unannounced assessment of Steps 2 and 3.

SLCP considers the self-assessment data provided by Better Work factories as enhanced self-assessment data due to the close engagement between Better Work and the Better Work factory, and the regular interactions to facilitate social dialogue between workers and management.

In the Better Work service model, assessments are one point of engagement between Better Work and factories. Training and Advisory engagements take place throughout the year to facilitate social dialogue between workers and management on the bipartite committees, to support the bipartite committee to manage compliance and remediation and to support improvement of non-compliance issues.

Better Work supports bipartite committees by building their capacity and facilitating social dialogue between management and worker representatives, so they are able to jointly review, prioritize and manage improvement and remediation plans to address non-compliance issues.

While the use of self-assessments is not part of the assessment process prior to the assessment, Better Work encourages and facilitates the bipartite committee to take leadership in filling in the SLCP self-assessment so that it represents the joint views of workers and managers, with a focus on key questions on occupational safety and health, social dialogue, industrial relations and grievance systems.

Further information on the Better Work factory service model can be found at their [website](#).

21. How will assessment data from Better Work factories be protected (on both the Better Work platform and the SLCP Gateway)?

Better Work data is protected under Microsoft Azure cloud services managed by the United Nations International Computing Centre. Data that is shared with the SLCP Gateway is encrypted and can only be accessed by authenticated users. The SLCP CAF v1.4 Step 1 data is shared with the Gateway, operated by ITC under the same UN protection rules.

22. How will assessment data be used in the Better Work program?

All assessment data generated from Better Work factories continues to be used by Better Work to measure compliance, support research, encourage transparency on working conditions and inform national and global policy discussions and collective action. This will be done in collaboration with SLCP and ITC where relevant.

23. What is the Better Work Virtual Compliance Check (VCC)?

As an International Labour Organization (ILO) programme, Better Work assesses compliance with International Labour Standards, national labour laws and other national/international instruments as agreed to with national constituents. In places where Better Work cannot travel to factories for extended periods of time in context of the Covid-19-pandemic, Virtual Compliance Checks (VCCs) are utilised. VCC data collection is focused on a subset of questions from each compliance cluster, including national labour laws and International Labour Standards, issues subject to public reporting on Better Work's Transparency Portal, and Covid-19 related questions.

The self-assessment data in Step 1 outside the scope of the VCC and self-assessment data in Step 2 and Step 3 has neither been assessed nor verified by Better Work.

The data submitted by Better Work is not a verification of the factory's SLCP self-assessment. The data received by SLCP contains self-assessment data, in addition to data from a Better Work unannounced assessment of Step 1 collected through virtual means. SLCP considers Better Work VCC data as equivalent to SLCP verified data.

Following the assessment of Step 1 during a VCC, Better Work continues to provide advisory and training services to the factory to support remediation and continuous improvement through a process of social dialogue within a bipartite committee of workers and managers. Any new issues found in these engagements is shared with the bipartite committee and reflected on Better Work improvement plans through the online portal.