



▶ Better Work Jordan: Worker, Supervisor and Manager Survey Results

RESEARCH BRIEF

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International
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Organization



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BetterWork.

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► Introduction

Better Work is a partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Operating in 13 countries, the programme brings together all stakeholders to enhance labour standards, promote respect for labour rights in the global apparel and footwear industry, and make the sector more competitive.

Founded in 2008, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) is mandatory for all garment factories that export to the US under the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (USJFTA). The programme currently includes 96 participating factories, 86 of which are garment factories. These factories employ approximately 78,000 workers, accounting for 96 per cent of Jordan's garment workforce.¹ Over its 16 years of operation, BWJ has made significant progress in improving working conditions, strengthening industrial relations, and enhancing business competitiveness of Jordan's garment sector.

BWJ is currently in its fourth strategic phase (2022-2027), focusing on sustaining the positive impacts of the programme.² Through capacity building, stakeholders' collaboration, and policy engagement, the programme aims to empower national stakeholders to take a leading role in maintaining and improving working conditions in the garment industry. BWJ works closely with

tripartite partners: the Government, primarily with the Ministry of Labour (MoL); Employers, including factory management and sectoral representative bodies such as the Jordanian Garment, Accessories & Textile Exporters' Association (J-GATE) and the Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI); and Workers, including individual workers and the sole workers' representative body in the local garment sector – The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries (JTGCU, or the union). Additionally, BWJ partners with the US government, particularly the US Department of Labour (USDOL), to ensure that decent work and living conditional were the norm across the garment industry. The programme also collaborates with local NGOs to conduct research, provide legal aids to workers, and develop standardized grievance handling procedures for the sector.

Following an evidence-based decision-making approach, BWJ has continuously invested in data collection and research. This commitment provides insights into labour conditions, compliance, and strategic priorities, enabling the programme to monitor its progress, assess programme impacts, adjust interventions, and respond to emerging challenges. This is the sixth in a set of policy briefs derived from BWJ's annual survey of workers, supervisors and managers.³ It presents key findings and updated results from the surveys conducted in July and August 2024, highlighting changes over time.

1 Authors calculation based on BWJ's administrative data.

2 [Better Work Jordan Phase IV Strategy \(2022 – 2027\)](#), 7 July 2022.

3 Responses from previous survey rounds are summarized in a series of policy briefs, which can be found on the Better Work Jordan's website. These include: [Better Work Jordan: Worker Voice Survey Results \(Nov 2019\)](#), [Better Work Jordan: Worker and Manager Survey Results \(Jun 2020\)](#), [Better Work Jordan: Worker and Manager Survey Results \(Oct 2020\)](#), [Better Work Jordan: Worker, Supervisor and Manager Survey Results \(Oct 2021\)](#), and [Better Work Jordan: Worker, Supervisor, and Manager Survey Results \(Nov 2023\)](#).



► Emerging challenges in the sector

The year 2024 has been challenging for the Jordanian garment industry. Since the previous year, the sector has struggled with high production costs due to rising prices of raw materials. The outbreak of the regional conflicts and the disruption in supply chains – particularly those in the Red Sea region – further intensified this challenge, leading to longer delivery times and higher shipping costs.

The ongoing conflicts have also brought many uncertainties to the industry. On the ground, factories have reported workforce reduction and even closure, primarily because of fluctuating orders from buyers. During 2024, one of the largest garment factories shut down due to economic faltering, leaving nearly one thousand workers of different nationalities without wages or financial compensations for several months. The situation was eventually resolved through collective efforts of stakeholder both inside and outside of Jordan. This case is not unique; as the conflicts continue, several factories continue to face similar challenges. Although a few factories have seen workforce expansion, these developments highlight the vulnerability of the industry during turbulent times.

Better Work has observed that its reduced direct engagement within factories has coincided with an increase in reports of deteriorating workplace conditions. Serious concerns such

as forced labour, sexual harassment, and verbal abuse have gained renewed attention, including through international media coverage. On 1 April 2024, a British journalist published a report detailing alleged labour violations at one Jordanian garment factory, following a suicide of a Bangladeshi worker in November 2023. The report suggested that verbal abuse in the workplace may have contributed to the tragic incident.

► Methodology

Better Work Jordan launched its first large-scale, representative survey of workers in June 2019, and has since conducted six additional rounds. Each round of the survey has drawn on a new random sample of respondents, with slight adjustment to the questions over time. Starting with the second round, a survey of managers was introduced, and in 2021, supervisors were also added.

The workers' sample was stratified by the gender and nationality composition of each factory, while the supervisors' sample was stratified by gender and Jordanian or non-Jordanian status. Within each stratum, both workers and supervisors were then randomly selected. These surveys were self-administered through personal cell phones or tablets, with translations and audio recording in Arabic, Bengali, Hindi, Sinhalese and Nepalese. Additionally, one manager from each factory was nominated to complete the survey, which was provided in both English and Arabic.



Table 1 presents the timeline and sample size of these surveys over time. The most recent round, carried out between July and August 2024, collected data from 1,564 workers across 78

factories, representing approximately 2 percent of the workforce, along with one manager per factory and 440 supervisors.

Table 1. Survey sample size over time for workers, managers and supervisors

TIME FRAME	NUMBER OF WORKERS	NUMBER OF MANAGERS	NUMBER OF SUPERVISORS	% FEMALE WORKERS	% NON-JORDANIAN WORKERS
Jun-19	1,731	N.A.	N.A.	71%	69%
Dec-19	1,667	73	N.A.	74%	69%
Jul-20	1,757	72	N.A.	74%	71%
Jul-21	1,458	63	364	74%	69%
Jul-22	1,568	86	437	74%	68%
Jul-23	1,562	78	438	74%	68%
Jul-24	1,564	79	440	72%	68%



► Findings

This brief focuses on workers overall job satisfaction, mutual trust, workers' concerns, stress level at work, workers' mental well-being, workers' perspectives on grievance mechanisms, stakeholders' engagement, and business concerns.

Key findings include:

- Overall results indicate slight improvements compared to last year, though challenges persist. Large differences were observed in results between migrant workers and Jordanians, as well as among different migrant nationalities, although gender gaps were minimum.
- Verbal abuse and sexual harassment remain key areas of concern in 2024, with Jordanian workers more likely to report these concerns than migrant workers. A more thorough investigation is needed to understand the factors influencing these behaviours.
- There has been an overall improvement in workers' mental well-being survey results, particularly among migrant workers. Workers who had been at the factories for less than six months reported lower mental well-being compared to those with longer tenure, highlighting the necessity for robust on-boarding and orientation programmes.
- Garment workers have access to multiple channels to raise complaints and grievances; however, these mechanisms do not always address their concerns efficiently or fairly. Survey results indicate a gap in the effectiveness of the Union-Labour committee (ULC), highlighting the need to strengthen the capacities of committee members.
- While there has been some improvement in workers' awareness of union membership, overall understanding remains low, with many still unaware that membership is voluntary.
- Knowledge gaps in labour law persist, especially in subcontracting factories, signaling an ongoing need for orientation training and outreach.
- Regional conflicts and supply chain disruptions pose serious logistical and cost challenges, with transportation, labour, and material expenses cited as top concerns among managers.

► Worker job satisfaction

Workers were asked about whether they would recommend a friend or family member to work in a garment factory similar to their own. This question serves as an indirect measure of workers' job satisfaction and whether they think the job has improved their lives.

Overall, BWJ observed minimal fluctuations in responses to this question over time. In 2024, approximately two-thirds of workers said they would recommend their job to a friend or family member, with migrant workers more likely to indicate job satisfaction (**Figure 1a**). By nationality, Bangladeshi workers reported the highest satisfaction rate at around 73 per cent. In contrast, the highest dissatisfaction rate at 42 per cent was observed among Indian workers (**Figure 1b**). These findings closely mirror those from the previous year.



Figure 1a: Job satisfaction (2019-2024)

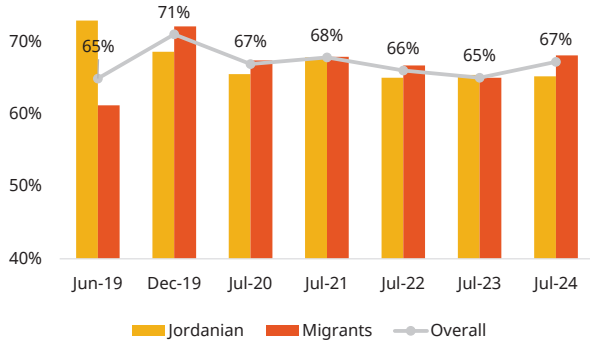
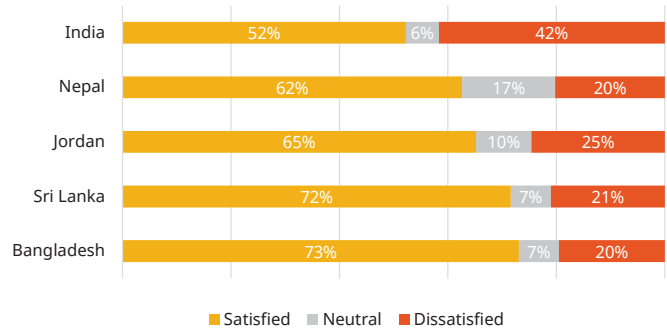


Figure 1b: Job satisfaction, by country (2024)

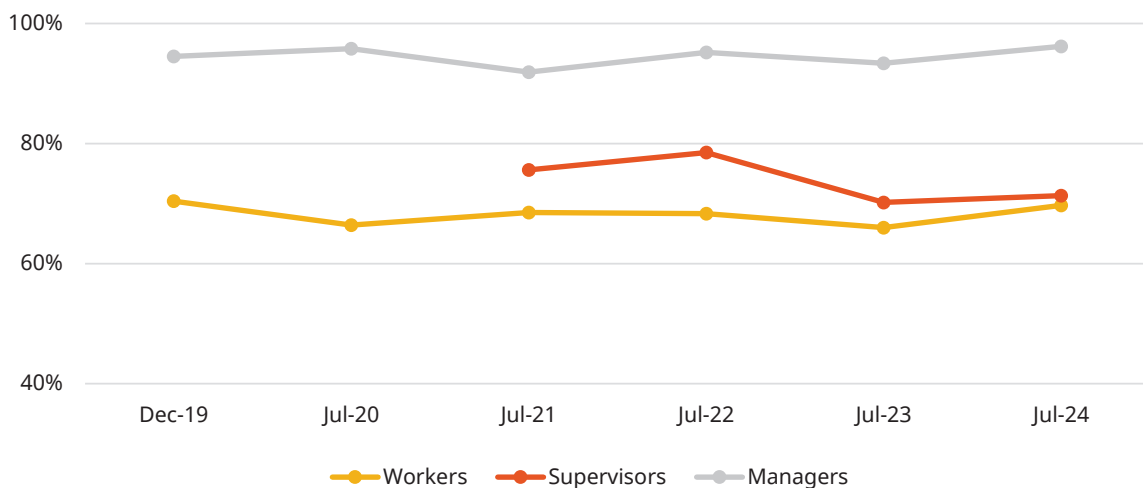


► Trust between workers and managers

Mutual trust between workers and managers is a cornerstone of factory success and lies at the core of BWJ’s approach to improving working conditions through open, effective social dialogues. However, trust must be earned and nurtured from both sides. To understand perceptions of mutual trust in the workplace, workers, supervisors, and managers were asked about their perceptions of mutual trust at the

workplace. The data revealed a significant gap: while 96 per cent of managers found mutual trust exists, only about 70 per cent of workers and supervisors shared the same view (Figure 2). Although both numbers are encouraging on their own, the difference in perspective highlights the need for continued efforts to bridge this trust gap.

Figure 2. There is mutual trust between workers and management in the factory (2019-2024)

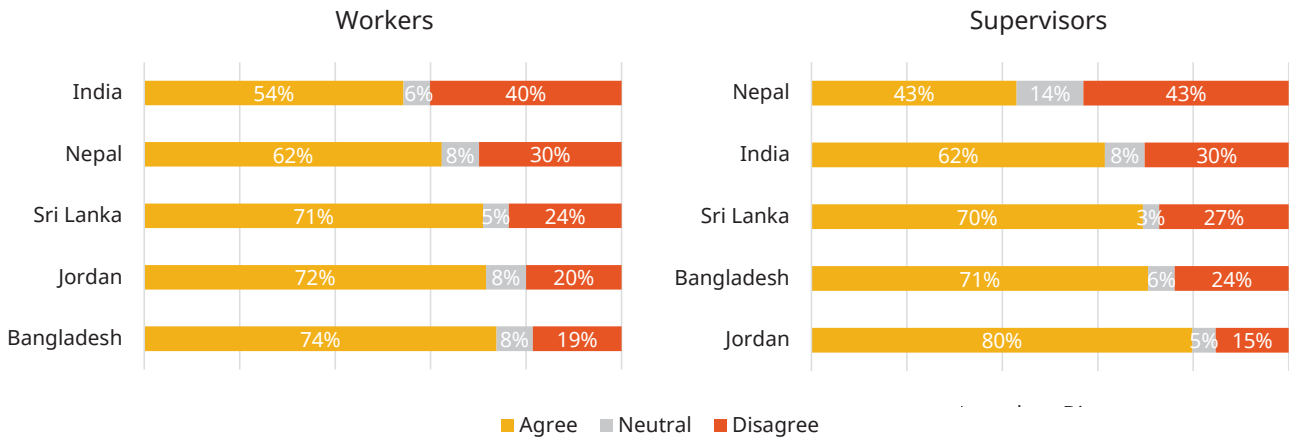


Looking more closely, the responses reveal clear differences across nationalities. Bangladeshi workers and Jordanian supervisors were the most likely to believe that there is mutual trust,

while those from India and Nepal were far less likely to perceive such trust (Figure 3). Within each nationality, there was minimum variation in responses by gender.



Figure 3. Do you think there is mutual trust between workers and managers in your factory (2024)



▶ Worker concerns

Workers were asked about the concerns that they and their co-workers had on several issues, such as pay, working hours, safety, verbal abuse, and sexual harassment. If workers indicated that they had a concern in a particular area, they were subsequently asked if they have taken actions to address this concern. These ‘actions’ ranged from discussion with co-workers or supervisors to more serious measures such as threatening to quit or going on strike.

Broadly speaking, the percentage of workers reporting concerns has decreased across all topics compared to previous years, reaching record lows (Figure 4a). Jordanian workers are generally more likely to report concerns than their migrant counterparts. Among specific topics, verbal abuse continues to be the most commonly reported concern among workers, cited by 29 per cent of workers. This is followed by concerns with pay (27 per cent), working time (22 per cent), sexual harassment (16 per cent), and workplace safety (13 per cent).

Figure 4a. Proportion of workers with concerns, by topic (2019-2024)

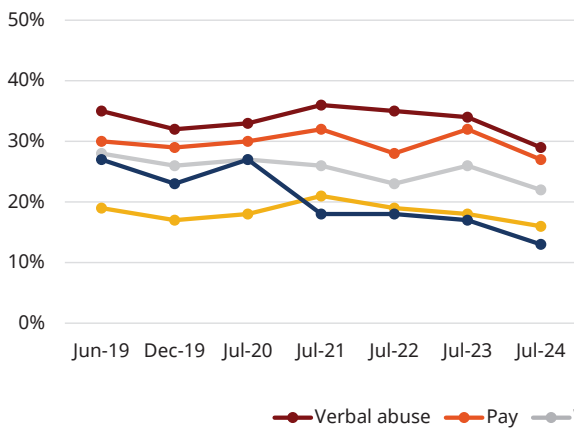
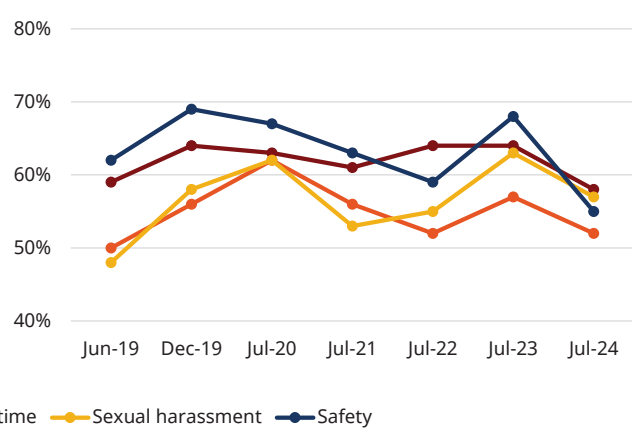


Figure 4b. Proportion of workers with concerns who took an action, by topic (2019-2024)



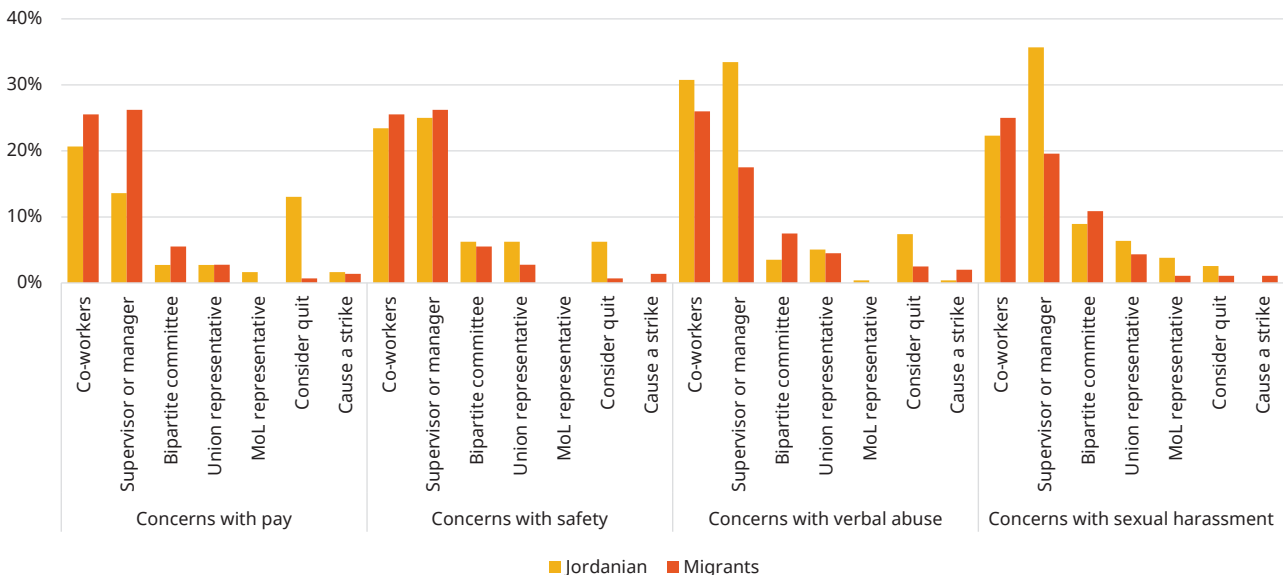


Most workers who reported concerns took some form of action in response; however, the overall percentage of workers taking actions in response on reported concerns declined for all issues in this survey round (Figure 4b). In terms of specific actions taken, workers were mostly likely to discuss their concerns with co-workers, or with their supervisors and managers. Workers were also more willing to bring concerns about sexual harassment to the bipartite committee (10 per cent) compared to other issues (around 5 per cent). At the same time, the percentage of workers indicating they would approach the union or the MoL remained very low, with fewer than 5 per cent mentioning the union and less than 2 per cent mentioning the MoL.

Workers' behavior in seeking action also varied

between Jordanians and migrant workers (Figure 5). Overall, Jordanian workers were more likely to take action when concerns arose, especially regarding verbal abuse and sexual harassment – Jordanians were notably more likely than migrant workers to raise these issues with their supervisors or managers compared. They were also more inclined to approach the union and the MoL. In contrast, migrant workers were more likely to address their concerns through bipartite committees. In a sign that the concerns were not being addressed, Jordanians were more likely to consider quitting their jobs. This suggests that Jordanians might have more alternative options, while migrant workers, who were tied to their current jobs in Jordan due to Kafala system, faced limited choices for supporting themselves, both in Jordan and in their home countries.

Figure 5. Proportion of workers who took an action in response to their concerns (2024)



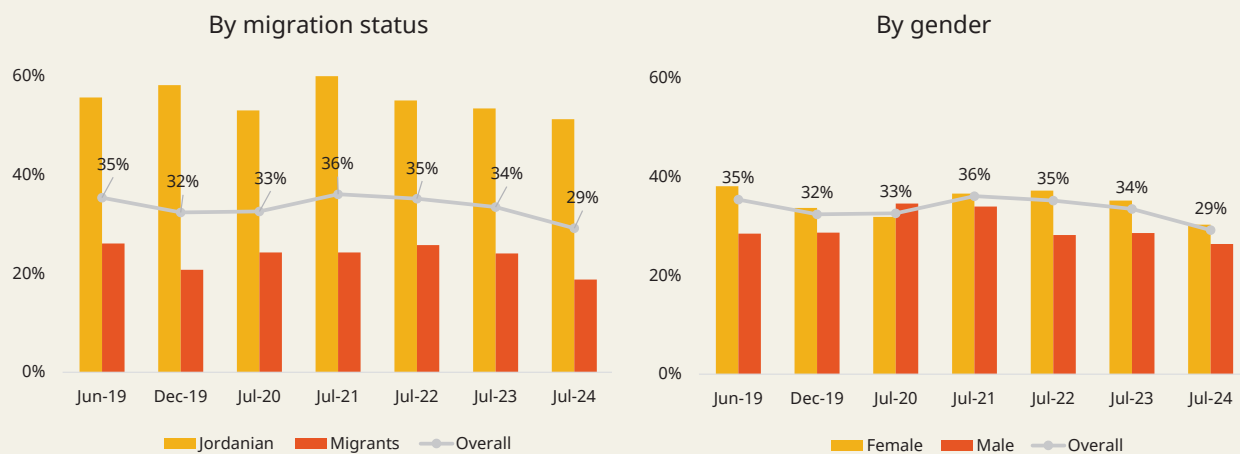


► In focus: Verbal abuse and harassment in the workplace

Verbal abuse is a persistent issue in the garment factories, especially on the production floors. In 2024, serious cases of verbal abuse emerged across the sector. **According to the BWJ's assessment data, by the end of September, 15 out of 49 assessed factories (31 per cent) were cited as non-compliant for verbal abuse – a significant increase from the previous year's 14 per cent.** In these factories, practices such as shouting, public scolding, inappropriate language, and demeaning comments were frequently reported. Supervisors usually do so when workers failed to meet production target or when they made mistakes. Workers also expressed reluctance to report these issues to HR, management, or the Union-Worker committee (UCL) because they are afraid of retaliation.

But BWJ's survey data indicated a slight decline in the proportion of workers reporting verbal abuse in 2024, dropping to just under 30 per cent, compared to 34 per cent in previous years. Jordanian workers were far more likely to report verbal abuse compared to migrant workers. Over the years, more than half Jordanians expressed their concerns, whereas less than one-quarter of migrant workers did the same (**Figure 6**). The apparent contradiction between survey results and reality may reflect workers' fear of retaliation, which discourages them from speaking up. Additionally, the survey captures perceptions, which can be influenced by factors like cultural differences in what workers consider abusive. For instance, migrant workers might have a higher tolerance for such behavior than Jordanian workers, who are generally more likely to voice concerns. Such findings require a more thorough investigation into verbal abuse, examining how various factors contribute to either mitigating or exacerbating the practice in garment factories.

Figure 6. Workers who think verbal abuse is a concern (2019-2024)

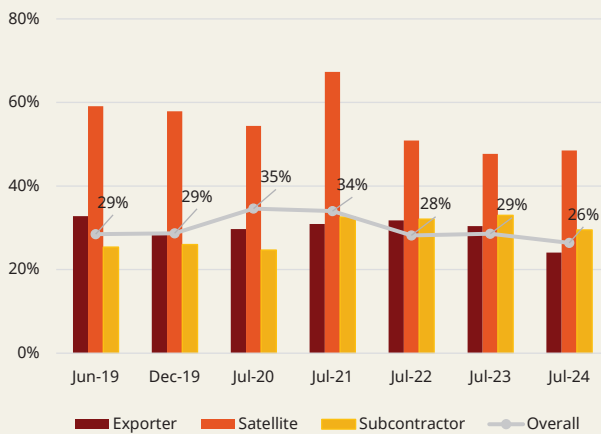




Female workers were more likely to report the issue with verbal abuse, with an average of 35 per cent expressing their concern, compared to 30 per cent of their male counterparts. This pattern holds true across all nationalities, with women consistently expressing greater concerns.

Workers from satellite units report verbal abuse most frequently, with nearly half raising

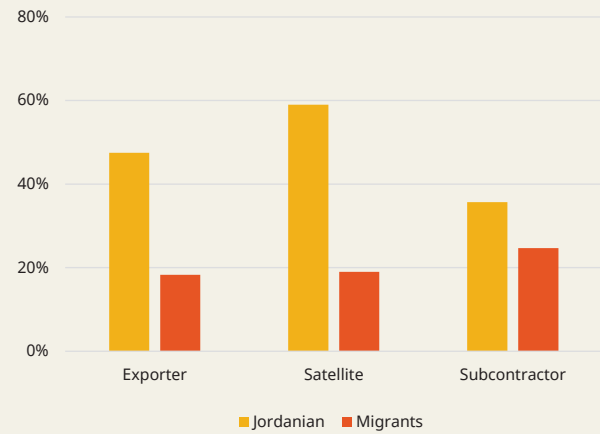
Figure 7a: Workers who think verbal abuse is a concern, by factory type (2019-2024)



Harassment at workplace is another key challenge faced by workers in garment factories. As a sensitive issue, sexual harassment can be interpreted differently, with workers’ perceptions shaped by cultural and educational backgrounds that influence their understanding of the concept and thresholds for what they consider is worth reporting. Recognizing the limitations of detecting this issue during regular compliance assessments, BWJ uses this confidential survey as a key tool for identifying and triangulating information on sexual harassment issues.

concerns. This is followed by one-third of workers from subcontract factories, and around 30 per cent from exporting factories (Figure 7a). Among Jordanians, those in satellite units are the most likely to report concerns compared to their peers in other factory types. Similarly, among migrants, those in subcontract factories are more likely to raise complaints than those in other types of factories (Figure 7b).

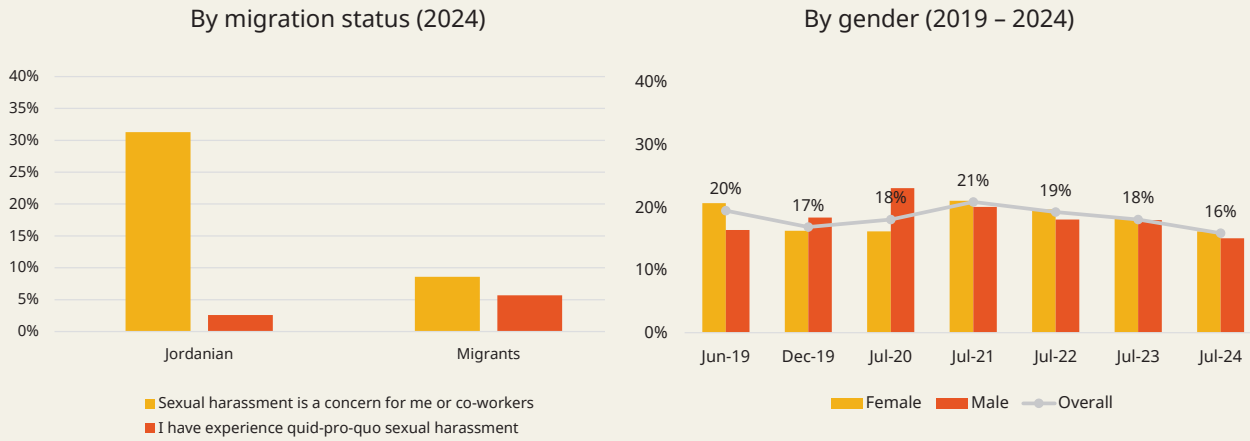
Figure 7b: Workers who think verbal abuse is a concern, by migration status and factory type (2024)



In 2024, approximately 16 per cent of workers reported concerns with sexual harassment, with an additional 16 per cent responding, ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I don’t want to answer’. Furthermore, 5 per cent of workers said they experienced quid-pro-quo sexual harassment. Jordanian workers were significantly more likely to express this concern, with 31 per cent reporting the issue compared to 9 per cent of migrant workers, although migrant workers reported higher instances of quid-pro-quo harassment. The difference by gender was minimal, with 16 percent of women and 15 percent of men expressing concerns (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Sexual harassment experiences and concerns



Sexual harassment is difficult to detect and prove during the assessment visit, especially while ensuring workers’ identity and protection. So far, the programme has documented only one non-compliance related sexual harassment during these visits. However, more

cases emerged in 2024. BWJ seeks to explore different approaches, including strengthening the grievances channels that allows workers to safely report such incidents, in order to address this issue more effectively.

► Stress in the workplace

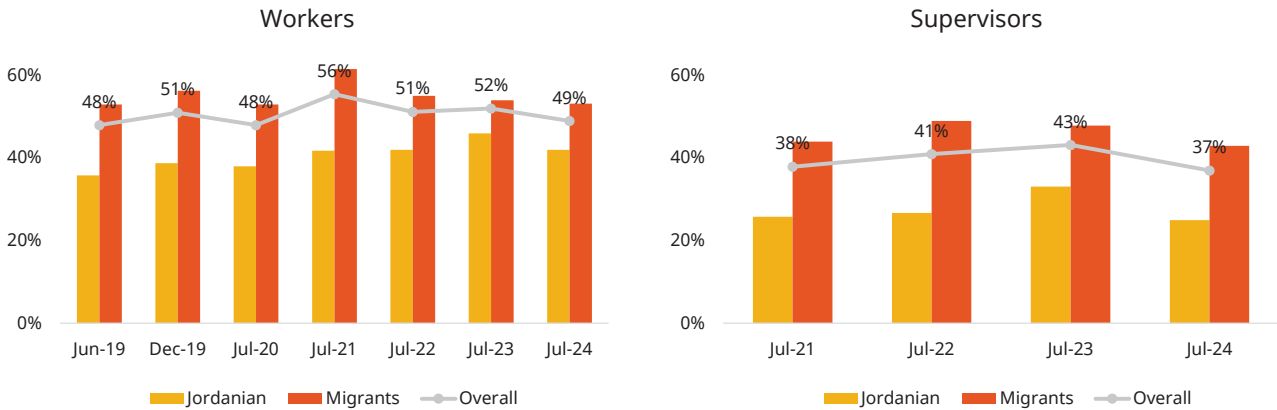
Garment factories are commonly associated with high levels of stress, affecting both workers and their supervisors. Workers often endure long hours, repetitive duties, and limited rest, while supervisors, under pressure to meet production targets, tend to pass their own stress onto the workforce. This creates a tense and demanding environment that can severely affect mental health and reduce overall productivity.

In the survey, workers and supervisors were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement

‘The stress associated with my job is acceptable.’ Those who responded with ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ were considered to be experiencing high levels of job stress. Over the years, around half of the surveyed workers reported their job-related stress as unacceptable, with migrant workers significantly more likely to report higher levels of job stress. In 2024, Bangladeshi workers reported the highest percentages of unacceptable stress, followed by Indian and Nepalese. While a greater overall proportion of female workers disagreed with this statement, a higher percentage of male workers strongly disagreed (Figure 9).



Figure 9. The stress associated with my job is unacceptable (2019-2024)



Similar patterns were observed among supervisors, with migrant supervisors, particularly those from Bangladesh, being more likely to report heightened job stress compared to other nationalities. Notably, the percentage of supervisors who found their job-related stress unacceptable decreased in 2024, with a significant decline among Jordanian supervisors, dropping from 33 percent in 2023 to 25 percent in 2024 (Figure 9). Further investigation is needed to better understand the underlying causes of this positive shift, which could provide valuable lessons for reducing stress among migrant supervisors and workers, ultimately contributing to a more positive and supportive workplace.

► Mental well-being

The workers survey collects information on workers mental well-being using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS). This scale consists of seven positively

worded statements related to functioning and feeling aspects of mental well-being. Workers were asked to rate how each statement applied to their personal experience on a Likert scale of five response categories, ranging from ‘none of the time’ to ‘all of the time’. The SWEMWBS is calculated by summing the responses for each item, scored from 1 to 5. Thus, the final score of SWEMWBS ranges from 7 to 35, with higher values representing higher levels of mental well-being.⁴

In 2024, the average SWEMWBS score for garment workers rose to 22.2, demonstrating a statistically significant improvement from previous years.⁵ It is particularly evident among migrant workers, whose average score increased by 1.6 points compared to last year (Figure 10a). On average, 44 per cent of surveyed workers reported low mental well-being this year, a notable decrease from 52 per cent in 2023. No significant differences in average SWEMWBS scores were observed between female and male workers.

4 For more information about the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale, see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/about/>

5 The WEMWBS is available in Arabic, Bangla, Hindi and Sinhalese. These translations are validated and verified through an intensive process, and WEMWBS restricts the use of the survey only to validated translations. For this reason, the seven WEMWBS questions were not translated into Nepalese and workers from Nepal (4 per cent of the sample) did not respond to these questions.



These findings reflect an overall improvement in workers' mental well-being, suggesting that recent BWJ-led initiatives have effectively advanced the mental health support and services available to workers. Specifically, these initiatives

have raised management's awareness of mental health, leading factories to implement new strategies, assign additional mental health focal points, and place greater emphasis on enhancing workers' well-being.

Figure 10a. Average SWEMWBS scores (2020-2024)

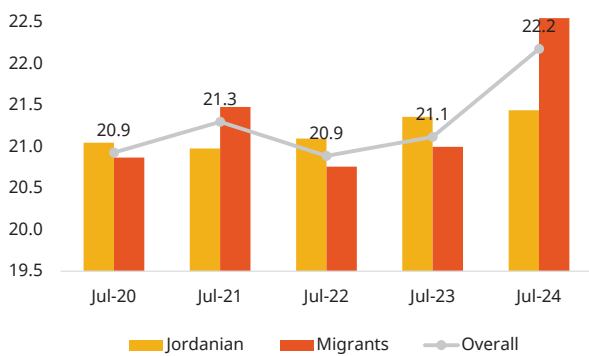
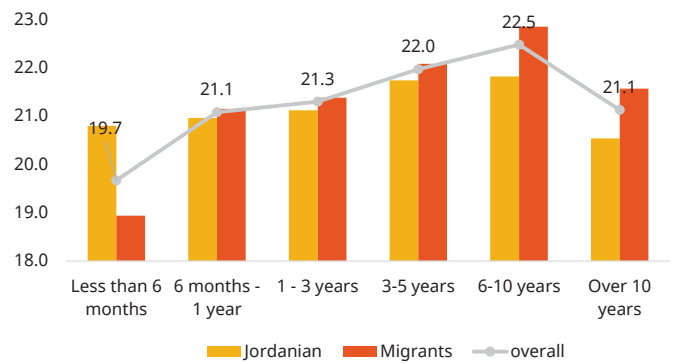


Figure 10b. Average SWEMWBS scores, by number of years worked in the factory (2020-2024 combined)

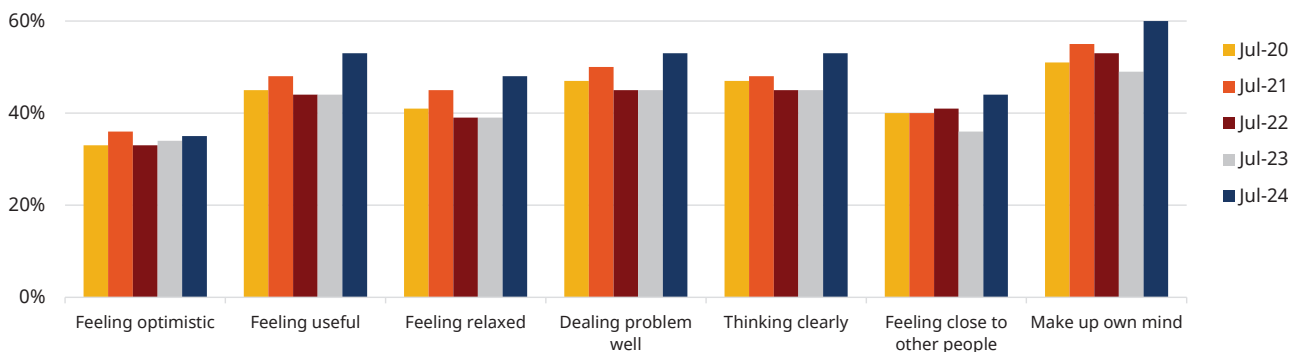


The survey results revealed that workers with less than six months of experience at the factory had the lowest SWEMWBS scores, particularly among migrant workers. Migrant workers with under six months of experience reported an average SWEMWBS score of just 18.9, the lowest of all groups (Figure 10b). These findings emphasize the importance of early support, particularly for migrant workers. On-boarding or orientation programmes introduced early in their employment can be crucial in helping them adjust to the factory environment and improving

their overall mental well-being.

When examining the specific aspects of mental well-being, improvements were noted across all measured aspects. However, the proportion of workers reporting optimism about the future showed only a marginal increase and remained the lowest scoring aspect of the SWEMWBS – with only around one-third of workers feeling optimistic. This finding suggests the need for more targeted interventions to address workers' long-term outlook.

Figure 11. Workers who responded each statement positively (2020-2024)





► Worker perspectives on grievance mechanisms

Grievance redress mechanisms play a vital role in the workplace by providing platforms for workers to voice their concerns. Effective grievance systems should allow factories to respond to complaints fairly, promptly, and consistently. This is especially important in industries where challenging working conditions can lead to a high volume of grievances.

Currently, workers have several resources to address workplace issues. Inside the factory, grievance channels include direct supervisors, HR, and worker-manager bipartite committees. Outside the factory, workers can formally raise their grievances to the trade union, the Ministry of Labour, and NGOs which provide legal aid. But these mechanisms do not always necessarily address workers' complaints efficiently or fairly.

In 2023, BWJ, in collaboration with Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which provide guidelines for streamlining grievance handling processes within the sector. Although the SOPs are developed in consultation with social partners, it has not been formally endorsed. In 2024, BWJ continues to engage with key partner to promote the SOPs, emphasizing their role in ensuring ethical practices and implementing effective grievance mechanisms at both factory and the sectoral level.

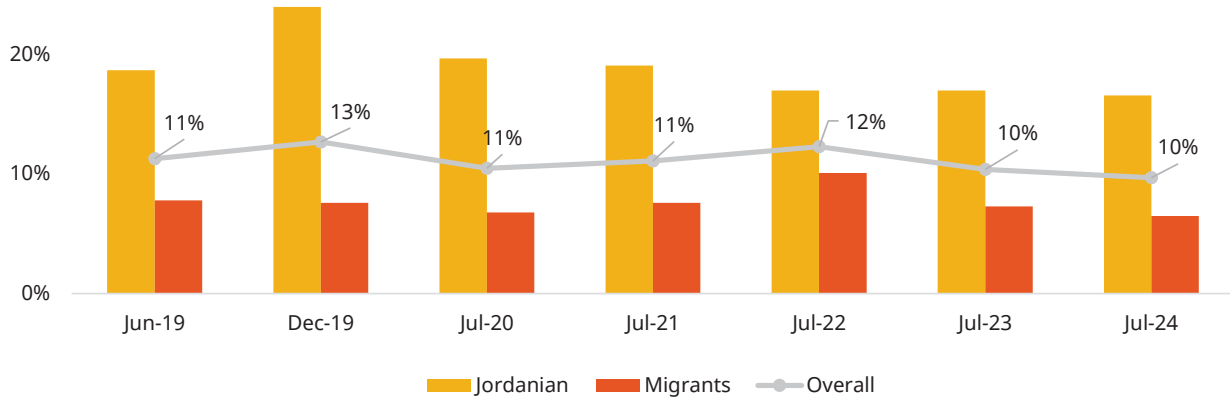
BWJ identified several significant deficiencies in the existing grievance mechanisms. First, language

barriers hinder effective communication, often leading to misunderstandings and difficulties in accurately expressing grievances. Second, cultural differences and fear of reprisals discourage workers from reporting their issues. Third, the absence of a formal and structured mapping of grievance handling processes limits effective and systematic resolution. Fourth, there are very limited external grievance channels for workers to report concerns independently. Within factories, personnel often lack the necessary skills for problem-solving and soft skills. The program also noted a lack of follow-up and coordination among teams handling grievances, both inside and outside of the factories. Finally, factory management often fears repercussions from buyers and audits for reporting grievances openly. To address these issues, BWJ organized a workshop in October 2024 that brought together factories, employers' organizations, the union and the MoL to collaboratively address and streamline grievance mechanisms within their operations.

BWJ's survey gathers workers' opinions on the available channels for placing workplace complaints or grievances. In 2024, about 80 percent of workers expressed satisfaction with these grievance systems, a result consistent with previous years. However, 10 percent reported dissatisfaction. Jordanian workers were more likely to express dissatisfaction (17 percent) compared to migrant workers (7 percent), a pattern that has remained steady over the years (**Figure 12**). This persistent gap raises questions about whether Jordanian and migrant workers may have differing understanding of what constitutes 'grievance systems.'



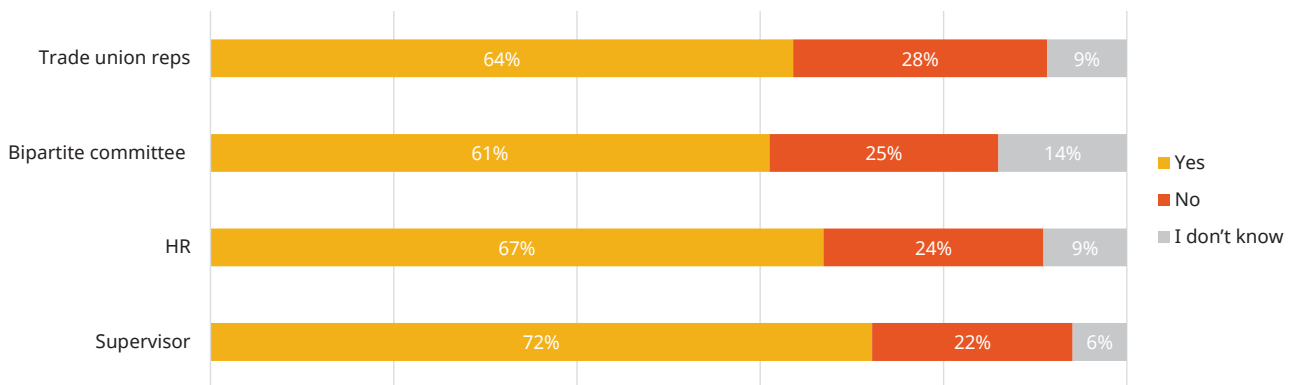
Figure 12. Dissatisfaction with existing grievances systems at the workplace (2019-2024)



When workers were asked about their comfort level with specific channels for conflict resolution, they reported feeling more comfortable going to their supervisors or HR for assistance, and less comfortable seeking help from the

worker-manager bipartite committees or union representatives (Figure 13). This finding highlights the limited effectiveness of bipartite committees and union representatives in addressing workplace grievances adequately.

Figure 13. If you were having a problem at work, for example with your pay, working time, work safety, or treatment at work, would you feel comfortable going to the following for help? (2024)

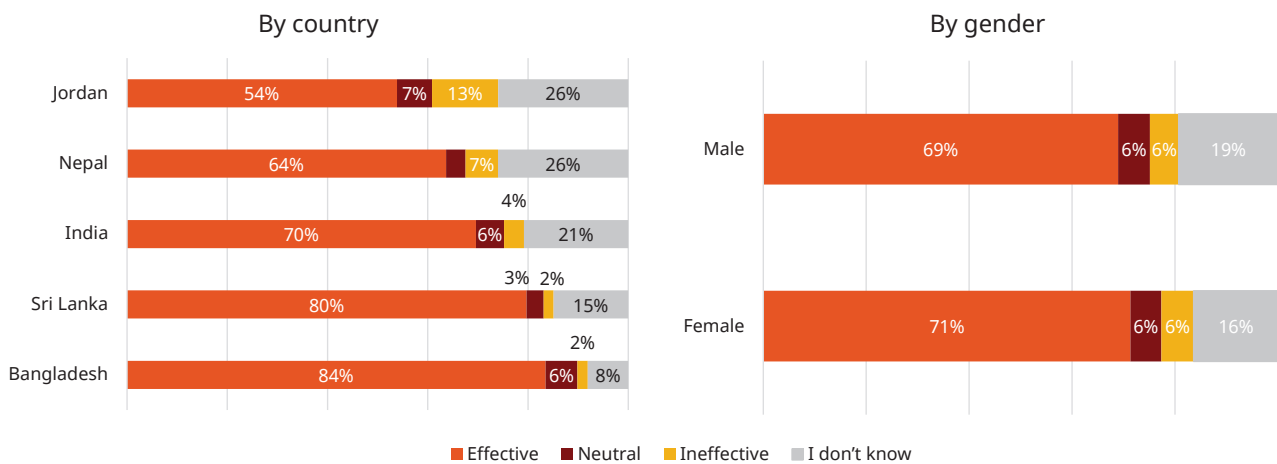




More than 70 per cent of workers found the worker-manager bipartite committee, or Union-Labour committee (ULC), to be effective in resolving conflicts between worker-manager though this perception varies across nationalities. Migrant workers, especially those from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, indicated a more favourable view of the committee's effectiveness than their Jordanian counterparts (Figure 14). Overall, there was minimum difference between female and male workers' perceptions. However, when examining nationalities, Bangladeshi workers stand out as the only group in which female workers perceived

the bipartite committees more positively than their male counterparts. Seventeen per cent of workers responded that they did not know about the effectiveness of the ULC. This lack of awareness suggests either limited awareness among these workers about the committee, or committee engagement in addressing significant disputes between employees and management. Both indicate a gap in the ULC's functionality, underscoring the need to further enhance the capacity of committee members and improve awareness of the committees' roles and functionality.

Figure 14. Effectiveness of bipartite committee (2024)



► Worker engagement with the union

The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries (JTGCU, or the union) is the only trade union in the Jordanian garment sector. It represents all workers and is responsible for negotiating the sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the employers' association on behalf of the workers. Garment workers have the right to join the union voluntarily by paying a monthly membership due

of 0.5 JD (US\$0.71).

BWJ works with the union to strengthen communication and support its effort in reaching a broader audience of garment workers, both Jordanians and non-Jordanians, across all industrial zones. This initiative has led to a positive shift: in 2024, 42 per cent of surveyed workers reported being union members, up from 30 per cent in 2023 (Figure 15a). Migrant workers were more likely to report their union membership (50 per cent) compared to Jordanian workers (23 per cent).



Figure 15a. Are you a member of the union (2024)

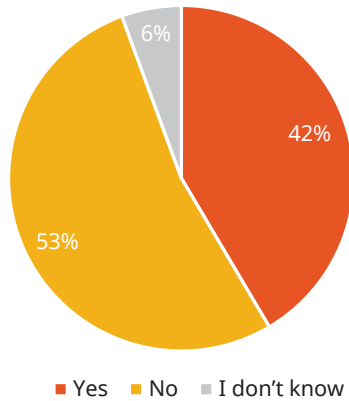
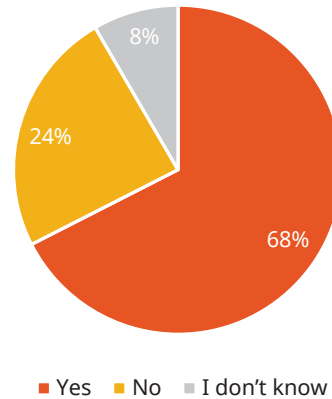


Figure 15b. Do you pay union dues (2024)



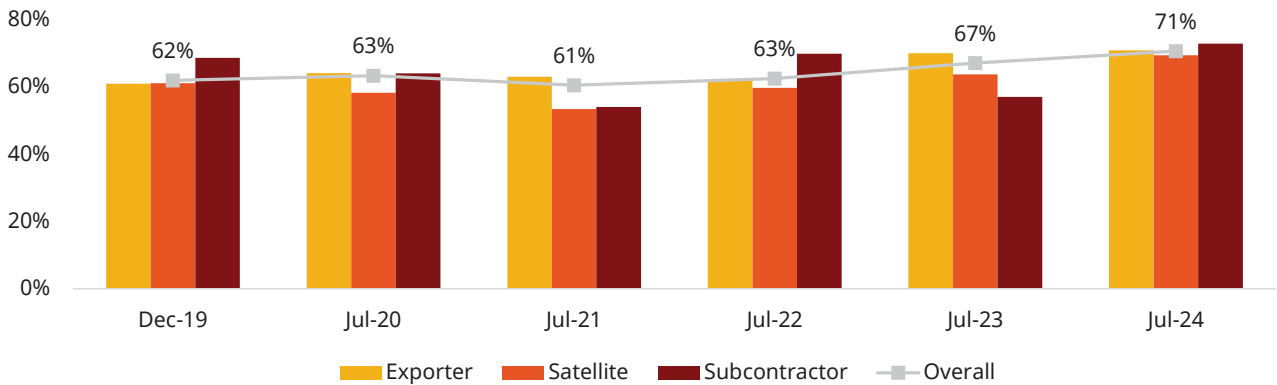
However, the percentage of workers self-identifying as union members remained lower than those who reported paying union dues – 68 per cent indicated that 0.5 JD was deducted from their monthly salary, highlighting low awareness of union membership (**Figure 15b**). Additionally, during factory assessments in 2024, BWJ observed that some workers were unaware of their right to freely join or decline union membership. This means that, although some workers recognized their union membership, they had been enrolled by the factories and were unaware they had the choice not to join. These gaps highlight the need for greater awareness to ensure that workers can make informed, voluntary decisions about union membership without employer influence.

To enhance communication with workers, BWJ also assisted the union in recruiting representatives

to cover all industrial zones and extend its reach into previously unrepresented governorates. This approach has increased the union's visibility, with union representatives now regularly visiting factories in all areas where garment factories are located. Recent figures showed that 71 per cent of workers had noticed union visits to their factories at least once a year, the highest percentage recorded to date. However, only 22 per cent reported seeing union representatives at their factories once a month or more in 2024, down from 29 per cent last year (**Figure 16**). This decline can be attributed to BWJ's adjustment of its implementation modality in 2024, which encourages a more proactive and independent role for the union rather than providing direct assistance. Unfortunately, this change faced some pushback, leading to fewer factory visits by the union this year.



Figure 16. Workers noticed trade union representatives visiting factory at least once a year (2019-2024)



Worker and employer representatives negotiate sectoral the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) that apply to all garment workers. Since 2023, BWJ has conducted intensive training sessions to enhance workers’ understanding of the CBA and their rights. Some progress has been noted, with 58 per cent of workers now reporting awareness of the agreement and its contents, up from 50 percent in 2022 (Figure 17a). Migrant

workers, particularly those from Bangladesh and India, demonstrated greater awareness, with over 70 percent indicating familiarity with the CBA's contents (Figure 17b). Still, gaps remain, as 29 per cent of workers saying – especially those from Jordan, Sri Lanka, and India – reported not knowing the CBA at all, with 40 per cent of workers in these groups unfamiliar with the agreement.

Figure 17a. Aware of the CBA and its contents (2019-2024)

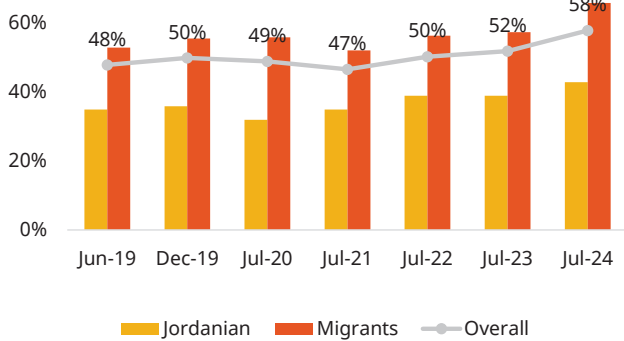
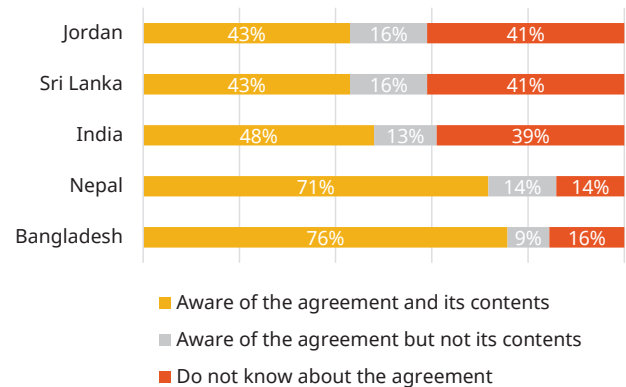


Figure 17b. Are you aware of the CBA and its contents, by country (2024)



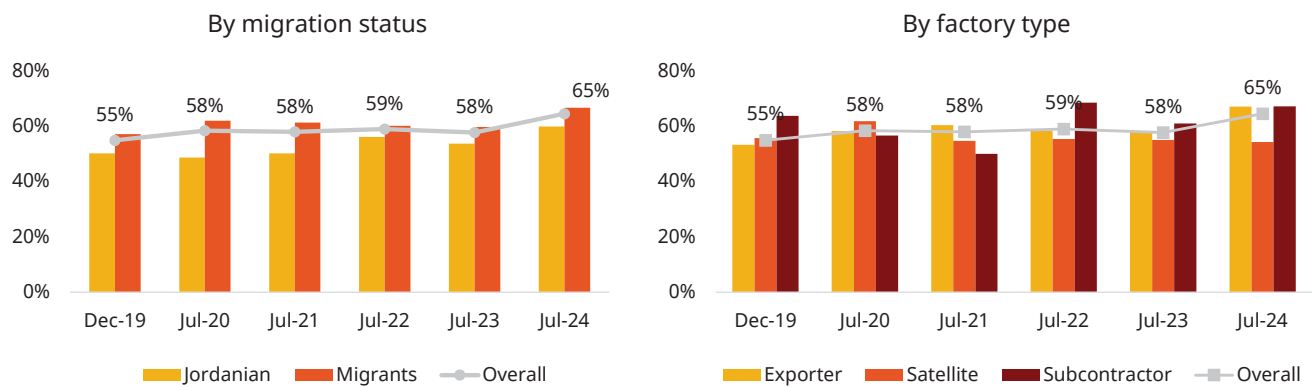


► Worker engagement with the government

Most workers have limited direct contact with labor inspectors from the Ministry of Labour (MoL). Nevertheless, as BWJ works to build the capacity of the labour inspectors and transfer core services to the MoL, the viability of MoL representatives has steadily increased. In 2024, 65 per cent of surveyed workers reported seeing MoL representatives at their factories at least once a year, marking the highest percentage on record (Figure 18).

Despite this progress, 35 per cent indicated that they had never seen or were unaware of any MoL labour inspector visits to their factories. Jordanian workers were more likely than to migrant workers to report being unaware of these visits. The visibility of MoL representatives varies across different factory types. MoL consistently had the highest visibility in exporting factories, while in subcontracting factories, which previously showed the lowest visibility, had gradually improved since 2022 and now surpassed satellite units. Currently, the lowest level of MoL visibility was reported in satellite units (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Workers who noticed Ministry of Labour representatives visiting factory at least once a year (2019-2024)

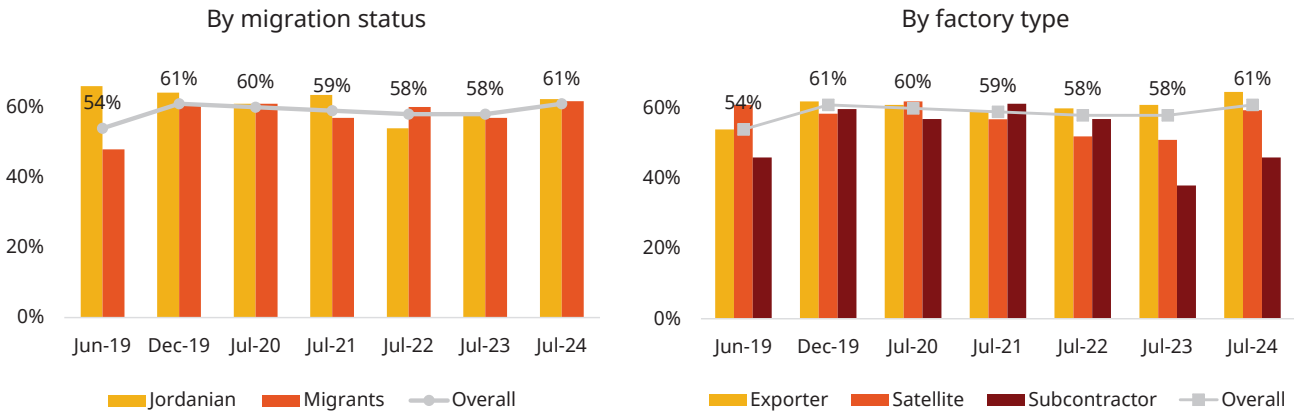


Labour inspectors from the MoL play a crucial role in enforcing the labour law, which 61 per cent of the workers reported they had sufficient knowledge about these regulations (Figure 19). While there were no significant differences in knowledge of labour laws between Jordanian workers and migrant workers, significant gaps

emerged among workers from different type of factories. Specifically, workers in subcontracting factories demonstrated the lowest level of understanding of Jordanian labour laws, with this gap becoming particularly pronounced in recent years compared to workers in exporting and satellite factories.



Figure 19. I have sufficient knowledge about the Jordanian Labour Law and how it affects my job and working conditions (2019-2024)



Alarming, 26 per cent of workers factories reported that they did not have sufficient knowledge of Jordanian labour law. This is concerning as it suggests that these workers lack clarity regarding their rights and responsibilities, which can lead to confusion, stress, and negatively impact their mental health.⁶ It also indicates deficiencies in induction training within factories, where education on workers' rights and responsibilities under labour law should be a fundamental element. In October 2024, BWJ organized a workshop that convened key stakeholders - factories, employers' organizations, the union and the MoL - to discuss plans for enhancing and coordinating induction practices across their operations.

► Business concerns

In the survey among managers, respondents were asked about their concerns regarding various conditions that could negatively impact their business success. Overall, more than half of the managers expressed moderate to serious concerns about all the factors presented. Notably, transportation costs emerged as the most significant issue reported (Figure 20a). This concern is primarily due to the ongoing regional conflict, which has disrupted shipping routes and forced reliance on alternative routes that are both more expensive and time-consuming. Additionally, the conflict exacerbates challenges related to already high labour and material costs, with both issues cited by more than 60 per cent of managers in 2024.

⁶ Karkkola, P., Kuittinen, M., & Hintsala, T. (2019). Role clarity, role conflict, and vitality at work: The role of the basic needs. *Scandinavian journal of psychology*, 60(5), 456-463.



Figure 20a. Managers' concern towards their business (2024)

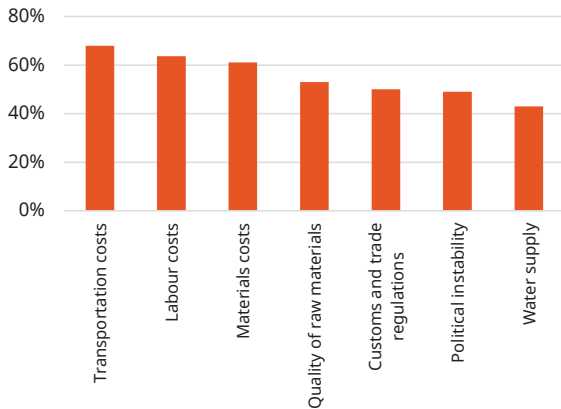
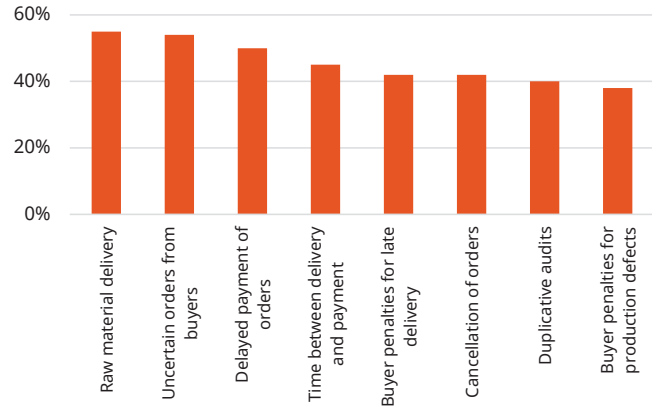


Figure 20b. Managers' perception on the challenges related to supply chain (2024)



These disruptions directly affect the delivery of raw materials, which have become the top challenge in the supply chain, cited by 55 per cent of managers (Figure 20b). Delays in receiving raw materials can severely impact production schedules, leaving businesses increasingly vulnerable to operational setbacks. Additionally, uncertain orders from buyers present another significant challenge, with 54 per cent of managers expressing their concern. Uncertain orders further complicate production planning and resource allocation, leading to inefficiencies and increased costs. Transparent communication between buyers and suppliers is crucial for building a more resilient supply chain. For instance, buyers can practice clearer and more timely communication about their needs, fostering transparency that allows suppliers to plan effectively.

With rising cases of serious labour standards violations this year, the programme noticed that international buyers are losing confidence in the sector. In response, more buyers would request their suppliers to undergo third-party audits to ensure compliance with the buyers' code of conduct or other industrial standards. According to the survey data, 14 per cent of factory managers reported an increase in third-party audits in 2024, with this rise most prevalent among satellite factories. For factories producing for multiple buyers, this often means facing several audits with differing requirements within short time frames, which ultimately leads to operational disruptions and strains on resources. BWJ's survey demonstrated that 40 per cent of factory managers considered that duplicate audits were challenging to their business (Figure 20b).



► Next steps

This brief provides a snapshot of the data gathered through worker, supervisor and manager surveys.

This information is important for stakeholders to understand and track how workers perceive them, and offers insights into specific worker concerns and who workers turn to in order to address these concerns. The recurring survey is a key tool BWJ uses to monitor working conditions in the garment sector and is especially important for tracking progress. The data from these surveys contributes to the monitoring and evaluation of the BWJ programme and informs its ongoing development.

BWJ is currently working to leverage the survey data and assessment data to identify key challenges in the sector and further guide programme interventions. This includes pinpointing factories and industries zones

where significant issues of concerns and non-compliance were reported by workers, assessing severity and the magnitude of these issues, and identifying factors that linked to inadequate working conditions, potentially enabling early identification of issues and crisis. Additionally, the programme plans to use the survey data to address research questions outlined in the BWJ research agenda for 2024-2025. This research agenda establishes a structured approach to address key socio-economic and labour issues in Jordan's garment sector. Integrating stakeholder insights, it prioritizes comprehensive studies, briefs, and actionable policies to create an evidence-based foundation that fosters sustainable development, supports worker well-being, and equips stakeholders to address sectoral challenges effectively.

Finally, these surveys are an ongoing initiative led by Better Work Jordan with supports from the Better Work Global research team and a local research partner. The next round of data collection will occur in July 2025.

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