



BetterWork
Jordan

2018 Newsletter

First Quarter Review

January-March

A review of Better Work Jordan's key activities, initiatives, and partnerships.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Better Work Jordan as part of Jordanian delegation to accompany His Majesty King Abdullah to The Netherlands
- Better Work Jordan participates In TexWorld Trade Show in Paris
- Better Work Jordan meets with international buyers in Istanbul
- FAIR: integrated programme on fair recruitment
- The Garment And Textile Union Workshop paves the way forward
- Gender equality in the workplace
- Gaining perspective: an interview with SIPA students
- Strategic compliance planning: ushering in a new wave of compliance implementation
- Clean advice: personal hygiene workshops address personal care issues
- Save the date: better work jordan's multi stakeholder's meeting scheduled for August 1st- 2nd

Better Work is a partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in collaboration with local and international stakeholders. It unites the expertise of the ILO in labour standards with that of the IFC in private sector development.

**For more information, contact:
Better Work Jordan**

Tayseer Nana'ah Street, South Abdoun, Amman, Jordan
Tel: +962 6 592 5778 Fax: +962 6 592 5779
Email: jordan@betterwork.org
Website: www.betterwork.org





Better Work Jordan as part of Jordanian delegation to accompany His Majesty King Abdullah to The Netherlands

His Majesty King Abdullah and Her Majesty Queen Rania recently paid an official visit to the Netherlands following the invitation of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander. The visit, which took place on March 20th-21st, aimed to further enhance the bilateral relations between the two countries, and identify partnership opportunities to promote Jordan's economic prosperity, with an emphasis on employment and the state of Syrian refugees in the country among other topics. Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan, a joint programme between the International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation, was among a select number of government and representatives of Jordan's business community chosen to accompany His Majesty King Abdullah.

His Majesty King Abdullah met with a group of business leaders and CEOs of major companies in the Netherlands, in the presence of King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands and discussions covered Jordan's economic advantages and the incentives it offers to investors, the importance of expanding and diversifying bilateral trade.

For her part, Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Sigrid Kaag said the Dutch government and the private sector will prepare an



action plan and roadmap, in partnership with their Jordanian counterparts, to advance economic cooperation and identify investment opportunities in key sectors to create jobs and achieve sustainable development in Jordan.

Tareq AbuQaoud, along with Jordanian representatives of the business sector met with Dutch counterparts and examined opportunities to expand cooperation in the agricultural and textile sectors.



Better Work Jordan participates in TexWorld Trade Show in Paris

Upon the invitation of World Bank Group (WBG) and Jordan Garments, Accessories, & Textiles Exporters' Association (JGATE), Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan, a joint programme between the International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation, participated in TexWorld Trade Show in Paris, France on February 10th-13th. The overall aim of the visit was to present improvements in the labour force's working conditions since the programme's inception in 2008 to EU buyers.

As one of the main supporters of Jordan's garment sector, WBG has worked to create employment opportunities for Jordanians and Syrians, pushing for the formation of a global alliance to promote the sector worldwide, whilst focusing on the ILO's mandate to create fair jobs for all

workers in this ever-growing sector.

As a first experience of its kind participation in the trade show highlighted Better Work's pivotal role in influencing national stakeholders to promote decent working conditions, which will lead to creating more sustainable jobs. Better Work's participation also led to the conclusion that attracting locals and Syrians is key to the success of the country's promotion in the industry, a fact that should be highlighted to international brands as a key factor to grow in the Jordanian garment sector.

Mr. AbuQaoud's activities at the trade show included participating in a press conference along with JGATE, Ethiopia, China, and Myanmar, where he presented the business case for complying with national and international labour standards.



Better Work Jordan meets with international buyers in Istanbul

Brands Adidas, JD Williams, M&S, New Balance, Nike, Puma, PVH, and Inditex along with organizations Fair Labor Association, Ethical Trading Initiative, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-Turkey and Better Work Jordan (BWJ) met in Adidas Liaison Office in Istanbul, Turkey on March 1st-2nd. The aim of the collaboration was to devise an approach to helping manufacturers in managing a progressive, multinational workforce including two focus areas, namely, migrant workers and Syrian refugee workers. The approach aims to evaluate existing best practices spanning the migrant worker lifecycle that can then be adapted for various countries and explore the possibility of collaboration in the region.

Challenges integrating refugee workers include a fear of

not being relocated and concerns over income tax on the refugees' part, and a perceived lack of added value and language barriers on the employers' part. This is especially true for Turkey. Nonetheless, in an attempt to defuse any potential tension, UNHCR-Turkey and other parties have been supporting community inclusion activities between Syrians and the local community in Turkey.

Acknowledging the progress made improving the working and living conditions for migrant workers in Jordan's garment sector, Mr. Tareq AbuQaoud, Programme Manager at Better Work Jordan, a joint programme between the International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation, took the opportunity to share different milestones in the sector in the context of migrant workers and current recruitment guidelines.



FAIR: integrated programme on fair recruitment

Better Work Jordan hosts meeting to discuss the objectives of the Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment, elimination of recruitments fees, and the way forward.

Taking another step in the ongoing and fundamental process to safeguard the rights of migrant workers, Better Work Jordan held a meeting on January 25th, 2018 to discuss the first objective of FAIR: Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment.

The main objectives of FAIR are to prevent abuses and exploitation of migrant workers, to provide workers with access to reliable information and improved services, and lastly, to redefine ethical recruitment to incorporate innovative approaches.

The meeting brought together Better Work Jordan's Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was to discuss a time frame for the adoption of a no recruitment fees policy for the sector in line with the principles guidelines. A time frame was agreed to.

As discussed in the meeting, raising awareness on the existing challenges is a necessary component to guarantee the successful implementation of FAIR, with one prevailing example of country specific issues raised being high and unfair recruitment fees across the board. In line with the International Labour Organization's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, an on-going commitment to ensuring that workers in the Jordanian garment sector do not pay a recruitment fee is essential. Phillip Fishman, the International Labour Organization's Senior Technical Advisor for Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, further commended the endeavor by adding, "We are fully committed to recruitment reform and the zero-cost

recruitment fee in line with the International Labour Organization's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment."

Better Work's current approach in assessing the payment of recruitment fees for assessments conducted before January 2019 stipulates that a factory is found compliant if the recruitment fees paid by workers do not exceed USD300. However, effective January 2019 Better Work will find factories in non-compliance if any of their employees have reportedly paid a recruitment fee for any workers recruited on or after January 2019. "The workshop was extremely beneficial as we were able to clarify the concept of zero recruitment fees. This commendable practice is inevitable and all stakeholders agreed to follow the international movement towards responsible business practices by adopting a zero recruitment fees policy," explained Husam Saleh, Chairman of JGATE.

Better Work also plans to inform garment factory employers and workers about the fair recruitment guidelines' component regarding recruitment fees and work with factories to ensure they comply before the deadline.

The proposed recruitment fee elimination process did pose several challenges as voiced by the meeting's participants such as proof of payment and employees' unwillingness to cooperate for fear of losing their job.

Nonetheless, the general consensus was that this was indeed a necessary step.

The Garment And Textile Union Workshop paves the way forward

With the aim of developing a new vision, mission, and plans for the Garment Union and Textile's development as an organization, in addition to a plan for bi-lateral cooperation with Better Work Jordan, Better Work, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the Garment Union Executive Board embarked on a five-day collaboration from 4 to 8 March 2018.

The mission, which was prepared in collaboration between Better Work Jordan, Better Work Global, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) Arab world specialist Mustapha Said, was created to support the Garment and Textile Union. With the majority of the 75,000 workers in the apparel industry living and working in Jordan's Qualified Industrial Zones, the union established an on-site base to accommodate the grievances of workers in addition to promoting the implementation of the most recent sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), which it negotiated with The Association of Owners of Factories, Workshops and Garments.

The overall objectives of this initiative were to support the Garment Union in developing a vision, mission, and plans for the future, facilitate the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Better Work Jordan and Garment Union to guide the collaboration for the next two years, and strengthen the working relationships between the

Garment Union and Better Work Jordan. "This is indeed a positive initiative. By drafting a well-thought and airtight plan our Union will be able to more effectively implement its vision and mission," shared Mr. Fathallah Al-Omrani, President of The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing Industries.

During the five-day workshop, a set of four strategic objectives were established by the Union for their work this year, with the main activities and objectives including the finalization of the Garment Union's vision and mission, which is intended to be fully realized by 2028. Other activities and objectives were further listed such as capacity building, the establishment of regional branches, and enhancing communication both with migrant workers and stakeholders. "I would say this has been a very fruitful and promising step," explained Mr. Al-Omrani.

The mission also lead to a draft MoU between Better Work and the Garment Union which focused on joint advisory visits, capacity building, information exchange, and communication between both parties. "We are very excited to be part of this initiative and commend The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile Garment & Clothing on their efforts to make this endeavor come to fruition," shared Maysa AL-Hmouz, Enterprise Advisor at Better Work Jordan.



Gender equality in the workplace

Better Work Jordan has been working tirelessly to achieve gender equality in the workplace, embarking on a Gender Equality agenda in early 2013. Equality is achieved when both women and men are able to enjoy the same set of circumstances in the workplace with identical pay and access to rewards, resources, and opportunities.

Although in recent history there has been an increase in female participation rates in the workforce, statistics indicate that there is still much to be done to achieve equality. Globally, women continue to earn less than their male counterparts and are less likely to advance in their careers.

In Jordan, despite a high percentage of women with higher education, women's economic participation continues to be stagnant. According to the Gender Gap Index, Jordan is ranked at 142 out of 145 countries in women's economic participation. A closer look at why women either refrain from entering the job market entirely or only enter for a short time reveals that three of the prevailing obstacles hindering equal participation are lack of daycare services, access to transportation, and pay inequity.

Better Work Jordan has been doubling its efforts to create a supportive environment for women in the workplace through two gender specific activities launched earlier this year in line with Better Work Global's agenda.

It is argued that occupational segregation results in the over-representation of women in the lowest-paying jobs. Channeling women into less complex jobs further propagates gender related associations with one's place in an organizational hierarchy, as such Better Work Jordan's initiative focuses on the removal of the limited mobility barrier. Through Better Work Jordan's targeted "Supply Chain" workshops, which commenced in February 2018, female workers were introduced to the basic concept of a supply chain including components and parties involved. To date a total of 11 workshops have taken place. Women were also given the opportunity to present a process of communication to address supply chain related challenges. Participants expressed feeling a sense of pride in their work, with others promising to take better care of the products since they now knew their real value. Introducing the women to other sections also sparked ambition and motivation among the

group, with some discussing plans to move up the career ladder.

The three-day "Supervisory Skills Training" (SST) programme targeted an ever-expanding pool of female participants. The session, which addresses rights, responsibilities, and professionalism in the workplace, was deemed highly beneficial.

The SST programme was implemented in several countries globally including Cambodia, Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Lesotho, Nicaragua, and Vietnam. With the aim of building confidence, improving relationships with workers, and elevating overall levels of productivity, the SST programme was created to educate supervisors on their roles, professional behavior, communication skills, and elevating the level of worker performance.

In an independent study conducted by Tufts University, findings indicated that the series of trainings were most impactful on supervisors who were open to learning and who were driven to persevere in the face of challenges. It also impacted supervisors who felt supported by their peers to implement new-found knowledge and those who felt they have moderate but not extreme authority. An openness to learn new skills and conviction to implement these skills on the factory floor were two contributing factors to the success of the programme. "I truly believe that women empowerment and awareness raising to men and women are essential to encourage a person to obtain the opportunity to get what he or she deserves regardless of gender," shared Zainab Yang, Team Leader Better Work Jordan.

Since 2014, more than 5,850 supervisors have taken part in the programme, which was first developed in 2005. With verbal abuse and stress deemed two factors hindering productivity and affecting team morale, the programme has helped create more empathy among supervisors. In addition, the study showed that workers are actually less likely to experience an injury at work if their supervisors undergo training. Turnover rates also drastically decreased when supervisors enrolled in SST. The programme also boosts productivity, by an estimated 25 percent. By providing training and career development opportunities, women's upward mobility is immediately supported and encouraged.



Gaining perspective: an interview with SIPA students

With the aim of producing a report assessing the impact of Better Work Jordan's policy work and making recommendations on how to sustain and improve positive outcomes, six graduate students of the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University visit Jordan.

Can you tell us a bit about SIPA and the purpose of your visit to Jordan?

Our team consists of graduate students of SIPA, Columbia's Graduate School of International and Public Affairs, Naoya, Nathan, Jess, Esther, Fatimah and Evie. We are all students of international affairs and public policy, concentrating our studies on human rights and economic development. Our team is working with Better Work Jordan to develop a framework that will help monitor, evaluate and improve Better Work Jordan's policy work with national and international stakeholders. For this project, our team visited Jordan, to better understand Better Work Jordan's existing collaboration and coordination efforts in the country through desk research and stakeholder interviews.

What are the objectives of the assessment?

Our research is designed to gauge the policy impact that Better Work Jordan has had here in Jordan, not only to help inform the objectives of Better Work Jordan going forward, but also in order to create a scalable assessment tool that can be used in other fields in which Better Work operates.

During the interview process, how would you rate relevant stakeholder's impressions of Better Work Jordan's work and effectiveness regarding the organization's policy influencing efforts?

One strikingly consistent comment from interviewees was that Better

Work Jordan created a space in which meaningful change could take place.

Who will benefit from the report?

The report will be used mostly by Better Work and the International Labour Organization as an assessment tool for the progress of the project so far on the policy level, in order to gain a better understanding of the impact Better Work has had in matters of sustainability of the labour market, in Jordan and in other contexts in which they operate.

When is it expected to be released?

We expect it to be released in two stages: first to our university on April 30th, and then, hopefully, as a joint publication with the International Labour Organization in the coming months.

Can you share your experience with regards to working with BWJ?

It's been a pleasure working with everyone at Better Work Jordan! Everyone has been very welcoming and accommodating, and of course it behooves us to give special thanks to Ayat, Samira, and Tareq for their constant support throughout the process. We had the pleasure of meeting with Patrick and Suha as well, and over the course of the 10 days, Eyad and Hussein were instrumental in helping our team navigate and get around, and we are grateful for that.

What are some of your favorite impressions of Jordan so far? What other activities would you like to do before you head back?

We have found Jordan to be a beautiful country, with very warm and welcoming people, and delicious food! Some of our favorite impressions of the trip include our visit to breathtaking Petra, as well as stargazing in the Wadi Rum desert.

Strategic compliance planning: ushering in a new wave of compliance implementation

Embacing ever-changing work places, new Strategic Compliance Plans offer targeted and customizable compliance and implementation solutions for labour inspectors despite challenges and resource limitations.

As it stands, the number of existing workplaces far surpasses the number of resources available to inspect. Furthermore, "standard" and "routine" inspections are ineffective in terms of attaining tangible and efficient enforcement and sustained compliance with national and international labour norms. This existing imbalance not only leaves workers unprotected but, in essence, enables violators to operate with total freedom and no accountability. The situation also creates unfair competition for compliant businesses. With traditional models deemed obsolete, it is necessary to look into relevant and more comprehensive compliance models.

To empower labour inspectors to apply a more progressive and inclusive approach to compliance, The Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch, a branch of the International Labour Organization's Governance and Tripartism Department, developed the International Labour Organization Approach to Strategic Compliance Planning for Labour Inspectorates. This approach not only provides labour inspectorates with the tools to develop both a short-term inspection strategy and a long-term inspection plan, but also covers contingencies that fall between these two extremes.

Valkyrie Hanson, International Labour Organization Technical Specialist for Strategic Compliance, shared, "Narrow thinking about how to achieve compliance, leads to narrow action. Strategic Compliance Planning helps labour inspectorates avoid this trap and resourcefully and inventively identify stakeholders and tailored interventions to influence compliance."

Reported challenges for the labour inspectorate included limited resources and mismatched powers in addition to being overwhelmed by the added responsibility of effectively promoting and implementing compliance in workplaces where there is no strong and independent labour union. As such, this novel methodology of the Strategic Compliance Planning is anticipated to enable them to achieve sustainable and measurable compliance outcomes.

With the aim of better clarifying Strategic Compliance Planning, Labour



Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch, and Better Work Jordan held a workshop on February 14- 15. Offering guidance and support to Better Work Advisors including temporarily seconded labour inspectors from Jordanian Ministry of Labour, the workshop enabled all participants to maneuver through the various processes of the International Labour Organization Approach to Strategic Compliance Planning and seamlessly execute the required steps to launch a tailored plan. Key participants were subsequently selected to participate as catalysts for changed thinking in the Strategic Compliance Planning Workshop with the Ministry of Labour in May 2018, and support the implementation of the Plan in conjunction with the Strategic Compliance Focal Point, selected by the labour inspectorate.

The Strategic Compliance Focal Point is anticipated to coordinate and participate in all tasks required during the development and implementation of the Strategic Compliance Planning. The anticipated workshop, which will host a multitude of key decision makers and operators of the labour inspectorate and Occupational Safety and Health department, which will launch the implementation of the Strategic Compliance Capacity Building Program for Jordan.

For more information about this new approach please visit the Strategic Compliance Resource Page:

http://www.ilo.org/labadmin/info/WCMS_620987/lang--en/index.htm



Clean advice: personal hygiene workshops address personal care issues

Better Work Jordan recently brought together factory employees to raise awareness on the importance of personal hygiene.

As one of several on-site workshops, Better Work Jordan hosted a series of “Personal Hygiene” workshops to shed light on the importance of personal care in the workplace. In addition to raising awareness on the invaluable health importance of personal hygiene, the workshop also touched upon how personal grooming can aid in the emotional betterment of employees by raising self-esteem, building confidence, and creating respect among coworkers.

“Practicing personal hygiene is essential when a woman is

significantly contributing personally and socially and the possibility of sustainable development is maximum when women are in good health. It increases the value of a person. It is also indispensable for health, as it helps to prevent the growth and spread of infections.” said Munira Shirajum, Consultant for Migrant Workers, Better Work Jordan.

The workshops started off with a brief explanation of personal hygiene and best practices. A series of group activities were then introduced where participants were encouraged to share how embracing a more hygienic lifestyle made them feel. The workshop also included role-playing games where the participants listed typical personal hygiene habits.

Save the date: Better Work Jordan’s Multi Stakeholder’s Meeting scheduled for 1st- 2nd August

Better Work Jordan’s annual multi stakeholder meeting aims to discuss lessons learned and the way forward. The meeting will also afford participants the opportunity to reflect on previous initiatives, assess the performance of current activities, and discuss possible future initiatives to enhance the performance of the garment sector in Jordan. The main objectives of the meeting include:

- Sharing and discussing progress
- Exchange stories of success
- Identify opportunities and challenges

Lasts year’s event included the Ministry of Labour, the United States Embassy in Jordan, the European Union in Jordan, the British Embassy in Jordan, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees-Jordan, Ministry of State for Investment Affairs, Jordan Investment Commission (JIC), and the Jordan Chamber of Industry, among others. This year’s meeting, which is set to take place on August 1st-2nd, 2018 is also anticipated to bring together representatives of the private and the public

sector, and civil society who are anticipated to reinforce the unique roles of their respective organizations. Participants in the 2017 event included Muhannad Shehadeh, Minister of State for Investment Affairs Chairman, Jordan Investment Commission (JIC), who shared “What the ILO is providing us with is the branding Jordan needs. Improving working conditions in the country is an important ingredient to attract investment.” Henry T. Wooster, United States Chargé d’Affaires to Jordan, added “I want to commend the Government of Jordan, the ILO and BW and all the stakeholders for raising the climate and the standards of labour in Jordan and to make it an attractive market.”

Andrea Matteo Fontana, Ambassador of the European Union to Jordan, said, “We are working on multiple levels: the regulatory level through the adoption of the Rules of Origin agreement - but also directly with the enterprises to ease their access to the market and their compliance with our standards, and through the ILO to guarantee that these job opportunities are part of the decent work initiative.”

Better Work Jordan is supported by the following key donor partners:

