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Better Work Jordan Phase IV Project, Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, and Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions Project

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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

- ▶ **Final Internal Evaluation of
Better Work Jordan Phase IV Project,
Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, and
Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair
Working Environment for Workers and Trade
Unions Project**

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► Abbreviations

ARDD	The Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development
BWJ	Better Work Jordan
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	The Development Assistance Committee
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EBMO	Employers' and Business Membership Organization
EMV	Economic Modernization Vision
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GBVH	Gender Based Violence and Harassment
GCM	The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GFJTU	The General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions
GTU	The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment, and Clothing Industries
HCD	Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
HR	Human Resources
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JCI	Jordan Chamber of Industry
JGATE	The Jordan Garments, Accessories and Textiles Exporters Association
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LTO	Long-Term Objective
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
mhGAP	Mental Health Gap Action Program
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOL	Ministry of Labor
MTO	Medium-Term Objective
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QIZ	Qualifying Industrial Zones
ROAS	ILO's Regional Office for Arab States
RoO	Rules of Origin
SHP	Sexual Harassment Prevention
TOC	Theory of Change
TOT	Training of Trainers
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
USJFTA	United States- Jordan Free Trade Agreement
WHO	World Health Organization

► 1. Better Work Jordan

1.1. Executive Summary

The Better Work programme, jointly implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), has been a cornerstone of labour reform and sectoral development in Jordan's garment industry since 2008. As part of a global initiative, BWJ was initially mandated to support labour compliance in factories exporting to the U.S. under the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (USJFTA). Over time, it has grown into a comprehensive programme promoting decent work, improving labour standards, and advancing sectoral competitiveness. Phase IV (2022–2027), the focus of this evaluation, builds on BWJ's legacy while introducing strategic shifts to promote national ownership, enhance institutional capacity, and respond to emerging global compliance frameworks.

At the heart of Phase IV is a theory of sustained change that combines robust technical assistance, institutional capacity-building, and inclusive governance. The programme's vision is a Jordanian garment sector governed by national actors through a tripartite-plus system that fosters transparency, dialogue, and sector-wide accountability. Despite the unexpected termination of U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) funding in early 2025—an event that affected the operational infrastructure of BWJ—the programme remained resilient and followed on with an adaptive approach, aligned with its Phase IV strategy focusing on institutional handover and safeguarding critical reforms while it is winding down.

The evaluation confirms that BWJ's strategic design and thematic focus are highly relevant and responsive to both national priorities and international expectations. The programme proactively integrated cross-cutting priorities—gender equality, disability inclusion, workers' voice, occupational safety and health (OSH), and digitization—into its activities and deliverables. Importantly, BWJ's scope extended beyond core services (compliance assessments, advisory visits, and training) to include initiatives on mental health, sexual harassment prevention, wage protection, and grievance redress mechanisms. These additions reflect BWJ's responsiveness to workers' evolving needs, buyer expectations, and Jordan's commitments under international labour and trade frameworks, including the Canada-Jordan FTA and anticipated EU directives on corporate due diligence.

Stakeholder feedback on BWJ Phase IV revealed varying perspectives on the project's strategy and implementation, particularly regarding its evolving focus on national ownership and the gradual handover of core compliance services. While BWJ was intended to support this transition, many stakeholders still viewed it as essential to service delivery. Three main areas of divergence emerged: the desired scope of the project—some favored a streamlined focus on core services, while others valued broader initiatives such as research, mental health, and inclusion; differing views on the seriousness of persistent noncompliance and the best mechanisms to address it; and debate over the project's engagement with emerging global compliance standards, with some stakeholders advocating proactive alignment to enhance competitiveness, while others argued that existing compliance levels are sufficient to sustain trade.

One of the programme's key strengths was its participatory and inclusive approach. The Project Advisory Committee (PAC), composed of representatives from government, employers, workers, and international observers, played a critical role in shaping strategic decisions and ensuring alignment across diverse interests. While there were some divergent views—particularly on the programme's scope, the prioritization of persistent non-compliance issues, and the relevance of anticipated global due diligence mandates—all stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to a shared objective: sustaining Jordan's competitiveness as a responsible sourcing destination. BWJ's impartial facilitation, trust-building, and evidence-informed approach helped maintain this unity and facilitated reforms in sensitive areas such as wage-setting and migrant worker rights.

On the implementation front, BWJ Phase IV showed tangible progress. Of 72 planned activities, 45 were underway and three completed as of the latest reporting period, while 23 remain scheduled for future implementation. Twelve of 45 performance indicators were already met or surpassed, and the majority of others showed positive trends from the baseline. These included improvements in labour compliance, grievance handling, and worker representation. However, some indicators reflected areas of concern—such as declining trust in certain social dialogue mechanisms—highlighting the need for continuous institutional strengthening.

BWJ's impact was evident at both the factory and institutional levels. On the factory floor, compliance outcomes improved, audit fatigue declined, and factories reported increased confidence from buyers, longer-term purchase orders, and entry into new export markets. The adoption of tools such as the Standard Unified Contract for migrant workers, and factory-level mental health policies signal a shift from reactive compliance to proactive labour governance. These reforms were supported by translated, digital, and modular training content enabling wide-scale uptake across the sector's diverse and multilingual workforce.

Institutionally, BWJ strengthened the capacity of national actors, including the Ministry of Labour (MOL), the Social Security Corporation (SSC), the garment workers' union (JTGCU), and employers' and business membership organizations (EBMOs) like JGATE. Activities included structured mentoring, co-design of training modules, and digital systems for data management and monitoring. However, challenges to sustainability remain. These include the delayed transition of some roles and responsibilities to national partners despite compliance with the work plan, and operational gaps in areas to sustain core services. The evaluation identified several operational components critical to the effective delivery of core services—such as transportation logistics, translation support during assessments and advisory visits, and the editing of technical reports—that are unlikely to be sustained seamlessly within existing government or constituent systems. These challenges are largely attributable to rigid administrative structures and extended procurement timelines, which could impede the continuity and responsiveness of service delivery. Additionally, workers' organizations engagement in decision-making—particularly among migrant and female workers—requires more inclusive and institutionalized channels.

The evaluation also highlights BWJ's strategic use of research and data to inform programme design and adaptive management. Periodic assessments, worker surveys, and stakeholder consultations enabled the programme to adjust its interventions in real-time and anticipate sectoral risks. This data-driven approach enhanced the credibility of BWJ and supported policy advocacy, such as its contributions to OSH legislative reform and the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA).

In conclusion, BWJ Phase IV stands out as a highly relevant, technically sound, and strategically adaptive initiative that has helped institutionalize labour compliance, promote decent work, and enhance sectoral competitiveness. Its contributions go beyond the garment sector, offering a replicable model for sectoral transformation through inclusive governance, impartial facilitation, and sustained stakeholder engagement. Going forward, stakeholders are encouraged to co-develop a unified operational framework, reinforce quality assurance, invest in inclusive technologies, and ensure that reforms are grounded in both data and political economy realities. The lessons and achievements of BWJ Phase IV provide a strong foundation for future ILO engagement and national efforts to link labour standards with sustainable industrial growth.

1.2. Project Background

1.2.1. Country and Project Context

Over the past two decades, Jordan has emerged as a significant player in global garment exports, largely benefiting from preferential access to the U.S. market under the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Central to this export infrastructure are the Qualifying Industrial Zones (QIZs)—notably in Sahab, ad-Dulayl, and Irbid—where Jordanian garment production is geographically concentrated. These zones operate as duty-free manufacturing enclaves, offering tariff advantages to companies operating within them. To qualify for these trade benefits, garment factories must participate in the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme, a joint initiative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Launched in 2008 at the request of the Jordanian and U.S. governments, BWJ aims to improve labour standards, enhance factory compliance, and promote decent work through collaborative engagement with stakeholders across the garment sector.

Through its mandatory participation model for all export-oriented garment factories, BWJ has achieved wide sectoral coverage, enabling it to work closely with both factory management and workers. As of 2023, the programme covers approximately 74,000 workers—of which three quarters are migrant workers.¹ The programme currently includes 95 participating factories and reaching 21 brands and retailers.

Throughout its 15 years of operations, BWJ has played an important role in monitoring and promoting Jordan's garment industry. Better Work's interlocking services of compliance assessments of core international labour standards and national labour law, advisory services focused on encouraging workplace dialogue and joint problem solving, and specialized training offerings led to higher levels of compliance alongside overall industry growth.

Better Work Jordan has been increasingly shifting its focus to strengthen the capacity of national stakeholders for upholding labour standards in the industry in the long term; support industry partners in creating a vision for the industry that combines both competitiveness and business strength, as well as respect for labour standards; and create stronger partnerships to build capacity for dialogue and grievance resolution at the factory level.

Prior to the launch of the Mental Health Project, Better Work Jordan (BWJ) has acknowledged the critical need for mental health interventions, underscoring the limitations of conventional labour relations frameworks in addressing psychosocial well-being. This triggered alarm across the sector and catalyzed recognition among stakeholders—including government, employers, unions, and buyers—of the need for structured mental health interventions. The situation was further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated worker anxieties around health, job security, and their families in countries of origin. While mental health challenges are neither sector-specific nor geographically isolated to Jordan, there is increasing recognition within the international labour community of the imperative to integrate mental health considerations into employment strategies, especially for vulnerable labour populations. This aligns with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which explicitly incorporates the mental health of migrant workers as a core component of its commitment to safeguarding migrant rights and well-being throughout the migration continuum (**Box 3**).

¹ Better Work, 2024. Better Work Jordan Annual Report 2024. [pdf] Better Work. Available at: <https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/English-BWJ-Annual-Report-2024-1.pdf> [Accessed 5 May 2025].

► **Box 1: : Mental health as part of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), facilitated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), acknowledges mental health as a critical aspect of migrant well-being. While the GCM does not have a standalone objective exclusively dedicated to mental health, it integrates mental health considerations across several of its objectives, emphasizing the importance of addressing mental health needs throughout the migration process.

Key Aspects of Mental Health in the GCM:

- **Health as a Cross-Cutting Priority:** The GCM recognizes health, including mental health, as a cross-cutting priority. It underscores the necessity of ensuring that migrants have access to healthcare services that are sensitive to their specific needs, which encompasses mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).
- **Objective 15 – Access to Basic Services:** This objective focuses on providing migrants with access to basic services, including healthcare. It advocates for the inclusion of migrants in national health systems and the provision of services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, thereby facilitating better mental health support.
- **Integration into National Systems:** The GCM encourages the integration of migrant health needs into national policies and systems. This includes training healthcare providers to recognize and address mental health issues among migrants and ensuring that services are accessible and non-discriminatory.
- **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** The GCM promotes collaboration among governments, civil society, and international organizations to develop and implement programs that address the mental health needs of migrants. This includes sharing best practices and resources to enhance the capacity of health systems to support migrant mental health.

Sources:

- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2018). *Mainstreaming the health of migrants in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*. Migration Health Division. Available at: <https://migrationhealthresearch.iom.int/> [Accessed 15 May 2025].
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1.2.2. Project Description

Better Work Jordan's Phase IV Strategy (2022-2027) – which commenced immediately during the COVID-19 recovery phase - is based on a theory of sustained change which works through multiple channels to enable national stakeholders to uphold worker rights and improve working conditions in Jordan's exporting industrial sector while simultaneously promoting the sector's competitiveness. Three key assumptions underlie this theory of sustained change. The first is that working conditions improve with assessments, training, and advisory visits. Over the course of 15 years working in the garment industry, Better Work has built up a substantial evidence base to support this assumption. The second assumption is that national partners are willing and able to play a leading role in the governance and development of Jordan's garment industry. Better Work Jordan's key tripartite partners have expressed commitment to these roles, and these commitments will be institutionalized through formal agreements with partner institutions. The third assumption underlying this theory of sustained change is that Better Work Jordan and the tripartite constituents have sufficient leverage to incentivize improved labour compliance among garment factories. The existing Better Work model is based on such incentivization.

At the end, BWJ expects to achieve the following outcomes by implementing a unified BWJ through multiple funding sources:

Outcome 1: By 2027, Jordan's garment industry will have an effective system of tripartite-plus labour market governance in which workers' rights are upheld and protected in line with national labour laws and core international labour standards.

Outcome 2: By 2027, export growth combined with active labour market policies will increase the garment industry's contribution to Jordanian employment.

Outcome 3: By 2027, Better Work Jordan will have made a positive impact on working conditions and labour market governance beyond Jordan's export-oriented garment industry.

1.3. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

1.3.1. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

In January 2025, the United States Government (USG) informed the ILO that Better Work Jordan, similar to other USDOL funded projects, will undergo a 90-day review period, which prompted a suspension of all USDOL-funded activities globally by the ILO Headquarters for the review period. Following that, the project received a notification on 27 March 2025 that the USDOL grants to the ILO have been terminated with immediate effect. Thus, with the aim of ensuring a proper documentation of project achievements and lessons learned, this evaluation focused on Better Work Jordan (BWJ) outcomes in enhancing labour standards, promoting social dialogue, and advancing institutional capacity, with particular attention to progress toward the programme's objective of transferring ownership to national stakeholders. Consequently, it provides a strategic opportunity to assess Better Work Jordan's performance midway through Phase IV (originally planned for 2022–2027), document institutional knowledge, and evaluate the programme's contribution to industry transformation in Jordan. It will serve as a critical input for shaping future ILO engagement in the sector.

The key objectives of the assessment, relevant to Better Work Jordan Phase IV are listed below.

1. Provide a high-level assessment of BWJ's achievements, strategic positioning, and contribution to decent work, with particular attention to its legacy, its long-term influence on labour market governance, and its relevance for future programming and policy dialogue.
2. Conduct a light review of the mental health project, consolidating key results and highlighting lessons learned for potential replication or integration into broader ILO programming.

3. Provide a final evaluation of the Canada-funded project 'Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists' implemented as part of BWJ Phase IV, with a focus on outcomes related to inclusivity, gender equality, and union capacity.
4. Support accountability and learning within the ILO and among national and international stakeholders.

Geographically, the evaluation is confined to the project's operational zones, specifically the three primary industrial zones—Sahab, ad-Dulayl, and Irbid—along with their associated satellite factories. The evaluation's principal clients include BWJ and the ILO's national constituents in Jordan, such as relevant government ministries and the ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), as well as the projects donors. Additionally, the findings are intended to benefit a broader secondary audience comprising project stakeholders, participating factories, and various ILO departments that may leverage the evaluation outcomes to inform institutional learning and strategic alignment.

► **Table 1: Funding arrangement, starting date and evaluation period for each project**

Project	Code	Contract dates		Budget (USD)	Evaluation Period	
		Start date	End date		From	To
1. Better Work Jordan Phase IV (USDOL core funding) *1	JOR/51/19/USA	11 Dec 2019	31 Dec 2024	3,700,122	Jan 2022	Dec 2024
	JOR/52/23/USA	27 May 2023	31 Dec 2025	2,173,574		
2. Mental Health Project*2	JOR/50/20/USA JOR/53/23/USA	19 Nov 2020	31 Dec 2025	1,850,000	Nov 2020	Dec 2024
3. Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions*	JOR/02/22/CAN	16 Mar 2022	31 Aug 2025	571,803	Mar 2022	Aug 2025
Notes: *1: Better Work Jordan Phase IV under USDOL core funding was originally planned to be implemented until December 2025. Yet, the core funding of the project by USDOL was terminated in 27 March 2025 per ILO communication to its constituents on 9 April 2025 and a structured wind-down of USDOL-funded services will conclude by June 2025. *2 USDOL funding for the Mental Health Project was originally planned to be implemented until December 2025. Yet, the funding by USDOL was terminated in 27 March 2025 per ILO communication to its constituents on 9 April 2025 and a structured wind-down started in June 2025.						

1.3.2. Evaluation Questions and Methodology

The evaluation methodology relied on two data collection tools: desk review and Key Informant Interviews (KII). Desk review entailed reviewing all critical documents on each of the three projects including project documents, annual reports, previous assessments, evaluations and research studies, as well as national strategies such as Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision (EMV). The list of documents that were reviewed during the evaluation is available in Annex 1: List of Documents.

To achieve the evaluation objectives and explore the areas of interest listed above, evaluation questions for each project were developed according to OECD DAC evaluation criteria in the tables below. The questions are arranged by OECD DAC criteria, indicates which tool/s were used to answer each question, and specific focus areas, if any.

The evaluation approach followed the [UN Evaluation Standards and Norms](#), [The Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management](#), and will utilize [OECD DAC evaluation criteria](#). The evaluation will also follow the principles of project evaluation outlined in the [ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation: Principles, Planning, and Managing for Evaluations](#), and the [ILO Results-Based Evaluation Strategy](#). Gender considerations will benefit from ILO Guidance Note 3.1: [Integrating Gender Equality in Monitoring and Evaluation](#), and the supplementary Guidance Note: [integrating gender equality in ILO M&E](#).

► **Table 2: Evaluation questions for Better Work Jordan Phase IV**

Criteria	Questions	Tools	Specific focus
Relevance of the project to beneficiary needs, Validity of the project design, overall Coherence	► Relevance and validity of project design: - To what extent is the project's design adequate to achieve its stated objectives? - What are examples of ways that Better Work has adapted its approach based on the country context (distinctive industry, labour market or political/ economic features)? - How satisfied are ILO constituents and other key stakeholders with the current strategy and the ways it is being implemented to date? ► Results framework: - To what extent does the project's results framework reflect and respond to identified challenges, including gender equality and workers' empowerment? ► Integration and cross-cutting issues: - To what extent does the project design incorporate cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, disability inclusion, prevention of gender-based violence, occupational safety and health, and promotion of the fundamental labour rights? - How well are these issues addressed in the project documents, monitoring and evaluation plans and activities?	Desk review and KII	Gender Workers' empowerment Disability inclusion
	► Coherence (between the three projects under evaluation) - Is there a coherence between the projects being assessed? - Are the projects coherent with other interventions of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme in Jordan?	Desk review	

Criteria	Questions	Tools	Specific focus
Effectiveness	► Achievement: - To what extent did the project achieve its objectives and results? To what extent have programme outputs been delivered in a timely and with the desired quality? - Have there been any unidentified results, positive or negative, that emerged during the implementation? - What would be the contributing factors that either facilitated or hindered progress on outcomes? What factors contributed to these outcomes? - Did any project components/objectives advance more than others? - How effective has the programme been at stimulating the participation and ownership of ILO constituents and other key stakeholders? To what extent have constituents and other key stakeholders across the programme been comparatively able to fulfill the roles expected in the programme strategy? ► Adaptability - To what extent did the programmes systematically and effectively monitor and document information to allow for measurement of results, including cross-cutting priorities? Have monitoring findings influenced adaptive management and contributed towards resolving implementation problems? - To what extent has the project adapted to evolving situation arising from the regional crisis and COVID 19? - Was the project flexible to cater to the emerging needs of stakeholders corresponding to external shocks and risk factors, including COVID 19?	Desk review and KII	
Efficiency	► How have the resources been used to fulfill the project performance in an efficient manner with respect to cost, time and management of staff? ► Were the project activities efficient in terms of financial and human resources in relation to its outcomes and outputs? ► What are the major challenges faced by the project in ensuring efficient delivery, and how have these issues impacted the project's performance and results? ► To what extent has the project established effective monitoring systems to collect sufficient and relevant data to track progress, including cross-cutting issues such as gender and inclusion of persons with disabilities? ► How efficiently was the data used to inform decision-making and enhancing project implementation?	Desk review	Gender Disability inclusion

Criteria	Questions	Tools	Specific focus
Impact Orientation	► Long-term impact • How likely are the project's interventions contribution to intended outcomes and positive long-term changes in Jordan's garment sector? • Will these interventions contribute to the garment sector's development, ensuring decent working conditions and creation of more and better-quality jobs? ► Institutional capacity (<u>for the three projects under evaluation</u>) • To what extent did the project strengthen the institutional capacity of the government, employers' and workers' organizations mainly in policy, services and practices improving the working conditions of the garment sector and promoting compliance with labour standard in the sector? ► Workers voice • To what extent have the project strengthened workers' voice and representation, particularly for women and migrant workers? • Did the project support workers' representation in governance and decision-making bodies?	Desk review and KII	Gender Workers' empowerment Disability inclusion
Sustainability	► What mechanisms and actions were taken by the project to ensure ownership of project results by benefiting institutions? ► What are the key factors influencing the sustainability of interventions at the higher political and institutional levels? ► To what extent did the project contribute to embedding sustainable practices and policies within government institutions, enterprises, and workers' organizations in Jordan's garment sector? ► To what extent is there a demonstration of political will and ownership among Better Work national stakeholders? ► Which good practices and lessons learned from the sustainability pathway of the programme could be helpful for other country programmes and development partners?	Desk review and KII	
Cross-cutting issues	► Did the project integrate gender equality, disability and non-discrimination as cross-cutting issues throughout its deliverables, including progress reports? ► Did the project contribute to social dialogue and tripartism and ILO convention, mainly on OSH, labour inspection, freedom of association and collective bargaining?	Desk review and KII	Gender Workers' empowerment Disability inclusion

► **Table 3: Evaluation questions for Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project**

Criteria	Questions	Tools	Specific focus
Coherence and Validity of Design	► Theory of change: • To what extent is the project's theory of change and strategy appropriate in addressing mental health challenges in the garment sector in Jordan? • To what extent and in what way are the project strategies and structures coherent and logical? • Is there any risk that has not been identified but compromised result achievements? ► To what extent is the project's emphasis on awareness raising an effective approach to increase workers' resilience against mental health risks? ► Did the project design adequately consider the gender dimension of the planned interventions?	Desk review and KII	Gender
Effectiveness	► Achievement of results: • To what extent has the project achieved expected results in terms of outcomes and outputs? • To what extent have stakeholder attitudes towards mental health and the project activities changed over the course of the intervention? • Have there been any unintended positive/negative consequences of the project intervention? ► What change can be seen in end-beneficiaries? What is the most significant change from the perspective of end-beneficiaries? ► How did the project address issues related to gender equality and non-discrimination?	Desk review and KII	Gender and nondiscrimination
Efficiency	► How have the resources been used to fulfill the project performance in an efficient manner with respect to cost, time and management of staff? ► Were the project activities efficient in terms of financial and human resources in relation to its outcomes and outputs?	Desk review	
Impact orientation	► To what extent has the project contributed to its long-term intended impact?	Desk review	
Sustainability	► To what extent are project's outputs/outcomes sustainable (durable) and transferable to the BWJ constituents, government institutions (MOL, MOH), the private sector, and communities to support efforts to address mental health challenges in the garment sector in Jordan?	Desk review and KII	

► **Table 4: Evaluation questions for Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions Project**

Criteria	Questions	Tools	Specific focus
Coherence and Validity of Design	► Theory of change: • To what extent is the project's theory of change and strategy appropriate in addressing challenges of inclusion and fair work environment in the garment sector in Jordan? • To what extent and in what way are the project strategies and structures coherent and logical? • Is there any risk that has not been identified but compromised result achievements? ► To what extent is the project's emphasis on capacity building an effective approach enhance inclusion and fair working environment in the garment sector in Jordan? ► Did the project design adequately consider the gender dimension of the planned interventions?	Desk review and KII	Gender
Effectiveness	► Achievement of results: • To what extent has the project achieved expected results in terms of outcomes and outputs? • To what extent have stakeholder attitudes towards inclusion of disability, fairness of work environment and the project activities changed over the course of the intervention? • Have there been any unintended positive/negative consequences of the project intervention? ► What change can be seen in end-beneficiaries? What is the most significant change from the perspective of end-beneficiaries? ► How did the project address issues related to gender equality and non-discrimination?	Desk review and KII	Gender and nondiscrimination
Efficiency	► How have the resources been used to fulfill the project performance in an efficient manner with respect to cost, time and management of staff? ► Were the project activities efficient in terms of financial and human resources in relation to its outcomes and outputs?	Desk review	
Impact orientation	► To what extent has the project contributed to its long-term intended impact?	Desk review	
Sustainability	► To what extent are project's outputs/outcomes sustainable (durable) and transferable to the BWJ constituents, government institutions (MOL), the private sector, and trade unions to support inclusion and fairness in the garment sector in Jordan?	Desk review and KII	

1.3.3. Limitations

The following are the key limitations to this evaluation.

Time constraints and methodological limitations. The evaluation was implemented within a compressed timeframe and encompassed three distinct projects, necessitating a streamlined methodological approach primarily based on document review and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders. The abbreviated schedule constrained the use of complementary qualitative methods such as site visits and focus group discussions, which could have enriched the data triangulation and contextual understanding. Nonetheless, the evaluation benefited from prior robust assessments conducted by Better Work Jordan, including comprehensive project and impact evaluations that had already validated key assumptions within the respective Theories of Change.

Limitations in assessing long-term outcomes. Given the ongoing nature and relatively short implementation timeline of both the 'Mental Health in the Garment Sector' and the 'Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions' projects, the evaluation could not meaningfully assess long-term or sustained impact. As such, the analysis was intentionally oriented toward examining progress toward impact rather than measuring definitive outcome achievement, in recognition of the inherent temporal limitations.

Stakeholder attribution challenges. An additional constraint emerged from the inability of some stakeholders to differentiate among the three concurrent Better Work Jordan projects under evaluation, and for BWJ in specific between phase IV and earlier phases. For these respondents, all project interventions were perceived collectively as part of a single BWJ initiative. As a result, the evaluator was required to provide targeted prompts and project-specific examples during interviews to elicit differentiated feedback. This overlap in stakeholder perception may have limited the granularity and specificity of responses regarding individual project contributions.

Influence of pre-evaluation stakeholder tensions. The timing of the evaluation coincided with ongoing stakeholder reactions to a recently re-disseminated ILO report that highlighted critical deficits in working conditions and decent work. Although grounded in an industrial relations assessment conducted by the ILO, and articulating recommendations for concerned stakeholders including the ILO and Better Work Jordan, the report was not well received by some stakeholders, generating ongoing debate and heightened sensitivity during the evaluation period. This contentious environment may have influenced stakeholder engagement dynamics, introducing potential bias in responses and limiting the objectivity of stakeholder reflections during data collection. The evaluator had to rephrase the evaluation questions to reduce this bias by focusing on the long-term results of the projects, and in one case, the interview was repeated with a focus on the evaluation scope.

1.4. Main Findings

1.4.1. Coherence and Validity of Design

Better Work Jordan began during a time when the sector faced significant scrutiny and challenges. It effectively addressed negative perceptions and labour compliance deficiencies through stakeholder collaboration and the provision of the key services: assessments, advisory support, and training. These services led to measurable improvements in compliance, which helped build stakeholder confidence. The project also contributed to reducing audit fatigue and lowering administrative costs for factories by improving transparency and trust among buyers, as indicated in the quote below.

“The services of BWJ provided long term assurance of compliance levels, resulting in extended order durations, improved order stability, and the acquisition of new buyers.” [Factory](#)

The design of Phase IV was both adequate and relevant, responding effectively to emerging sector needs. The project scaled alongside sector growth, further expanding its reach to include satellite units and subcontractors. It also embraced key adaptations included the introduction of new areas of focus such as mental health, sexual harassment, and inclusion. Regular compliance reports, as well as thematic reports, alerted stakeholders to new and emerging issues, helping to inform and shape their responses. Phase IV of BWJ, and its associated strategy, is also a phased transition plan towards local tripartite stakeholders playing the leading role in maintaining and improving working conditions in the sector. To achieve that, the activities of this phase focused on further building the capacity of local tripartite stakeholders, collaboration and conveying around key policy issues. In addition to working closely with international buyers, civil society organizations, the media, implementing partners and foreign government to ensure sustainability and follow through.

National ownership and sustainability of compliance and governance improvements were foundational elements of the previous project phase. Phase IV started with factory-level engagement primarily driven by tripartite partners, with labour inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and the Social Security Corporation participating in, and in some cases independently conducting, compliance assessments. Advisory functions were already divided between the Ministry of Labour, which oversees OSH, and the workers’ union, which leads on social dialogue. Training has already been transitioned to a Training of Trainers (ToT) model, with ongoing efforts to digitize delivery to enhance reach and sustainability, supported by a robust QA/QC framework. Tripartite negotiations have produced a series of sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) negotiated by JTGCU and J-GATE, addressing critical labour issues such as non-discriminatory overtime pay (2014), standardized contracts for migrant workers (2015), workplace violence and harassment policies (2019), and, overtime limits, expanded seniority bonuses, and mandatory mental health policies (2022).

Stakeholder feedback on BWJ Phase IV strategy and implementation varied. Phase IV of BWJ started with further reinforcement of national ownership of compliance and governance improvements, such as finalizing the gradual handover of the core services (also referred to as factory-level engagement) to the local stakeholders, yet, many still perceived BWJ as a critical element to the provision of these services. Three core areas of divergence on the satisfaction with project strategy and implementation emerged among the stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation:

First, stakeholders differed on the preferred scope of the project: some advocated for a more streamlined approach focused on core compliance services, even if not delivered directly by the project, while others emphasized the added value of broader initiatives such as research, mental health programming, inclusion efforts, and the development of the Workers' Centre. For instance, while some stakeholders regarded the project's research as instrumental in informing policy and identifying emerging risks, others perceived it as potentially contributing to negative media coverage that could harm the sector's well-established reputation.

Second, opinions varied on the project's approach to persistent noncompliance issues. Stakeholders held differing views on both the severity of these issues and the most appropriate mechanisms to addressing them, reflecting divergent priorities and expectations.

Third, there was debate over the project's engagement with emerging compliance demands, particularly those linked to international buyer expectations and new regulatory frameworks such as the EU Directive 2024/1760 on corporate sustainability due diligence. While the project and some stakeholders view proactive alignment with these standards as essential for enhancing the sector's competitiveness, and supporting the ambitious targets in Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision (EMV), others believed that the sector does not suffer from serious deficits in decent work and thus current compliance levels are sufficient to sustain and grow trade relationships.

Despite these areas of divergence, there is a general consensus that the key strength of BWJ remains its impartiality. Better Work Jordan's neutrality remains an asset, underpinning its credibility and the trust stakeholders place in the compliance framework supporting the sector's export performance. Furthermore, all stakeholders shared a unified commitment to enhancing the sector's access to export markets and demonstrated a collaborative approach grounded in mutual cooperation and aligned objectives.

The results framework and Theory of Change (ToC) for Phase IV are well-aligned with the identified sector challenges and BWJ Phase IV strategy. The project's three outcomes reflect the desired status by 2027, of the labour market governance in the garment sector, the employment of Jordanians in the garment sector, and the working conditions beyond the garment factories participating in BWJ. The project design also incorporates key cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, workers' voice, occupational safety and health (OSH), disability inclusion, gender-based violence, labour migration, social dialogue, and digitization. These issues are systematically integrated across project documentation, monitoring and evaluation plans, and implementation activities.

The project continues to be highly relevant. The BWJ's approach—grounded in evidence that assessments, advisory services, and training contribute to improved compliance—is well-suited to achieving its objectives.

1.4.2. Effectiveness

The project was advancing in alignment with its work plan. For the full implementation period of the project (between 2022 and 2027), the project outlined a total of 72 activities: 3 have been successfully completed, 45 are currently in implementation, 1 has experienced delays, and 23 are scheduled for future initiation. This reflects a strong level of operational engagement across most planned components, with a substantial proportion of activities actively progressing. Nevertheless, several stakeholders expressed a preference for the accelerated implementation of specific activities that would have facilitated a more timely and comprehensive transfer of key services to local counterparts. This feedback suggests a degree of dissatisfaction with the project's implementation timeline as outlined in the work plan, and reflects stakeholder concerns regarding the full execution of critical activities in light of the termination of project funding.

The project performance reporting indicates effective progress on results to date. In terms of results monitoring, the assessment of performance targets remains complex due to the predominance of end line-focused indicators, which are structured for measurement upon project completion. Despite this constraint, 12 of the 45 indicators have already been achieved or exceeded. Additionally, most remaining indicators are showing favorable trends when compared to baseline data, indicating effective progress. Nevertheless, a small subset of indicators is showing a downward trajectory, potentially signaling emerging challenges in areas such as compliance, effectiveness, inclusiveness, or representativeness within social dialogue frameworks. These trends warrant targeted analysis and adaptive management to safeguard the project's overarching goals even with the local constituents leading future interventions.

Factory stakeholders recognize and appreciate the support of Better Work Jordan. Although the factories value the assessments by BWJ and indicated their effect in reducing audit fatigue and associated administrative costs for factories, the factories valued training and advisory to address non-compliances and develop systems and internal policies that can overcome other compliance issues (as indicated in the quotes below). Although a small number of factories were interviewed for this evaluation, the findings suggest that smaller enterprises exhibit a comparatively higher demand for technical advisory support and capacity-building services than larger firms.

"Advisory is a very effective tool to enhance compliance." [Several factories](#)

"Capacity building is a great investment, all training activities across the projects were useful. In some areas, we now have the capacity to implement new requirements on our own without external support." [Factory](#)

Capacity-building interventions played a pivotal role in driving outcome achievements and fostering stakeholder engagement and ownership. These initiatives were instrumental in empowering stakeholders to assume leadership in sustaining and enhancing working conditions within the garment sector. Notable examples include the targeted training of Ministry of Labor (MOL) inspectors in factory assessment reporting, supplemented by quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) support, which enhanced their capacity to conduct assessments and produce standardized reports—thereby strengthening their ability to enforce labour standards. Similarly, technical assistance provided to the workers' union bolstered its internal systems and institutional capacity to provide advisory services. BWJ also employed implementation agreements as a mechanism to institutionalize role transitions supported by capacity building. For instance, BWJ facilitated the appointment of six union representatives and a communication officer under the Trade Union framework. Upon completion of the implementation agreement, the union sustained the employment of three representatives and the communication officer through its own financial resources. This transition reflects a significant step toward institutional sustainability and alignment with the union's strategic objectives.

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings served as a critical mechanism for fostering sector-wide collaboration and policy dialogue. Stakeholders consistently recognized the PAC as an effective platform for the proactive identification and resolution of pressing challenges within the garment sector, as indicated in the quotes below. Documentation from PAC meetings highlights the committee's capacity to drive concrete actions related to labour policy reforms, performance indicator tracking, and the management of emerging sectoral issues. Regular agenda items included review and discussion of the BWJ Annual Report, proposed legislative amendments, updates to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and dissemination of research outputs produced by BWJ, underscoring the PAC's strategic role in sectoral governance and coordination.

“BWJ achieved its purpose, not only because of the critical services provided that improved and demonstrated compliance, but also because it built a bridge of communication and transparency between the trade stakeholders and the tripartite partners.” ILO, Supply Chains

*“The PAC meetings were critical, BWJ engaged all stakeholders and, supported a constructive social dialogue”
Several Stakeholders*

The use of implementation agreements as a mechanism for stakeholder engagement did not consistently lead to the intended – sustainable – outcomes. Throughout the evaluation period, BWJ entered into—or attempted to enter into—several such agreements with key partners, including the trade union, JGATE, and JCI. However, a number of these agreements experienced substantial delays during the negotiation phase, required post-signature amendments, or were ultimately supplanted by more adaptable coordination frameworks. Notably, the implementation agreement with JCI, the main employers’ organization in the country, generated some promising results; JCI leveraged project support to facilitate knowledge transfer sessions between small enterprises and garment-exporting factories, focusing on best practices in human resource management and lean manufacturing—demonstrating the potential value of targeted, outcome-oriented collaboration.

The project employed an adaptive management approach to address implementation challenges; however, stakeholder consensus on strategic direction and activity execution was not consistently achieved. Progress and results were systematically monitored, documented, and used to inform implementation adjustments, with issues and proposed solutions regularly discussed with stakeholders and during Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings. While collaboration on sectoral-level priorities within the PAC framework proved constructive and contributed to informed policy dialogue, coordination at the level of operational activity implementation remained complex and, at times, challenging. Technical implementation progress reports consistently reflected these challenges, documenting both obstacles encountered and the measures undertaken. Despite the project’s structured efforts to foster alignment, divergences in stakeholder priorities—particularly regarding activities beyond the scope of core service delivery—frequently impeded consensus on co-implementation. These misalignments, as detailed in prior sections, underscore the inherent difficulties in advancing joint initiatives where stakeholder mandates, expectations, or capacities differ, thereby limiting the effectiveness of collaborative execution beyond core service and policy dialogue.

1.4.3. Efficiency

The project demonstrated a generally high level of efficiency in resource utilization, with financial and human resources systematically mapped to outputs, outcomes, and activities. Detailed financial reporting accompanied all technical progress reports submitted to the donor, ensuring transparency and accountability in resource management. These reports provided disaggregated data by expenditure categories, enabling a clear alignment between resource inputs and expected results. This structured approach to financial oversight allowed for effective tracking of expenditures relative to project milestones.

Operational efficiency was further supported by the project’s strategic staffing model, which relied primarily on internal project staff and contracted consultants for the delivery of most activities. This approach facilitated cost control, ensured timely implementation, and enabled adaptive management of human resources. Additionally, several implementation agreements with local stakeholders were introduced during Phase IV, which served to institutionalize roles, decentralize responsibilities, and leverage local capacities. These agreements also included clear budgetary provisions, enhancing predictability and accountability in the use of financial resources. Although implementation agreements represent an efficient modality for operationalizing project activities and towards building the capacity of stakeholders, they did not consistently yield the intended outcomes, as previously outlined.

While no external benchmark was available for direct comparison, the project's financial and human resource efficiency is assessed as satisfactory. This conclusion is based on the granularity of the budget framework, the coherence between allocated resources and targeted outcomes, and the operational clarity provided by implementation agreements. Furthermore, regular engagement through Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings facilitated the integration of performance data into strategic and operational planning, thereby reinforcing a data-driven management approach. Nevertheless, some stakeholders indicated a preference for a more focused project scope centered on core service delivery, supported by a reduced budget, even if the services are not provided directly by BWJ. This perspective was underpinned by the belief that a narrower, more targeted intervention might have enhanced the project's sustainability and increased its appeal for additional donor funding during the remaining period of Phase IV. Although this hypothesis warrants further validation, it highlights the importance of incorporating stakeholder feedback into future planning processes, if any.

The project's ability to use data effectively for decision-making represents an additional dimension of its operational efficiency. Beyond routine reporting, performance data—particularly in relation to key indicators—was regularly analyzed and served as the basis for real-time adjustments. Discussions during PAC meetings played a critical role in reviewing progress and identifying areas for optimization, thus reinforcing a feedback loop between data collection, analysis, and adaptive project management.

1.4.4. Impact Orientation

The project exhibited a strong impact orientation, with interventions contributing to both immediate outcomes and long-term systemic changes within the garment sector. Notably, project-supported services led to measurable improvements in compliance with labour standards and enhanced the capacity of factories to demonstrate such compliance to external stakeholders. This, in turn, increased buyer confidence, reduced the frequency of external audits, and alleviated associated administrative burdens and costs for factories. These improvements reflect not only enhanced operational efficiency but also progress toward the broader goal of promoting sustainable and responsible sourcing practices across the sector. The quote below from the opening remarks of the UN's Resident Coordinator during the latest stakeholders' forum, refers to the systematic changes catalyzed by the project within the garment sector.

"Better Work Jordan is a rare example of a programme that achieves high impact with modest resources. It has shown how technical cooperation, grounded in tripartite dialogue, can catalyze systemic change across an entire industry." [The UN Resident Coordinator's opening remarks during BWJ latest Stakeholders' Forum](#)

In terms of structural transformation, the project contributed to long-term sectoral development by promoting decent working conditions and facilitating the creation of more and better-quality jobs. The integrated support model—combining capacity building, technical assistance, and multi-stakeholder dialogue—enabled progress toward the intended outcomes and supported systemic changes conducive to sustainable development. These contributions were particularly relevant in strengthening the enabling environment for labour market governance and improving working conditions in alignment with national development objectives and international labour standards. Amended legislations, Collective Bargaining Agreements and enhancement of grievance redress mechanisms within the factories and across the sector are some examples of these critical sectoral transformations.

A key area of impact was the strengthening of institutional capacity among government bodies, employers, and workers' organizations. Stakeholders credited this capacity enhancement to the project's targeted interventions, including technical training, advisory support, and structured engagement through the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and other stakeholder forums. These capacity-building initiatives complemented the stakeholders' own investments and interests, creating a multiplier effect that reinforced institutional ownership and sustained engagement in policy and service delivery processes.

Continued efforts to strengthen workers' voice remain central to maintaining and improving working conditions in the sector. Significant progress was made in enhancing worker voice and representation, particularly among women and migrant workers, including through legislative amendments allowing migrant workers to become members of trade unions. These advancements were supported, in part, by legislative reforms and project efforts to embed worker representation in governance and decision-making structures. The workers' union expressed confidence in its ability to sustain these gains, drawing on its institutional legacy and reinforced capacity. However, despite these positive developments, challenges remain in aligning the broader legal and institutional frameworks for freedom of association with international labour standards, especially in terms of inclusivity within trade union structures. Lastly, while the project facilitated meaningful participation of workers' representatives in dialogue processes, findings from this evaluation—as well as previous assessments—indicate that employers and government institutions continue to exert disproportionate influence over tripartite dialogue and policy-making mechanisms. This imbalance suggests a need for continued efforts to strengthen the voice and negotiating power of workers' organizations to ensure more equitable representation and influence in shaping labour market policies and sectoral reforms.

1.4.5. Sustainability

Phase IV of the project was strategically oriented toward establishing a robust and inclusive tripartite-plus labour market governance framework within the garment sector. This phase emphasized a gradational implementation plan designed to culminate by 2027, starting with the full transition of core service delivery—namely assessment, advisory, and training functions—to national stakeholders and enhancing coordination to address sector-wide issues. The overarching goal was to ensure that local constituents assume full ownership and leadership in sector governance. In support of this transition, the current and previous phases of the project facilitated a series of system-wide legislative reforms and policy advancements that serve as critical and sustainable pillars for preserving and institutionalizing the progress achieved to date, including:

- 1. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining:** BWJ facilitated the establishment and periodic renewal of Jordan's first sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in the garment industry. The CBA institutionalized rights related to wages, leave, overtime, and grievance resolution. BWJ also supported the operationalization of tripartite dialogue mechanisms, promoting balanced representation of workers, employers, and government actors.
- 2. Migrant Worker Protections:** BWJ contributed to strengthening protections for migrant workers through advocacy on the Standard Unified Contract and support for the enforcement of the legal ban on passport retention. These efforts improved transparency, fairness in employment practices, and compliance with international labour standards.
- 3. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH):** BWJ provided technical assistance to inform amendments to labour and OSH regulations, contributing to improved factory safety, regulated working hours, and enhanced maternity protection. These reforms supported more consistent enforcement of workplace standards.

4. Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination: The program advanced gender equity by supporting anti-harassment policy development and promoting the inclusion of women—particularly migrant workers—in trade unions and workplace governance. These actions contributed to greater gender representation and safer work environments.

5. Grievance Mechanisms and Labour Inspection: BWJ strengthened labour inspection systems in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, focusing on inspector training and standardized assessment procedures. The project also supported the institutionalization of internal grievance mechanisms, enhancing workplace-level dispute resolution and overall compliance monitoring.

While local constituents are largely prepared to sustain core service delivery and social dialogue mechanisms, ongoing impartial quality assurance, operational support, and alignment with buyer expectations remain essential to ensuring the long-term sustainability and credibility of the sector's governance system. Detailed findings are included in the following paragraphs.

Local constituents expressed a high level of confidence in their ability to sustain the delivery of core services—namely factory assessments, advisory support, and training—pending the completion of a few remaining transition measures. However, all stakeholder groups indicated a shared preference for the continued involvement of an impartial entity to oversee or provide quality assurance for factory assessments, ensuring objectivity and credibility. The tripartite partners further affirmed confidence in their capacity to uphold effective, representative, and inclusive social dialogue mechanisms, as well as to respond efficiently to sector-wide developments and emerging issues.

Despite that, the evaluation identified several operational components critical to the effective delivery of core services—such as transportation logistics, translation support during assessments and advisory visits, and the editing of technical reports—that are unlikely to be sustained seamlessly within existing government or constituent systems. These challenges are largely attributable to rigid administrative structures and extended procurement timelines, which could impede the continuity and responsiveness of service delivery.

Stakeholders also signaled a strong interest in continued technical support in emerging areas, particularly the integration of technology and innovation to enhance compliance monitoring and predict workplace-related risks. Such advancements are viewed as essential to modernizing assessment methodologies and maintaining relevance in a rapidly evolving global supply chain context.

Importantly, sustaining buyer confidence in the ability of local institutions to uphold compliance standards and deliver credible services through established social dialogue structures remains a critical determinant of long-term sustainability. Ensuring ongoing alignment between local capacity and buyer expectations is an area requiring deliberate action and closer coordination with trade partners.

To that end, local constituents will need to further institutionalize performance standards, invest in technological innovation, and strengthen external communication strategies to demonstrate credibility and maintain trust with international stakeholders. These measures are integral to consolidating gains and advancing the sector's sustainability agenda.

1.4.6. Crosscutting Issues

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) Phase IV (2022–2027) integrates several cross-cutting issues critical to enhancing labour standards, promoting inclusive growth, and ensuring sustainability within the garment sector.

Gender equality and inclusion: BWJ has prioritized gender equality by fostering women's economic empowerment and promoting an enabling environment for career development. The program strengthens women's voices in factories, labour management committees, and trade unions, aiming to reduce gender-based discrimination, including violence and harassment in the workplace. Additionally, BWJ has developed guidelines to enhance the employment of people with disabilities in the garment sector, focusing on equitable recruitment practices and workplace accommodations supported by the ESDC funded project “Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan's Garment Sector Project”.

Migration and inclusive employment: recognizing the significant role of migrant workers in Jordan's garment industry, previous phases of the project supported the implementation of a unified contract for garment migrant workers, ensuring fair employment terms and conditions. It also supported the enforcement of legal protections, such as the prohibition of passport retention by employers, to safeguard migrant workers' rights. BWJ Phase IV planned to involve new modes of cooperation with stakeholders in sending countries to maintain improvements to the recruitment process. Furthermore, it planned to work with the constituents to uphold workers' rights by tackling the issues of pay discrimination and living conditions.

Data and evidence-based decision making: BWJ emphasizes the importance of data and evidence in shaping policies and practices. The program supports stakeholders in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data to inform decision-making processes. This approach enhances transparency, accountability, and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving labour standards and working conditions.

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH): The program collaborated with the Ministry of Labour to strengthen OSH management systems, raise awareness about health services and first aid, and improve worker accommodations. Despite progress, challenges remain in areas such as mental health provision and compliance with OSH regulations, necessitating continued efforts to enhance workplace safety.

1.5. Recommendations and Lessons Learned

1.5.1. Recommendations

Informed by the needs of local constituents, future efforts should explore viable pathways to provide: (i) impartial quality assurance, (ii) operational support, and (iii) stronger alignment with buyer expectations. These elements are critical to sustaining the long-term credibility, governance integrity, and export competitiveness of the sector. Even if current BWJ resources are insufficient to fully support this process, local stakeholders—such as trade unions, employer organizations, and relevant public institutions—can collaborate to identify potential approaches and assess their feasibility, resource implications, and funding requirements. This joint exploration would lay the groundwork for future interventions that reinforce sectoral sustainability and stakeholder ownership.

Given the three core areas of divergence among stakeholders - namely, the project's scope, approaches to addressing persistent noncompliance, and the level of engagement with emerging compliance demands - it is essential that local constituents develop a shared vision and define how these issues will be addressed within their respective mandates. As the sector transitions toward nationally led governance, and with the termination of BWJ technical assistance, these actors will bear primary responsibility for sustaining compliance frameworks. To ensure continuity and sectoral integrity, a long-term strategic vision should be developed alongside an interim operational plan. Initiating this process quickly will safeguard previous gains, maintain stakeholder confidence (including buyers and international partners), and ensure that compliance mechanisms remain credible, functional, and responsive to both current and future demands. Local stakeholders will also need to identify and institutionalize mechanisms to sustain the collaborative engagement and dialogue structures established through the PAC meetings, as integral components of the broader operational plan and strategic vision.

Given the dynamic and politically complex context of the sector, it is essential that future activities, including those undertaken during the BWJ wind-down period and any prospective ILO interventions, integrate iterative and actionable political economy analysis (PEA). Embedding PEA throughout the program cycle will allow strategies to remain adaptive, politically smart, and context-responsive, ensuring greater stakeholder buy-in and relevance. Such an approach is critical not only for enhancing the contextual accuracy of project design but also for informing real-time adjustments to operational tools such as logframes, implementation plans, and engagement modalities. Where political will or local conditions do not support reform, PEA can help define 'realistic scopes of engagement', allowing the project to prioritize areas where meaningful and locally feasible change is possible. Moreover, in contexts where stakeholders are not yet ready to initiate reforms, embedded PEA enables the project to make informed decisions about the timing, nature, or even necessity of intervention. This ensures that resources are directed where they can generate the most sustainable impact while minimizing risk and reinforcing alignment with local dynamics.

1.5.2. Lessons Learned

Sustained engagement, tailored support, and multi-level training strategies are of critical importance to strengthen institutional capacities across the sector. The project successfully employed a combination of social dialogue facilitation, direct training, mentoring, and institutional engagement to strengthen the capacities of factory personnel, trade union representatives, and national actors in promoting decent work and labour compliance. One of the most effective modalities was the use of Training-of-Trainers (ToT), which enabled the dissemination of knowledge at scale while embedding ownership at the factory level. By targeting HR managers, compliance officers, and union focal points, the ToT model ensured that knowledge and tools were retained within institutions. Furthermore, the project made strategic use of digital tools to expand the reach and sustainability of training

content. Sexual Harassment Prevention (SHP) training, for example, was digitized into a mobile-friendly format using WhatsApp and eLearning platforms and translated into multiple worker languages. This allowed the project to engage thousands of workers—including migrant and hard-to-reach groups—without the logistical constraints of in-person delivery.

Over the course of the program, the PAC emerged as a crucial tripartite-plus platform, facilitating structured dialogue, sectoral coordination, and stakeholder alignment. Its regular convening enabled diverse actors—including government, employers, workers' representatives, and development partners—to collaboratively address emerging challenges, review program progress, and influence strategic direction. The PAC proved particularly valuable in responding to crises, such as factory closures or reputational risks, where timely information exchange and joint decision-making were essential.

Utilizing research and data to guide decision-making and inform programmatic adjustments proves valuable, even in cases where there is not full consensus among stakeholders. Throughout implementation, BWJ consistently utilized evidence-based approaches to respond to emerging sectoral needs, identify systemic gaps, and calibrate interventions accordingly. Research outputs, including worker surveys, factory-level assessments, and studies on mental health, gender-based violence, and disability inclusion, enabled the project to design contextually relevant tools and activities. For instance, findings from assessments on workers with disabilities directly informed the development of sector-specific inclusion guidelines, while survey data on harassment patterns guided the expansion and localization of training modules. Additionally, analysis of grievance trends and compliance performance contributed to the refinement of the grievance redress SOPs. This deliberate use of data not only enhanced the credibility of the project among stakeholders but also helped anticipate buyer expectations and align sectoral responses with international due diligence requirements. However, the experience also underscored the importance of strengthening institutional mechanisms for data utilization, particularly in supporting national actors to sustain evidence-based planning beyond the project's lifecycle.

► 2. Mental Health

2.1. Executive Summary

The Better Work Jordan (BWJ) Mental Health Project, initiated in 2021 and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, represents a pioneering effort to embed mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) within Jordan's garment sector. Sparked by a series of distressing incidents—including suicides among workers—the initiative responded to a recognized need for mental health services in a sector dominated by migrant workers, many of whom face isolation, language barriers, and high-pressure working environments. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed and exacerbated these vulnerabilities, underlining the critical necessity of worker-centered psychosocial interventions. The project was conceived in alignment with global commitments, including the ILO-WHO Global Action Plan on Mental Health at Work.

The project's theory of change is built around two transformative outcomes: (1) strengthening workers' resilience to mental health risks, and (2) increasing the coverage and accessibility of factory-level and external referral systems for those in need of support. These objectives are advanced through multiple strategies, including mental health risk assessments, awareness-raising, capacity building among healthcare and HR personnel, and expanding access to mental health services through trained in-factory counsellors and external networks. Mental health focal points and cross-functional mental health task forces were established in several factories, playing a key role in integrating MHPSS into day-to-day operations and supporting the creation of factory-specific policies. The project also engaged with national stakeholders to incorporate mental health provisions into sectoral frameworks such as Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) and occupational safety and health (OSH) legislation.

Implementation results by late 2024 showed that 14 out of 30 planned outputs had been completed, with an additional 13 actively underway. Notable achievements included the rollout of the WHO's Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) and Psychological First Aid (PFA) training, the institutionalization of mental health policies at the factory level, and the establishment of awareness activities that reached thousands of workers. The development and dissemination of a model Mental Health Policy—accompanied by Standard Operating Procedures—were pivotal in translating awareness into action. These interventions contributed to a measurable improvement in the psychological well-being of workers, particularly among those exposed to training and peer support structures.

The evaluation found the project's design to be contextually relevant and largely responsive to gender and migration dynamics, although early iterations lacked consistent integration of these cross-cutting concerns. In recent phases, however, gender-sensitive approaches were more evident in the design of awareness materials and in the project's commitment to improving the mental health of women workers, who face compounded risks due to social and cultural stigma. Likewise, increased attention was given to language accessibility, with materials translated into several languages spoken by the migrant workforce—although more consistent translation and targeted outreach to smaller and satellite factories remain areas for improvement.

From a cost-effectiveness standpoint, the project successfully leveraged existing institutional tools (such as ILO and WHO training content), minimized operational costs by integrating into existing factory structures, and built capacity through scalable training-of-trainers (ToT) models. The use of multiple communication platforms—including social media, in-person events, and printed materials—enabled broad reach despite barriers related to literacy and technology access. However, more robust integration of mental health services within factory clinic operations and stronger links to long-term corporate responsibility strategies could enhance sustainability.

Evidence from a 2024 study confirmed the project’s positive psychosocial impact, particularly in terms of reduced stress and improved help-seeking behavior. Workers trained through the program reported greater confidence in coping with work-related pressures and a stronger willingness to access available support mechanisms. The establishment of supportive peer environments and the empowerment of mid-level managers and healthcare staff played an instrumental role in normalizing mental health dialogue within the workplace.

Looking ahead, the evaluation emphasizes the need to institutionalize mental health within factory HR and compliance functions, embed translated tools into onboarding processes, and ensure continuity through partnerships with national systems and frameworks. Formalizing mental health policies through sectoral CBAs and labour legislation would solidify gains made under the project. Additionally, the use of digital technologies and peer-learning platforms could further strengthen the reach and relevance of interventions.

In conclusion, the BWJ Mental Health Project succeeded in addressing a critical gap in worker well-being and laid the groundwork for long-term transformation in workplace mental health culture. Its emphasis on participatory approaches, operational integration, and alignment with international best practices serves as a valuable model for similar interventions in other high-risk, high-turnover sectors. Lessons from the initiative highlight the importance of management buy-in, tailored strategies for diverse worker groups, and a multi-level approach that links factory practices to broader labour governance frameworks.

2.2. Project Description

Mental health, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), is a state of well-being in which individuals can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and contribute to their communities. In the context of Jordan’s garment sector, several intersecting factors contribute to poor mental health outcomes: stressful working and living conditions, social exclusion, discrimination, limited language proficiency, and gender-based vulnerabilities.² Prior to the launch of the project, several critical research exercises took place defining the status of mental health among the sectors’ workers, the factors that affect mental health and outcomes, and areas of interventions that are likely to improve mental health among the sectors’ workers. These publications were the corner stone of the project’s design, and informed key baseline indicators.

In response to the country context and research findings, BWJ initiated the “Mental Health in the Garment Sector in Jordan” project in early 2020, and was launched in 2021, funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). The initiative is rooted in a preventive and support-based approach, informed by prior assessments, stakeholder consultations, and collaborations with institutions such as Columbia University and Caritas Jordan. The project is aligned with international frameworks, including the joint ILO-WHO Global Action Plan on Mental Health at Work (2022)³, and aims to improve psychosocial outcomes among workers—particularly women and migrants—by building individual resilience, strengthening factory-level responses, and enhancing referral mechanisms to external mental health services.

2 Gardin, K., Kim, Y.K., Keim, H., Song, J., Takemura, R., Tomar, S. & Zein, S., 2019. Supporting Mental Well-being of Migrant Garment Workers in Jordan. [pdf] Better Work Discussion Paper No. 33. International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Finance Corporation (IFC). Available at: https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/DP33_V3.pdf [Accessed 5 June 2025]

3 World Health Organization (WHO) & International Labour Organization (ILO). (2022). Mental health at work: Policy brief. Geneva: WHO & ILO. Available at: <https://www.who.int/teams/mental-health-and-substance-use> [Accessed 26 August 2022].

► **Box 2: Summary of report ‘Supporting Mental Well-being of Migrant Garment Workers in Jordan’**

Supporting Mental Well-being of Migrant Garment Workers in Jordan

This report explores the mental health challenges faced by migrant workers in Jordan’s garment sector. Impact of Work on Mental Health: The workplace plays a crucial role in shaping mental health outcomes. Poor working conditions, repetitive tasks, and high psychological demands can negatively impact workers’ well-being.

1. Unique Challenges for Migrant Workers: Migrant garment workers face additional stressors, including language barriers, financial pressures, loss of social support, and difficulties integrating into a new environment. These factors make them more vulnerable to mental health issues.
2. Barriers to Mental Health Services: Access to mental health services for migrant workers is limited due to financial constraints, gaps in service provision, lack of coordination, resource shortages, and stigma surrounding mental health.
3. Recommendations for Improvement: The report proposes several interventions, including:
 - Raising awareness about mental health at the factory level.
 - Establishing ‘Worker Well-being Networks’ and ‘Crisis Management Protocols’ to provide targeted support.
 - Creating a mental health information system to track and monitor worker well-being.
 - Embedding mental health support across the migration cycle, such as improving pre-departure training and offering workplace buddy systems.
 - Strengthening national policies to ensure long-term sustainable mental health programs for migrant workers.

Source: Gardin, K., Kim, Y.K., Keim, H., Song, J., Takemura, R., Tomar, S. & Zein, S., 2019. Supporting Mental Well-being of Migrant Garment Workers in Jordan. [pdf] Better Work Discussion Paper No. 33. International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Finance Corporation (IFC). Available at: https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/DP33_V3.pdf [Accessed 5 June 2025]

The project’s theory of change is centered on two long-term outcomes: increasing worker resilience to Mental Health risks and expanding factory and referral system coverage for workers needing mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS). The project is expected to achieve the following results:

Goal: Improve mental well-being among garment workers, prioritizing women and migrant populations.

Long-Term Outcomes (LTOs):

- **LTO 1:** Workers are resilient against mental health risks, including seeking psychosocial support.
- **LTO 2:** Factories and the mental health referral system reach more workers needing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services

Medium-Term Outcomes (MTOs):

- **MTO 1.1:** Increased worker willingness to seek support.
- **MTO 1.2:** Higher proportion of workers reporting acceptable stress levels.
- **MTO 2.1:** Factory-led detection and response systems for at-risk workers.
- **MTO 2.2:** Expanded mental health referral system access for women and migrant workers.

Strategic Pillars:

1. **Needs Assessment** – Identifying mental health risks and needs within the sector.
2. **Awareness Campaigns** – Multilingual initiatives targeting stigma and promoting mental health literacy.
3. **Capacity Building** – Training factory stakeholders, counselors, and mental health focal points.
4. **Service Access** – Enhancing internal (factory-level) and external (referral-based) MHPSS provision.

2.3. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

The scope of evaluation, methodology and questions per project are included in section 1.3 above.

2.4. Main Findings

2.4.1. Coherence and Validity of Design

Project design is aligned with sector needs. The BWJ Mental Health project drew from the 2019 study on migrant well-being ⁴ (also summarized in Box 2 above). Its design aligns with Better Work Jordan's overarching strategy to improve workers' conditions. The project logic is embedded in a theory of change (ToC) that targets both preventive and support mechanisms: enhancing worker resilience and expanding access to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS). The intervention is coherent with BWJ's broader objectives and effectively integrates within ongoing services in the garment sector. This final evaluation also considered the research that examined the causal impacts of the Mental Health Project published in 2024⁵, which found that the project interventions had a significant positive impact on the mental well-being of garment factory workers. Furthermore, it confirmed that the training component of the factory-level interventions in particular appears to have been a major driver of the positive effects observed. This training component involves mental health support training to workplace healthcare professionals and managers which provides them with the skills, knowledge and tools to proactively identify and assist workers in need of mental health support.

Results chain is logical. The project's design is logically articulated across outcomes and outputs, particularly in how LTO1 fosters preventive practices and LTO2 strengthens institutional responses. MTO 2.1 advances factory-level reforms through policy enhancement, stakeholder capacity-building, and institutional awareness, while MTO 2.2 addresses systemic referral mechanisms, including a pilot cross-border referral link for migrant workers. The mid-point evaluation indicated that the project does not fully reflect all preventive activities being implemented. The final evaluation indicates that this finding remains valid, and future interventions can better integrate preventive activities in the result chain.

4 Gardin, K., Kim, Y.K., Keim, H., Song, J., Takemura, R., Tomar, S., and Zein, S., 2019. Supporting Mental Well-being of Migrant Garment Workers in Jordan. International Labour Organization (ILO).

5 El-Rayyes, T. and Vaswani, H., 2024. Developing effective mental health workplace interventions in low and middle-income countries: Evidence from Jordan's garment industry. Geneva: International Labour Office and International Finance Corporation.

Institutional context and gender considerations were incorporated the project. The criminalization of attempted suicide in 2022 ⁶, poses significant barriers to mental health disclosure and care-seeking—especially for migrant workers. This context necessitates cautious, stigma-sensitive project strategies which was integrated in the project design and activities. The mid-point evaluation found that the gender dimension in project design is partial and not systematically integrated across the project logic. Mainly because women are explicitly mentioned as a target group in the project’s objective, but gender is not adequately embedded in the formal results framework (LTOs, MTOs, STOs). This final evaluation notes that gender considerations were improved by enhancing gender integration in key deliverables as activities, such as the Mental Health Policy that was published in 2024, followed by an industrial seminar to introduce it to the factories and social partners. Additionally, gender is integrated in two of the project outputs ⁷.

2.4.1. Effectiveness

The project was progressing well in terms of output achievement. As indicated in Table 5, 14 of outputs were achieved and another 13 under implementation, while only 2 were delayed or did not start. The termination of funding implied that many project activities could not be continued. The mid-term evaluation similarly captured timely project progress. The project key activities resulted in the development of the Mental Health Policy in the Workplace and the Standard Operation Procedure for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Jordanian Garment Factories, as indicated in the quote below. Some of the factories interviewed for this evaluation indicated that the policy has been updated three times so far, to correspond to their needs, as indicated in the quote below. The factories also commended all the factory-level interventions included in Box 3. Of these, several factories highlighted the important role of the training, and mentioned that the Psychological First Aid was used internally to train supervisors and support mental health across the factory, as indicated in the quote below.

“We did not know much about mental health. Buyers have been asking us to work on this issue for years, but we did not know how. Now, all the factories have mental health policies, referral SOPs, on-site counselors, and improved capacity through training.” [Factory](#).

“Psychological first aid training is short and very useful, it is now incorporated in the supervisors training program” [Factory](#)

⁶ Article 339 of Criminal law number 16 for the year 1960, amended in 2022.

⁷ Output 1.1.1.1: Worker interviewed to identify their challenges and needs in mental wellbeing taking into account workers’ culture, language, level of education and gender, and Output 2.1.1.1 Factories’ existing HR and grievance systems, OSH, sexual harassment prevention, anti-discrimination and gender policies reviewed and revised.

► **Table 5: Mental Health Project, implementation status of outputs**

Project Objective: Improved workers' mental wellbeing, especially among women and migrant workers, in the garment sector in Jordan	Outputs status			
	Completed	Ongoing	Delayed/ not started	All
LTO 1: Workers are resilient against mental health risks, including seeking psychosocial support				
MTO 1.1: Workers report willingness to seek psychosocial support, including informal support.	2	3	0	5
MTO 1.2: More workers report an acceptable level of stress.	3	1	1	5
LTO 2: Factories and the mental health referral system reach more workers needing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services.				
MTO 2.1: Factories take measures to detect workers at risk and provide Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services	6	4	1	11
MTO 2.2: The mental health referral system serves a broader range of workers, including women and migrant workers.	3	5	1	9
Total - Number	14	13	2	30
Share	47%	43%	10%	100%

Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project has made significant strides in integrating mental health considerations into the garment sector's framework. Most critical of these were through enhancements in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) legislations. The 2019 CBA incorporated specific roles for employers in supporting workers' mental health needs. This inclusion underscored a collective acknowledgment of mental well-being as a critical component of workplace health. Additionally, the 2022 CBA further expanded on mental health-related provisions, introducing obligations to employers to support workers' mental health by referring them to specialist centers in Jordan when needed or upon request, especially if clinic-level services are insufficient. Workers cannot be dismissed solely for being referred to mental health services unless a specialist confirms permanent incapacity after treatment. Employers must also provide training on the importance of mental health and establish a workplace mental health policy. This policy should align with Better Work Jordan's guidelines and ensure access to factory-level mental health and psychosocial support. The Ministry of Labour also revised key OSH regulations, including Regulation No. 31 of 2023 on Occupational Safety and Health and Occupational Hazards Prevention, to enhance awareness of mental health issues in the workplace and recognize psychosocial hazards as a risk factor in industries such as the garment sector.

► **Box 3: Factory-level interventions implemented by the Mental Health Project**

Factory- level intervention included:

1. **Mental Health Focal Points.** Designated factory staff (e.g., Counsellors, HR Officers, Health Professionals) tasked with:
 - Identifying available mental health and psychosocial support services and facilitating confidential referrals.
 - Supporting development and implementation of factory-level mental health policies via a cross-factory task force.
 - Coordinating mental health activities, including trainings and awareness sessions.
2. **Counsellors.** Appointed to deliver non-specialized mental health counselling aligned with UN MHPSS guidelines. Counsellors hold relevant degrees, receive clinical supervision, and maintain case records submitted to Better Work Jordan.
3. **Training.** Delivered to factory welfare-related staff and included:
 - WHO mhGAP: 4-5 day training on mental, neurological, and substance use disorder management, with monthly psychiatric follow-up.
 - Psychological First Aid (PFA): 1-day training for immediate support to distressed individuals, targeting a wide range of factory staff.
 - Mental Well-being: 4-day training on counselling techniques, recognizing vulnerable individuals, and managing mental health issues.
 - Problem Group Management Plus: 6-day training on group psychological help for adults impaired by distress in communities exposed to adversity.

The project was also on track to achieving almost all of its result indicators. Many of the project indicators have been over achieved, including: i) Number of the awareness session participants who think the awareness sessions were useful, ii) Number of factories implemented training to workers to improve their understanding of the issues affecting mental wellbeing, iii) Number of counsellors hired to support workers in the sector and IV) Number of workers who received services from the mhGAP trainees. Some of the indicators were close to the target by September 2024, especially the indicators on mental health status measured through self-reporting in the worker/manager survey such as the following indicators. It is important to track the actual values of these indicators if a worker/manager survey takes place in 2025.

- Percent of workers with moderate or high mental wellbeing, disaggregated by gender and migration status.
- Percent of workers who say they tend to bounce back quickly after hard times
- Percentage of workers who report they feel comfortable seeking psychological support when they are experiencing personal stress
- Percentage of workers with acceptable job stress, disaggregated by gender, migration status and factory type.
- Percent of supervisors who agree that there are things they can do to support a person with a mental health problem

2.4.2. Efficiency

The Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project has demonstrated notable efficiency in the strategic use of financial and human resources. The project capitalized on synergies with existing ILO and WHO materials, particularly by adapting financial education content and mental health tools to the garment sector context. Additionally, the project successfully leveraged factory-level resources, which facilitated cost-effective implementation of interventions, such as counseling services and training programs. The project also worked in a coherent manner on sexual harassment grievance mechanisms, where it developed the factory-level grievance mechanism while the project 'Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan's Garment Sector', supported a sector wide grievance mechanism. Stakeholders widely acknowledged the high quality of project deliverables, although some suggested that the length of certain training modules could be reduced for better engagement and time efficiency.

Human resource deployment has also been optimized. BWJ staff strategically guided implementation activities and ensured close collaboration with mental health focal points, factory managers, and external consultants. The use of a multilingual, multi-channel communication strategy—disseminating materials in five languages—maximized the reach and impact of awareness campaigns. These materials were both culturally and linguistically accessible, supporting a more inclusive intervention. Furthermore, the training of trainers (ToT) model used across thematic areas such as financial literacy and sexual and reproductive health enhanced internal capacity-building while reducing the need for ongoing external facilitation. Factories in ad-Dulayl also appreciated the access to the mental health clinic services in the area through the rotating schedule of the psychiatrist supported by the project.

Despite these successes, some structural inefficiencies persist. Key areas needing further attention include extending project activities to small and satellite factories, addressing language translation gaps in training resources, and bolstering the migration component—particularly in relation to the mental health needs of migrant workers. The project also faces systemic barriers in the national mental health referral system, especially for non-Arabic-speaking migrant workers. Addressing these limitations would improve the overall cost-benefit profile and extend the reach and equity of mental health service provision across Jordan's garment sector.

2.4.3. Impact Orientation

The Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project has made significant strides in improving mental well-being among garment sector workers. This was achieved by promoting resilience against mental health risks and expanding access to support services, as indicated in the quote below reflecting utilization of these services over time at the factory level. Key initiatives such as awareness campaigns, training in financial literacy and reproductive health, the integration of mental health counselors and focal points within factories have reduced stigma and increased workers' willingness to seek help, and the development of the Mental Health and Wellbeing policy as a model for factories to adopt. These interventions have created more supportive work environments and equipped both workers and management with tools to recognize and respond to mental health needs. As mentioned previously, recent research published in 2024 ⁸ found that the project interventions had a significant positive impact on the mental well-being of garment factory workers especially the training component of the factory-level interventions.

"Few workers were receiving the counselling support when we starting working on mental health, I conduct over 12 session a month in addition to referrals" Counsellor, Factory

⁸ El-Rayyes, T. and Vaswani, H., 2024. Developing effective mental health workplace interventions in low and middle-income countries: Evidence from Jordan's garment industry. Geneva: International Labour Office and International Finance Corporation.

The project demonstrated strong progress toward achieving its intended outcomes, with the majority of result indicators either meeting or exceeding their targets. Several key indicators were significantly surpassed, including: (i) the proportion of awareness session participants reporting the sessions as beneficial; (ii) the number of factories implementing worker training to enhance understanding of mental health challenges; (iii) the number of mental health counsellors recruited to support the workforce; and (iv) the number of workers who accessed services delivered by mhGAP-trained personnel. Additionally, by September 2024, some indicators related to mental health outcomes measured through self-reported data in the worker/manager survey were approaching their targets including the percentage of workers with moderate or high levels of mental well-being, the proportion of workers reporting psychological resilience and the percentage of workers who feel comfortable seeking psychological support when experiencing personal stress. Monitoring the actual values of these outcome indicators will be essential, particularly if a follow-up worker/manager survey is conducted in 2025, to validate sustained impact and guide future programming by sector stakeholders.

Despite these gains, structural challenges remain, particularly in extending mental health support to all workers and underserved factory settings. Language barriers and limited referral systems, may limit the reach and sustainability of current efforts, The impact of the project will depend on expanding services to underserved factory settings, enhancing gender-sensitive strategies, and ensuring long-term stakeholder commitment to institutionalizing mental health support in both the workplace and broader health systems.

2.4.4. Sustainability

The project has strategically engaged factories, unions, and key governmental actors in co-developing and adopting Mental Health Policy frameworks and Standard Operating Procedures. The incorporation of mental health components into the sector-wide Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) creates a durable structural anchor obligating factories to provide ongoing support for worker well-being. Furthermore, the establishment of factory-level mental health focal points and counselors, combined with peer exchange platforms and regular training, fosters embedded capacity and cross-learning, thus ensuring continuity beyond the project's lifespan. The factories also adopted a mental health policy, and many updated the policy more than once to meet their needs.

The sustainability of mental health clinic services and the effective operationalization of occupational safety and health (OSH) legislation could have been addressed earlier by the project. Mental health service delivery was initiated through the establishment of a clinic at the Al Hassan Workers' Center and via rotating service provision in the ad-Dulayl industrial zone. However, no concrete plans were developed to ensure long-term sustainability, such as incorporation into factory-level corporate social responsibility (CSR) frameworks or support mechanisms through trade union structures. Additionally, Ministry of Labour (MOL) assessment visits indicated that some factories have integrated mental health considerations into their workplace systems, others demonstrated limited understanding of how to implement psychosocial risk management requirements outlined in the revised OSH regulations. This implies the need for further guidance and capacity building to the factories.

2.5. Recommendations and Lessons Learned

2.5.1. Recommendations

Institutionalize factory-level mental health structures: To ensure continuity and sustained impact, and building on the project success, factory-level roles such as Mental Health Focal Points and counsellors should be formally integrated into enterprise human resources and compliance systems. The endorsement of mental health policy frameworks at the factory level, supported by regular monitoring mechanisms, will reinforce accountability and long-term adoption.

Expand access to services for migrant workers: Mental health programming should be better tailored to the unique vulnerabilities of migrant workers, who often face isolation, language barriers, and limited access to psychosocial support. Translation of materials, culturally sensitive counselling approaches, and mobile or digital service delivery can help close this gap.

Prioritize training and capacity building: Continuous training for focal points, counsellors, and line managers is critical. This includes refresher courses and skill enhancement in trauma-informed care, basic counselling, and psychological first aid. Training modalities should also integrate digital and blended learning for scalability.

Facilitate sector-wide peer learning: Peer learning forums should be institutionalized, allowing factories to exchange best practices and collaboratively address challenges. Lessons from high-performing factories can guide others in shaping effective, context-appropriate interventions.

Institutionalization of project approaches through social partner ownership: To ensure sustainability and sector-wide impact beyond the lifecycle of the Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, social partners—including employers, government bodies, unions, and buyers—are encouraged to adopt and institutionalize the project's approaches. This entails embedding core service components, such as mental health support, within the operational frameworks, policies, and mandates of relevant institutions. Social partners should assume responsibility for the continued implementation of essential services, including the operation of mental health clinics, while proactively addressing service gaps through coordinated resource allocation and capacity-building measures. Sustained national ownership is critical to consolidating the gains made by the project and embedding mental health as a standard element of decent work practices across the garment sector.

2.5.2. Lessons Learned

Early buy-in from factory management is pivotal: Success of the mental health intervention was largely influenced by the degree of engagement and ownership shown by factory leadership. Where management viewed mental health as integral to workforce productivity and compliance, implementation was more effective.

Mental health support cannot be one-size-fits-all: The project revealed that different factories require tailored approaches depending on size, workforce composition, and organizational culture. Customization in counselling modalities and focal point selection enhanced relevance and effectiveness.

Mental health is a cross-cutting issue: The integration of mental health services strengthened outcomes across several compliance areas, including sexual harassment prevention, grievance handling, and absenteeism management. This demonstrates the value of framing mental health within a broader decent work agenda.

► 3. Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan's Garment Sector Project

3.1. Executive Summary

This final evaluation assesses the performance, relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project “Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan’s Garment Sector”, implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in partnership with national stakeholders and supported by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). The evaluation covers the period from project inception in August 2022 through early 2025, focusing on achievements under the project’s outcomes, cross-cutting issues, and institutional integration, particularly within the context of the broader Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme.

Project context and strategic alignment. The project was implemented in a dynamic and at times volatile environment, shaped by regional conflicts, disruptions to global supply chains, and increasing scrutiny over labour rights in global value chains. Despite these challenges, the project remained aligned with national priorities in Jordan and with ILO’s Strategic Policy Outcome 5 on gender equality and equal treatment. It also responded to emerging compliance requirements under trade frameworks such as the Canada-Jordan Free Trade Agreement and the evolving EU due diligence directives. The project’s strategy was grounded in tripartite collaboration and complemented the broader BWJ mandate to improve labour conditions in the garment sector through assessment, advisory, training, and advocacy services.

Relevance and responsiveness. The project’s design demonstrated strong alignment with stakeholder needs and sectoral realities. Its focus on enhancing inclusivity, supporting grievance redress mechanisms, addressing gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH), and promoting digital tools for training and data management was highly relevant. Stakeholders, including factories, the trade union, government entities, and workers, confirmed the value of these interventions. Moreover, the inclusion of topics such as disability inclusion, and the creation of sector-specific tools reflected a forward-looking, demand-driven approach. However, some divergence existed among stakeholders regarding the project’s scope—particularly the balance between core compliance services and broader social and institutional themes.

Effectiveness and results. The project achieved measurable results across its two outcomes. Under Outcome 1, key milestones included the development and dissemination of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for grievance handling, the piloting of Sexual Harassment Prevention (SHP) training in multiple languages, and the creation of national guidelines for disability inclusion. These deliverables were produced through collaborative processes and supported by capacity-building activities targeting HR personnel, union representatives, and employers. Outcome 2 focused on strengthening trade union capacity and worker representation, notably through the deployment of female union focal points and the establishment of a union membership database, which now includes over 66,000 entries.

The project demonstrated strong implementation effectiveness, with substantial progress in both output delivery and outcome achievement. As of October 2024, six of the sixteen planned outputs were fully completed, nine were under active implementation, and only one had yet to be initiated. The latest implementation report rated output delivery as satisfactory, with 60–80% of outputs and indicator milestones progressing on schedule. Outcome-level performance was similarly strong, with the project assessed as “highly probable” to achieve all intended

outcomes by the end of its cycle, supported by the timely delivery of key outputs such as disability employment guidelines, multilingual factory training, and capacity building for women union representatives. Improvements in key performance indicators further reflect the project's impact orientation—most notably, an increase in the proportion of workers reporting no concerns about sexual harassment, rising to 68.5% in 2024 (from 64.1% in 2023), with particularly strong gains among female workers. These results affirm the project's contribution to enhancing workplace safety, gender inclusion, and decent work conditions in Jordan's garment sector. Integration of cross-cutting issues. The project effectively mainstreamed gender, disability inclusion, digitization, and workers' voice across its interventions. The SHP e-learning modules in five languages expanded access to vulnerable groups, while the disability inclusion guidelines and training-of-trainers sessions supported factories in adopting inclusive HR practices. The digital grievance redress training and WhatsApp-based learning models exemplified scalable solutions in a high-turnover, multilingual sector. Importantly, the project utilized research and data to inform its programming—an approach that proved valuable even when stakeholder consensus was not fully achieved. This evidence-driven methodology strengthened the project's credibility and positioned it to contribute to sectoral policy debates.

Sustainability and institutionalization. A significant part of the project's final phase has been devoted to sustainability and national ownership, as planned prior to the project end in August 2025 including institutional handover plan, emphasizing documentation, stakeholder engagement, and capacity transfer. Tools such as the union database, SOPs, and training materials are being transitioned to national partners, with varying levels of ownership and readiness. While several factories and trade union actors have demonstrated commitment to maintaining these systems, challenges remain around long-term coordination, financial resources, and political will—especially given the lack of binding enforcement mechanisms.

Key lessons from the project highlight that sustained stakeholder engagement and aligned incentives are essential for the formal adoption of tools like SOPs; while digitization expands access, particularly for migrant workers, it must be complemented by offline alternatives to address language and literacy barriers. Effective disability inclusion requires not just awareness but also tailored operational support at the factory level. Targeted investment in female leadership has demonstrated clear benefits in strengthening worker representation and responsiveness to gender issues. Lastly, the sustainability of digital tools hinges on clear institutional ownership and ongoing commitment to data maintenance and use.

To strengthen the long-term impact and sustainability of the project, it is recommended to support the formal endorsement and operational integration of the Grievance Redress Mechanisms SOPs, including through MoUs and buyer engagement; scale up the WhatsApp-based Sexual Harassment Prevention trainings across all worker languages and embed them into factory compliance routines; assist factories in adopting disability inclusion guidelines by piloting model factories and establishing a monitoring framework; finalize and institutionalize the trade union database with regular updates and capacity-building for union administrators; expand support and mentorship for female union focal points to enhance their effectiveness; and promote more inclusive collective bargaining processes by ensuring direct consultation with workers, particularly migrant and female workers.

In conclusion, despite operational disruptions and complex contextual challenges, the project delivered on its core commitments and contributed meaningfully to advancing decent work, inclusion, and social dialogue in Jordan's garment sector. Its integration of research, digital innovation, and stakeholder collaboration has created a foundation for sustained impact, provided that national actors continue to prioritize and institutionalize the tools and lessons generated through this intervention.

3.2. Project Description

Despite progress, workers in the Jordanian garment industry, particularly women, migrant workers, and workers with disabilities, continue to face discrimination, gender-based violence, and unequal representation. These issues persist in both workplaces and living conditions, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile Garment and Clothing Industries requires enhanced capacity to address these concerns effectively. The project focuses on creating a more inclusive environment by achieving two main outcomes:

Outcome 1: Reducing gender-based violence and harassment while promoting equal opportunities for workers with disabilities;

Outcome 2: Strengthening the union's ability to engage in social dialogue, with an emphasis on gender equality.

The country context is included in section Country and Project Context¹1.2.1 above.

3.3. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

The scope of evaluation, methodology and questions for this project are included in section ¹1.3 above.

3.4. Main Findings

3.4.1. Coherence and Validity of Design

The project demonstrates a high degree of adequacy and relevance, particularly in its beneficiary-centered approach. By prioritizing the needs of garment sector workers—especially women, migrant workers, and persons with disabilities—the project ensured that its objectives were grounded in a rights-based, inclusive framework. The emphasis on creating equitable and non-discriminatory workplaces aligned with the lived realities of the workforce and addressed structural barriers to participation, representation, and protection at work.

The project design also supports and reinforces national legislative and policy frameworks. These include Jordan's labour law, the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the associated national policy framework, thereby strengthening the enabling environment for inclusive labour practices. Furthermore, the project supported Jordan's commitments under international frameworks such as the ILO's Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) and the labour cooperation provisions of the Canada-Jordan Free Trade Agreement—specifically in relation to non-discrimination, with reference to ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment. The project's design also demonstrated strong policy coherence with ILO normative instruments and strategies, notably the Decent Work Agenda and the ILO Disability Inclusion Strategy. This alignment ensured that interventions were not only contextually relevant but also technically sound, guided by evidence-based international standards and principles.

The project responded directly to donor and development partner priorities. The project design elements included the promotion of gender equality, strengthening social dialogue, and protection of rights at work. These thematic priorities were operationalized through targeted interventions, including capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and institutional development.

The project also capitalized on the institutional and operational foundations of Better Work Jordan (BWJ). Implemented in parallel with Phase IV of BWJ, the project leveraging BWJ's existing platforms, and established stakeholder relationships, the project ensured continuity, cost-efficiency, and accelerated implementation.

Stakeholders' satisfaction with the project's strategy and implementation approach was influenced by differing views on the overall scope of Better Work Jordan (BWJ). As previously noted, some stakeholders favored a more streamlined BWJ model focused on the delivery of core services—such as assessments, advisory support, and training—while others valued the broader components introduced through this project. These included efforts to reduce gender-based violence and harassment, promote equal opportunities for workers with disabilities, and strengthen the trade union's capacity to engage in social dialogue, particularly on gender equality. The abrupt termination of BWJ funding disrupted the implementation of certain project activities, which contributed to dissatisfaction among some stakeholders. Nonetheless, capacity-building initiatives were systematically evaluated using pre- and post-training assessments, and participants expressed strong satisfaction with factory-level training and services delivered both directly by the project and through union representatives.

The project's results framework and theory of change (ToC) were well-constructed and integrates cross cutting issues. The project TOC responds to key sectoral challenges and explicitly integrating cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, the inclusion of persons with disabilities, workers' voice and representation, prevention of gender-based violence, digitization, and core labour rights. These dimensions were consistently embedded in project documentation, implementation strategies, and monitoring and evaluation plans. The framework featured a strong set of quantitative indicators effectively capturing the intended outcomes. However, while the indicators' design was methodologically sound, several target values appeared overly ambitious, particularly given the novelty of the intervention and the lack of prior evidence establishing attribution. Although the methodology had not been previously tested, it demonstrated an appropriate and technically sound approach to measuring project effects.

3.4.2. Effectiveness

The project demonstrated strong effectiveness in implementation, as evidenced by the substantial progress in delivering planned outputs and achieving outcome milestones. Out of 16 total outputs, six were fully completed, nine were under active implementation, and only one had yet to be initiated. According to the most recent implementation report (October 2024), the output delivery performance was rated satisfactory, with the majority (60–80%) of outputs progressing on schedule in alignment with the implementation plan. Similarly, 60–80% of the project's indicator milestones have been met to date (October 2024), confirming a generally consistent trajectory toward achieving intended results.

The effectiveness of the intervention is further reinforced by outcome-level performance. According to the most recent implementation report (October 2024), with the project assessed as “highly probable” to achieve all intended outcomes by the end of its lifecycle. More than 80% of milestones scheduled for the current reporting period have been met, substantiating a strong likelihood of full outcome realization. This is supported by notable deliverables such as the development of ‘Guidelines for Enhancing the Employment of Workers with Disabilities in Jordan's Garment Sector’, delivery of multilingual factory-level training, and capacity-building initiatives specifically aimed at strengthening the role of women union representatives in social dialogue.

Improvement in key performance indicators also illustrates the project's impact orientation. According to the 2024 Annual Workers' Survey, 68.5% of workers—disaggregated by gender and nationality—reported no concerns regarding sexual harassment, reflecting a positive trend from the 2023 figure of 64.1%. This result exceeds both the previous year's target (63%) and the current reporting period's target (65%). Gender-disaggregated data further highlight a noteworthy increase among female workers, with 69.0% indicating no concerns in 2024, up from 65.5% in 2023. These results affirm the effectiveness of project activities addressing workplace safety and gender-based violence, signaling progress toward broader objectives related to decent work and inclusive labour practices.

3.4.3. Efficiency

The project leveraged partnerships with local NGOs and national institutions, thereby enhancing resource utilization and implementation reach. Notably, collaboration with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD) enabled specialized training for key stakeholders—including workers with disabilities, employers, trade union representatives, and labour inspectors—across major industrial zones such as Sahab, Irbid, and ad-Dulayl. This approach ensured localized expertise, minimized operational costs, and enhanced the relevance of interventions to the Jordanian context.

Additionally, the project capitalized on the infrastructure and complementary activities of Better Work Jordan (BWJ), creating synergies that optimized delivery and avoided duplication of efforts. For example, BWJ's existing engagement with union representatives was utilized to reinforce the gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) referral system, including the development and dissemination of sector-specific standard operating procedures (SOPs). This integration of efforts across initiatives not only improved cost-efficiency but also ensured coherence and continuity in service delivery across the garment sector.

3.4.4. Impact Orientation

The project demonstrated a clear orientation toward impact through its monitoring and evaluation processes. Progress reports were submitted in a timely manner and contained sufficient detail, including comprehensive contextual analyses that outlined implementation challenges and opportunities. This facilitated informed decision-making and enabled adaptive management in response to dynamic sectoral conditions. The documentation consistently linked activities to intended outcomes, providing stakeholders with a transparent view of project performance.

The project's results framework and Theory of Change (TOC) were well-articulated and responsive to sector-specific needs. They integrated critical cross-cutting themes as mentioned earlier. The indicators appropriately reflected the expected results; however, some targets appear aspirational and may present challenges related to attribution. Nonetheless, the methodological approach was deemed appropriate and offered potential for future scalability and learning.

The project's impact orientation was further reinforced through its strategic use of research to inform activity design and implementation. Evidence generated through project-supported assessments—such as those examining the lived experiences of workers with disabilities in garment factories and the evaluation of digital training modalities—contributed to refining interventions and strengthening impact pathways. These research outputs not only enhanced project relevance but also provide valuable insights for the design of future initiatives in similar contexts, promoting knowledge transfer and evidence-based programming.

Importantly, the project contributed to institutional change within the sector. Including enhancing policy frameworks, stakeholder capacities, and governance structures. Key achievements include the development of standardized grievance redress mechanisms, including gender-based violence (GBV) procedures, which were integrated into the sector's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and disseminated through multilingual digital training modules. The project also institutionalized disability inclusion through the creation of comprehensive employment guidelines and factory-level action plans, supported by Training-of-Trainers sessions for HR and compliance officers.

At the trade union level, the project strengthened institutional capacity. This was achieved by operationalizing the union's five-year strategy, launching a member database now covering over 66,000 workers, and deploying trained female representatives to enhance grassroots engagement. Sector-wide policy reforms, utilizing BWJ PAC meetings, were supported through the formation of a technical committee to address factory closures and inputs to national labour law amendments.

3.4.5. Sustainability

The project adopted a multi-faceted strategy to ensure ownership of its results by national stakeholders. The project prioritizing joint development, institutional embedding, and capacity building. Key achievements included the co-development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for grievance redress mechanisms in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, the General Trade Union, local NGOs such as ARDD, and employers' organizations. These SOPs were introduced through collaborative workshops and training sessions, with endorsement secured through tripartite engagement. By embedding these procedures into operational practices and linking them to factory-level implementation, the project facilitated broader alignment and accountability within the sector.

Efforts to institutionalize project outcomes extended to the inclusion of gender-based violence (GBV) provisions in the 2022 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). These additions formalized referral and complaint handling procedures and committed employers and unions to joint awareness efforts. The project further reinforced sustainability by supporting the renewal of memoranda of understanding between ARDD and the trade union, enabling legal support services to be offered to affected workers. Similarly, the project supported the trade union in implementing components of its 5-year strategy, including developing a worker database now covering over 66,000 individuals and training staff to manage grievance-related data.

A major component of the project's work focused on increasing inclusivity for workers with disabilities. Through a consultative process, guidelines were developed to help factories adopt inclusive human resource practices and improve infrastructure accessibility. These guidelines were disseminated via a Training-of-Trainers (ToT) approach, with factory-specific knowledge transfer plans created and monitored. Complementary awareness-raising initiatives, including human interest stories and infographics, were used to highlight the lived experiences of workers with disabilities, helping shift perceptions among employers and sector stakeholders.

Despite these efforts, sustainability challenges remain. Notably, some stakeholders showed hesitance in formally adopting SOPs or integrating digital training platforms at scale. While the Sexual Harassment Prevention trainings reached thousands of workers in five languages, uptake varied significantly between factories. Institutional disruptions, such as the termination of USDOL funding to Better Work Jordan, further complicated coordination and accelerated the need for national ownership before all systems were ready. In addition, ongoing challenges were noted with sustaining the functionality and use of the union's digital grievance tracking systems. Without formal mandates or performance incentives, structural and capacity limitations within national institutions pause implementation risks stalling post-project. As the project moves into its final phase, efforts are focused on consolidating knowledge, finalizing handovers, and engaging national partners to safeguard progress and promote continued sectoral reform.

3.4.6. Crosscutting Issues

The project “Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan’s Garment Sector” demonstrates an integrated and sustained approach to embedding cross-cutting issues—namely gender equality, disability inclusion, digitization, and social dialogue—across its deliverables. At the core of its strategy, the project prioritized minimizing gender-based violence and harassment through awareness-raising, grievance redress mechanisms, and the institutionalization of sector-wide referral systems. These efforts culminated in the development of comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for grievance handling and their translation into factory-level practice via tailored training sessions targeting human resource personnel, compliance officers, and union staff.

In parallel, the project made significant strides in promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Through collaboration with the Phenix Center and the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the project developed and launched sector-specific guidelines and an implementation toolkit. These resources address recruitment practices, workplace accessibility, and HR policies, enabling factories to adopt more inclusive employment practices. Awareness sessions and training-of-trainers workshops were delivered to HR teams and trade union representatives across industrial zones, with follow-up mechanisms introduced to monitor adoption at the enterprise level.

Digitization was another pivotal cross-cutting theme. The project deployed technology to widen access to training and strengthen institutional systems. One example is the digitization of the Sexual Harassment Prevention (SHP) training modules into five languages, delivered via WhatsApp and supported by interactive learning tools. Moreover, the project advanced the union’s digital infrastructure by developing a member database with grievance-tracking capabilities—though this area still faces challenges in data upkeep and full institutional ownership.

Despite these achievements, several challenges remain. A persistent gap in stakeholder willingness to formally endorse and institutionalize SOPs limits the sustainability of grievance redress mechanisms. Additionally, varying levels of buy-in among employers have constrained the full roll-out of SHP trainings and disability inclusion measures, particularly in light of factory closures and sectoral instability. Furthermore, the recent cessation of USDOL funding to the broader BWJ platform necessitates a recalibration of delivery modalities and underscores the urgency of securing national ownership of the project’s tools and frameworks.

In its final phase, the project has shifted focus toward institutional handover, with an emphasis on consolidating outcomes and safeguarding institutional memory. Stakeholder engagement and documentation activities are being prioritized to ensure continuity beyond the project’s lifespan. The experiences gathered offer critical insights for future initiatives aiming to operationalize inclusion, rights-based approaches, and digital transformation in complex industrial sectors.

3.5. Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Recommendations and lessons learned for the Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan’s Garment Sector Project is arranged around two key themes. First building an inclusive and fair working environment, and second; strengthening trade union and worker representation.

Building an inclusive and fair working environment

Recommendations:

- Advocate among stakeholders to officially endorse the Sector’s Grievance Redress Mechanisms SOPs and further integration into factory-level operations, CBAs, and sector-wide agreements. Encourage formal accountability through MoUs with MOL and buyer support.

- Expand the WhatsApp-based Sexual Harassment Prevention (SHP) trainings across all worker language groups with sustained factory-level dissemination plans. Embed digital training tools into induction and annual compliance programmes to ensure sustainability.
- Engage with factories in implementing guidelines on employment of persons with disabilities by piloting model factories with comprehensive support (e.g., retrofitting, HR policy revisions, and reasonable accommodations), including increased visibility and recognition of these factories. Establish a monitoring framework to track adoption and progress.

Lessons Learned:

- Stakeholder engagement requires persistence and incentives in addition to enforcement mechanisms: Formal uptake of tools such as SOPs requires sustained advocacy and the alignment of buyer, union, and employer incentives.
- Digitization enhances reach but needs offline options: While digital tools broaden access, especially for migrant workers, offline formats remain essential due to language, technological, and literacy barriers.
- Disability inclusion needs tailored and practical support: Awareness alone is insufficient; operational tools and factory-specific guidance are critical to make inclusion of persons with disabilities actionable and measurable. In parallel, enforcement measures have to be implemented to comply to ensure the compliance with the legal framework.

Strengthening trade union and worker representation

Recommendations:

- Finalize and sustain the trade union database, ensuring regular data updates and use for grievance tracking and strategic planning. Offer capacity-building to Union administrators on data governance.
- Expand support for female union focal points across factories and provide structured mentorship to strengthen their role in grievance resolution and communication between workers and union leadership.
- Encourage participatory mechanisms in future CBA negotiations, including direct worker consultations, especially among migrant and female workers, to ensure inclusivity and legitimacy.

Lessons Learned:

- Targeted investment in female leadership pays off: Grassroots engagement of female workers in union structures increased visibility and responsiveness to gender-based concerns.
- Digital tools need institutional buy-in to sustain use: Without clear responsibility and commitment to maintaining data systems, the potential of digital databases may remain underutilized.

► Annex 1: List of Documents

This is a list of documents that were reviewed during the evaluation.

1. Better Work Jordan Research Agenda, 2024-2025
2. Better Work Jordan Country Strategy, 2022-2027
3. Better Work Jordan Phase IV Core Funding Results Framework
4. Better Work Jordan Phase IV Core Funding Performance Management Plan
5. Better Work Jordan Phase IV Core Funding Qualitative Indicators
6. Better Work Jordan Phase IV Core Funding Workplan
7. Better Work Jordan Phase III Interim Independent Evaluation, 2020
8. EU/ILO collaboration in the monitoring of labour aspects in the implementation of the EU's rules of origin initiative for Jordan, Phase II - Final Independent Evaluation, 2023
9. Better Work Jordan Phase IV Project Document Revision, 2023
10. Better Work Jordan Phase IV Core Funding, Technical Progress Reports
11. Better Work Jordan Newsletter, July 2022
12. Better Work Jordan Newsletter, End of year 2022
13. Better Work Jordan Newsletter, September 2023
14. Better Work Jordan Newsletter, End of year 2023
15. Better Work Jordan Annual Report 2023: An Industry and Compliance Review, Reporting Period: January - December 2022
16. Better Work Jordan Annual Report 2024: An Industry and Compliance Review, Reporting Period: January - December 2023
17. Better Work Jordan: Worker, Supervisor and Manager Survey Results, Research Brief, November 2023
18. Better Work Jordan: Worker, Supervisor and Manager Survey Results, Research Brief, October 2024
19. ILO, Grant Arrangement Document, Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions, GM 23 and GM 24
20. Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, Project revision form, 2023
21. Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, Results Framework, 2024-2025
22. Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, Mid-term Evaluation, 2023
23. Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project, Technical Progress Reports from September 2021 to March 2025
24. Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions, Progress Reports from September 2022 to September 2024
25. Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions, Self-Evaluation, Not dated
26. Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions, Workplan, 2022-2025
27. Jordan Economic Modernization Vision
28. ILO, Economic Modernization Vision: Ready-made garment sector goals-The promise of change, 2024
29. The National Strategy for the Textile and Leather Sector 2024 - 2026

► Annex 2: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Final Internal Evaluation - Better Work Jordan Phase IV Project, Better Work Jordan Mental Health Project and Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unions Project

Background

1- Better Work Jordan Project - Phase IV (2022-2027)

Better Work Jordan (BWJ) started operations in 2009 at the request of the Government of Jordan and was made mandatory for all garment factories exporting to the US under the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (USJFTA). The programme currently includes 95 participating factories covering approximately 75,000 workers – of whom 75 per cent are female – and reaching 21 brands and retails. Furthermore, the programme has expanded beyond the garment sector to include industries benefiting from the relaxation of the Rules of Origin (RoO) requirements in the EU-Jordan Association Agreement. Notably, the programme now engages with the chemical, engineering, and plastic industries.

Throughout its 15 years of operations, BWJ has played an important role in monitoring and promoting Jordan's garment industry. Better Work's interlocking services of compliance assessments of core international labour standards and national labour law, advisory services focused on encouraging workplace dialogue and joint problem solving, and specialized training offerings led to higher levels of compliance alongside overall industry growth.

BWJ has been increasingly shifting its focus to strengthen the capacity of national stakeholders for upholding labour standards in the industry in the long term; support industry partners in creating a vision for the industry that combines both competitiveness and business strength, as well as respect for labour standards; and create stronger partnerships to build capacity for dialogue and grievance resolution at the factory level.

Better Work Jordan's Phase IV Strategy (2022-2027)⁹ is based on a theory of sustained change which works through multiple channels to enable national stakeholders to uphold worker rights and improve working conditions in Jordan's exporting industrial sector while simultaneously promoting the sector's competitiveness. Three key assumptions underlie this theory of sustained change. The first is that working conditions improve with assessments, training, and advisory visits. Over the course of ten years working in the garment industry, Better Work has built up a substantial evidence base to support this assumption. The second assumption is that national partners are willing and able to play a leading role in the governance and development of Jordan's garment industry. Better Work Jordan's key tripartite partners have expressed commitment to these roles, and these commitments will be institutionalized through formal agreements with partner institutions. The third assumption underlying this theory of sustained change is that Better Work Jordan and the tripartite constituents have sufficient leverage to incentivize improved labour compliance among garment factories. The existing Better Work model is based on such incentivization.

⁹ <https://betterworksite2024.azurewebsites.net/reports-and-publications/better-work-jordan-phase-iv-strategy-2022-2027/>

At the end, BWJ expects to achieve the following outcomes by implementing a unified BWJ through multiple funding sources:

- **Outcome 1:** By 2027, Jordan's garment industry will have an effective system of tripartite-plus labour market governance in which workers' rights are upheld and protected in line with national labour laws and core international labour standards.
- **Outcome 2:** By 2027, export growth combined with active labour market policies will increase the garment industry's contribution to Jordanian employment.
- **Outcome 3:** By 2027, Better Work Jordan will have made a positive impact on working conditions and labour market governance beyond Jordan's export-oriented garment industry.

The phase IV strategy is implemented through multiple sources of funding and is aimed at fulfilling the overarching Phase IV strategy and should, therefore, be viewed as a single entity, regardless of their specific funding sources. The phase IV strategy is currently funded by the United States of America Department of Labour (USDOL), the Government of Canada, and the European Commission.

2- Better Work Jordan - Mental Health Project

The Better Work Jordan (BWJ) Mental Health Project, funded by the United States Department of Labour (USDOL), was launched in 2021 to address rising concerns around workers' psychological wellbeing in Jordan's garment sector—particularly among women and migrant workers. The project aimed to improve mental health outcomes by increasing awareness, building resilience, reducing stigma, and strengthening factory-level and external referral support systems. It focused on equipping workers and management with tools to identify and respond to mental health risks, while also supporting linkages with specialized service providers.

The project is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- **LTO 1:** Workers are resilient against mental health risks, including seeking psychosocial support
- **LTO 2:** Factories and the mental health referral system reach more workers needing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services.

Note: A mid-term evaluation of the mental health project was conducted in 2023

3- Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists in Jordan's Garment Sector Project

Despite progress, workers in the Jordanian garment industry, particularly women, migrant workers, and workers with disabilities, continue to face discrimination, gender-based violence, and unequal representation. These issues persist in both workplaces and living conditions, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile Garment and Clothing Industries requires enhanced capacity to address these concerns effectively.

The project focuses on creating a more inclusive environment by achieving two main outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Reducing gender-based violence and harassment while promoting equal opportunities for workers with disabilities;
- **Outcome 2:** Strengthening the union's ability to engage in social dialogue, with an emphasis on gender equality.

Note: This project is being implemented as part of BWJ phase IV strategy, with an end date of 30 August 2025

Context and Purpose

In April 2025, following the termination of all United States Department of Labor (USDOL) funding to the ILO, the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme was required to immediately halt activities supported by this funding and begin a structured wind-down of its USDOL-funded services related to the Jordan–U.S. Free Trade Agreement. The wind-down is set to be completed by mid-June 2025.

This final evaluation offers a critical opportunity to assess BWJ's performance under Phase IV (2022–2024), capture institutional memory, reflect on the programme's contribution to industry transformation in Jordan, and serve as a foundational input for future ILO engagement in the sector. It is intended that this evaluation will:

- Provide a high-level assessment of BWJ's achievements, strategic positioning, and contribution to decent work, with particular attention to its legacy, its long-term influence on labour market governance, and its relevance for future programming and policy dialogue.
- Serve as the final evaluation of the Canada-funded project "Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Unionists", implemented as part of BWJ Phase IV, with a focus on outcomes related to inclusivity, gender equality, and union capacity.
- Support accountability and learning within the ILO and among national and international stakeholders.

Scope of the Evaluation

This evaluation will examine three main interventions:

1. USDOL Core Funding Project: Better Work Jordan Phase IV 2022–2024
2. USDOL Mental Health Project
3. Building Capacity for a More Inclusive and Fair Working Environment for Workers and Trade Union 2022–2024

The evaluation will focus on the performance and outcomes of Better Work Jordan during Phase IV (2022–2024). It will seek to assess how the programme contributed to long-term improvements in labour practices, social dialogue, and institutional development, while also fulfilling its strategic vision of transitioning responsibility to national actors.

Specifically, the evaluation will cover:

- BWJ's contribution to improving compliance with labour standards, strengthening workplace dialogue, and promoting decent work in the garment sector.
- The effectiveness and relevance of BWJ's core services (compliance assessments, advisory support, and training), the programme's engagement with tripartite partners, and its shift toward capacity-building and institutional ownership.
- A light review of the mental health project consolidating key results and highlight lessons learned for potential replication or integration into broader ILO programming.
- The achievements of the Canada-funded project particularly in relation to gender equality, disability inclusion, and union capacity for gender-responsive social dialogue.
- The degree to which the BWJ programme and its components have supported sustainable outcomes, including systems and capacities likely to persist beyond the programme's closure.
- Cross-cutting themes such as gender, OSH, migrant worker inclusion, and tripartism.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation will follow the UN Evaluation Standards and Norms, the Glossary of key terms in evaluation and Results-Based Management, as well as utilise the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) evaluation criteria.

The evaluation will also take into account cross-cutting themes such as tripartite collaboration, worker voice, institutional capacity-building, and external contextual factors.

Specific evaluation questions will be refined and finalized in consultation with the selected consultant during the inception phase, in alignment with the scope of the evaluation and the available evidence.

The evaluation will pay particular attention to the sustainability of programme outcomes, the long-term impact of BWJ's institutional strengthening efforts, and stakeholder perspectives on the legacy of the programme.

Methodology

The evaluation will include:

- Desk review of relevant reports, project documents, annual reports, assessment data, research studies including the following:
 - BWJ Phase IV Project Document (2022–2027)
 - Projects project documents, logical frameworks, technical progress reports and data reporting forms.
 - BWJ annual reports (2022, 2023 and any drafts of 2024 report)
 - BWJ workers, supervisors and managers survey briefs (2022, 2023 and 2024)
 - Midterm Evaluation of the BWJ Mental Health Project (2023)
 - Jordan Economic Modernization Visions (2022-2033)
 - ILO Report: Economic Modernization Vision: Ready-made garment sector goals- The promise of change (October 2024)
 - Others TBD
- Key informant interviews with stakeholders including ILO, MOL, JGATE, JCI, GTU, Royal court employer reps, buyers, donors.
- Data analysis using a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collected through previous methods.
- A light theory-of-change reflection may be included to frame BWJ's legacy – to be agreed.

Deliverables

The consultant will be required to deliver the following

1. Inception Report (including the agreed detailed evaluation questions - max. 10 pages)
 - Due: Within 3 days of contract start
2. Draft Evaluation Report (max. 25–30 pages + annexes)
 - The draft and final report should include:
 - Standalone chapter / section highlighting the evaluation findings for the Canada project
 - Standalone chapter / section highlighting the evaluation findings for the Mental Health Project
 - Due: Within 15 days
3. Final Evaluation Report (This shall also include a PowerPoint presentation to be used in showcasing the evaluation findings)
 - Due: Within 30 days and no later than 31 May 2025.
 - Total number of expected workdays: 30 day
 - All report shall be submitted in English
 - The consultant is expected to present the findings during a stakeholder meeting (tentatively on 4th June 2025)

Supervision

The consultant will report to BWJ program manager for overall guidance and work closely with the BWJ team. The BWJ program manager should approve all deliverables.

Payment Method

According to the market rate, payments to the External Collaboration will be made as lumpsum according to expertise and is asked to submit a financial offer detailing the daily rate. The consultant will only be paid upon satisfactory completion and approval of deliverables 1,2 and 3 and upon receipt of signed invoices by no later than 1st June 2025.

Responsibility of Data Collection

Collection of any data / information required is the responsibility of the consultant. BWJ will facilitate for any needed meetings.

Confidentially

The External Collaboration will sign a contract with International Labour Organization that contains clauses on confidentiality and non-disclosure.

Required Qualifications (Individual Consultant Only)

- Minimum 10 years' experience in evaluation, particularly in labour rights, gender equality, or development projects.
- Proven experience conducting evaluations for ILO or similar UN/international organizations.
- Strong analytical and communication skills.
- Knowledge of Jordan's labour and garment sector is an asset.
- Excellent command in English and Arabic.

How to apply

Interested applicants wishing to apply to this assignment must send an email to jordan@betterwork.org with Cc to aldabbas@ilo.org with the subject (BWJ_EVAL_2025).

The email shall include the following:

- 1- Technical Offer
 - Consultant Curriculum Vitae (CV).
 - A proposal which at least consists of proposed approach and methodology, work plan and timeframe.
- 2- Financial Offer
 - The financial offer should demonstrate the needed budget for implementation (daily rate)

The deadline for receiving applications is **27th April 2025** COB.

► Annex 3: List of Stakeholders Interviewed

Organization	Position
Buyer	Buyer representative
Buyer	Buyer representative
Buyer	Buyer representative
Ministry of Labor	Secretary General Assistant to Secretary General Head of Inspection Head of Better Work Unit Head of International Cooperation International Cooperation Staff Member
Ministry of Labor	Inspection Directorate BWJ Unit
Employer 1	Factory Manager Head of Human Resources Safety Manager
Employer 2	Administrative Manager Psychologist/Counsellor
Employer 3	Country Head Head of Human Resources Compliance Manager Wellbeing Coordinator
Employer 4	Managing Director
Employer 5	Executive Director Human Resources and Governance Services Manager
Employer 6	Compliance Manager Compliance Officer and Mental Health Focal Point
Jordan Chamber of Industry	Sector Representative Sector Coordinator Head of Labour Unit
J-GATE	Chief Operations Officer Chairperson
GFJTU	Consultant
GTU	President

GTU	Group meeting with Union Representatives
NGO	Manager
US Embassy	Economic Office Head Economic Officer
BWG	Branch Chief Head of Partnerships, Advocacy and Communications
ILO	Jordan Country Coordinator Deputy Regional Director
ILO	Senior Specialist, Migration
ILO	Senior Specialist, Employers' Activities
ILO	Senior Specialist, Workers' Activities
ILO	Director, Supply Chains
Better Work Jordan	Project team
IOM	Labor Migration and Social Inclusion Team

► Annex 4: References

International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2018). Mainstreaming the health of migrants in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Migration Health Division. Available at: <https://migrationhealthresearch.iom.int/> [Accessed 15 May. 2023].

International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2018. Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. [online] Available at: <https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration> [Accessed 15 May 2025].

International Organization for Migration (IOM), n.d. Migration Health. [online] Available at: <https://www.iom.int/migration-health> [Accessed 15 May 2025].

International Organization for Migration (IOM), n.d. Mental Health, Psychosocial Response and Intercultural Communication. [online] Available at: <https://www.iom.int/resources/mental-health-psychosocial-response-and-intercultural-communication> [Accessed 15 May 2025]

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