



Evaluation Summary



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Better Work Jordan Phase 2 – Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Jordan
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Administrative Office: DWT/CO-Amman
Technical Office: Better Work Global
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Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Phase 2 of the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) programme was implemented from July 2014 to June 2017 with the aim to sustain outcomes achieved during its first phase, to focus on creating a more flexible model through adapting the way services are delivered, and to further integrate the work of the programme with that of national constituents. Its development goal is articulated as follows: *BWJ aims at reducing poverty by expanding decent work opportunities in Jordan's apparel industry. The programme strives to improve working conditions in and the competitiveness of the industry by enhancing economic performance at the enterprise level and improving compliance with Jordanian labour law and the ILO core labour standards.*

In working toward its developmental objective of improvement in workers' lives and enhanced economic performance, the Phase 2 programme's outcome areas include core service delivery, influencing the national

agenda, and supporting greater financial, managerial and institutional viability. While still focused on the delivery of services and continued improvements, Phase 2 features a greater emphasis on promoting buy-in, building capacity and working toward greater means of sustaining its efforts.

Phase 2 activities implemented in support of the above objectives fall under 4 broad areas. The first is that of core service delivery through engaging the garment sector in conducting and providing assessments, training, advisory services, and quality assurance. A second area is an agenda to continue to engage the garment sector and other stakeholders in providing information to influence policy debate and promote further growth and stability of the field. The third and fourth areas relate to the long-term sustainability of BWJ itself as nationalized entity capable of further guiding and supporting economic growth and compliance with international labour laws in Jordan.

Present Situation of the Project

During the latter half of the Phase 2 programme, there were several recent developments in Jordan, namely the signing of the Jordan Compact by donors, aimed at assisting Jordan deal with the Syrian refugee crisis. Another significant development has been the World Bank's concessional loan to the Government of Jordan. As part of the loan terms, the garment sector in Jordan has been considered a source for more jobs for Syrians. Further, to address high unemployment, particularly among women, the Government of Jordan has required that 25 percent of workers in garment factories to be Jordanian. A Phase 3 is under development, taking into consideration these developments and the challenges and opportunities they offer.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The rationale for the Phase 2 final evaluation is to analyse the programme's progress and provide

recommendations applicable to the Jordanian context. The final evaluation is expected to build on the available knowledge on Better Work and Better Work Jordan accumulated through impact assessments, midterm evaluations and sustainability studies, and to recommend strategies to make Better Work Jordan's impact more sustainable. The audience for the evaluation is the Better Work staff, tripartite partners, ILO officials in the region and Geneva, and donors.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluator collected data through a combined approach to desk review of programme documentation and other relevant reports about the garment sector in Jordan; semi-structured interviews with key persons; and focus group discussions with factory workers, both members of the Performance Improvement Consultative Committee (PICCs) at 5 factories, and, where feasible, conversations with workers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 52 people, including representatives of employers association, union, government, civil society and factory management; and 51 people participated in focus group discussions, including factory workers and members of PICCs. The evaluator engaged another 12 members of the BWJ team in a large group discussion.

Quantitative data collected by the BWJ programme on non-compliance and factory performance, as well as training implemented during Phase 2 was analyzed, in addition to the qualitative data collected through the interviews described above. Data collected was analyzed and triangulated to determine emerging trends. The secondary quantitative data collected was analyzed and interpreted along with the qualitative data collected and analyzed together. Findings were then articulated on the basis of this analysis.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance

- The wording of the Phase 2 development objective and outcome areas reflects the dual approach to increased competitiveness in the industry and increased welfare of workers. Yet the reference to Decent Work and poverty reduction is not strong, particularly with regard to Outcome 2, while the kind of sustainability initially sought in Outcome 3 was determined to be non-achievable during the first half of programme implementation.
- The relevance of the BWJ program to the ILO DWCP is limited due to its impacting only 5 percent of the total workforce and 25 percent of the manufacturing sector, yet its intended impact of

developing the MOL labour inspectorate and providing social sector work the garment industry and BWJ's experience may provide learning for other sectors going forward.

- The BWJ programme design is highly relevant to international development priorities as Decent Work and migration feature strongly in the Declaration on the 2030 Agenda.

Accomplishments in the sector: growth and non-compliance rates

- The garment sector has witnessed growth following the 2006 crisis, where exports in 2015 have exceeded 2005 export levels. There is the positive perception among stakeholders that the BWJ programme has played a significant role in the industry's growth.
- Data on non-compliance rates indicate overall a high number of non-compliances for those factories participating for just 1 year and a low number for those factories participating for 9 years, yet there is not a clear downward trajectory in number of non-compliances for factories participating between 2 and 9 years.
- The Phase 2 programme overall witnessed decreases in non-compliance rates in 38 percent of Working Conditions and 26 percent in core labour standards, which represents greater progress achieved as compared to the overall time period of 2010-2017. Yet greater increases in non-compliance were witnessed in 13 of the 21 Working Condition sub-areas, or 62 percent of the total number of areas; and 6 of the 19 Core Labour Standard sub-areas, or 32 percent of the total number of areas during Phase 2.
- Overall, stakeholders generally spoke to those non-compliances continuing to be most persistent within the industry to include overtime pay and verbal abuse. Yet the evaluation finds the more persistent areas of non-compliance are found in the areas of discrimination, due to the wage difference between local and migrant workers; freedom of association, due to the lack of such freedom in the Jordanian labour law and the GOJ's delay in ratifying ILO Conventions 87 and 98; OSH, reportedly due to the Jordanian labour law's stringent treatment on SH and medical staff; and HR/contracts.

Effectiveness in BWJ delivery of core services: assessments

- BWJ assessments are overall well regarded by stakeholders, including employer association and buyers.

- The lack of a clear downward trajectory in non-compliance by the end of Phase 2 are identified by stakeholders as due to: varying levels of competency among BWJ staff; introduction of new standards agreed upon in the CBAs; lack of a nuanced assessment tool in the CAT; and lack of changed sourcing behavior by buyers.
- There is the question as to whether a more conducive environment with other inputs needs to be in place – such as a more fair labour market as mandated by Jordanian Labour Law as well as improved buyer behavior -- with a more stable measurement system to provide for a clearer trajectory over time. While a clearer measurement approach can be applied by the BWJ programme, there is still the question as to whether the BWJ approach is effectively working toward the desired change or whether the programme has reached a plateau.
- BWJ began documenting communications and response with the MOL concerning Zero Tolerance non-compliance only in year 2016. Just one factory in 2015 is identified as closed due to 5 cases of forced labour and 2 cases of child labour. Transparency and more decisive action on ZT is a controversial point among stakeholders.

Effectiveness in delivery of core services: capacity building

- BWJ training and advisory services provided was overall considered of high quality, was well contextualized and based on audits performed, and it focused on encouraging application of new skills and knowledge.
- Yet access was problematic, with on average (for years 2014-2016) 65 percent of factory units participating in training. Further, those factories with the greatest number of non-compliances did not participate, particularly among the group of sub-contracting factories.
- While training focused on application of skills, there was not systematic follow-up after training with select participants to determine potential change in the workplace as a result of application of new knowledge and skills.

Influencing agenda: successes and challenges

- The significant wins in the Outcome 2 area for the BWJ Phase 2 programme include the development and acceptance of the unified contract and public reporting.

- Transparent decision-making by the MOL committee charged with the mandate to decide on factory applications for foreign workers is a vital link to address workforce composition;
- While the CBAs are commonly lauded as a win for the industry, the notion of genuine representation and participation of workers within the industry poses a critical question for the programme as to what extent Decent Work is achievable within one industry without an improved labour market overall that guarantees freedom of association and one minimum wage for all workers.

Sustainability of BWJ approach

- The Jordan Compact and the GOJ's commitment to create more job opportunities for Syrians, as well as Jordanians, has been a significant development, which has provided some new possibilities for the BWJ programme. This includes the opportunity to work toward a more productive and viable labour market and the possibility of becoming a more self-sustained entity.
- Of primary concern going forward is further developing capacity building for the MOL labour inspectorate, and effectively sustaining the capacity building work done so far with a well-monitored approach.
- Also paramount is for BWJ to remain involved in the garment sector and to sustain progress made as long as there are vulnerable groups among its workforce and while the labour inspectorate's capacity continues to be built.

Recommendations

Recommendations for the ILO and MOL

- 1. Ensure a detailed MOU is negotiated and signed for BWJ Phase 3 implementation, which lays out a detailed plan for effective capacity building and institutional strengthening of the Labor Inspectorate.** As the MOL has one of the weakest Labor Inspectorates in the region at this time, a very carefully planned approach to transfer auditing functions from the BWJ programme to the Labor Inspectorate must be done in a phased manner. If not carefully monitored, migrant workers themselves will be the ones most adversely affected as labor standards would deteriorate.
- 2. As part of a formalized agreement, ensure there is a clear role for the seconded labor inspectors upon their return to the MOL.** It is recommended to provide a central role to the returned labor inspectors to help build a core inspection unit within the Labor

Inspectorate, to build capacity among fellow inspectors; to oversee the visa and work permit applications, ensuring that approval is granted on the basis of specified need and rationale; and to engage in inspection themselves. They should be a part of the establishment of an inspection quality assurance unit, which will help build capacity and institutionalize a proper system within the MOL.

3. Conduct an assessment of MOL Labor Inspectorate capacity as a follow-up to the first one completed. An updated version would assist in identifying capacity building needs for a Phase 3 of BWJ and help to establish a baseline for monitoring.

Recommendations for the MOL

4. Apply a stricter Zero Tolerance approach within the garment sector as a means toward creating greater levels of compliance. Greater understanding of such consequences by factories will facilitate greater levels of change within the industry.

5. Adopt one minimum wage for all workers in Jordan. A multiple minimum wage system hurts all workers, including Jordanian. Only when working conditions are harmonized at a decent level will Jordanian workers be able to compete on a level playing field. The garment sector has favored a readily available workforce paid at a lower wage, and such an arrangement has perpetuated the economy's reliance on low-wage low-skill production methods. These impacts have coincided with high rates of Jordanian unemployment and an economy stuck in a low growth and low value added equilibrium. One minimum wage for all workers will eliminate the gap in wages and would reduce employers' incentives to hire non-Jordanians rather than Jordanians.

6. Work toward the establishment of a sound system in place for labour inspection within the MOL. Put priority on labour inspection and the building of its capacity with sufficient funding for human resources and training. Establish an inspection quality assurance team or unit within the labour inspectorate.

Recommendations for the ILO

7. As a fundamental purpose for moving forward with a Phase 3, expand the BWJ mandate from the QIZ garment factories to address broader systemic problems within the MOL through advocacy, capacity building and institutional strengthening. A focus on the Labor Inspectorate and its capacity development, based on a sound assessment from the beginning, will enable a systematic approach that can be monitored and evaluated to ensure demonstration of

sufficient capacity development through the course of implementation.

8. Develop a sound strategy for addressing freedom of association for Phase 3. One of the systemic means identified for working toward greater change in the industry is to develop a clear strategy going forward.

9. Consider additional strategies to work toward lower non-compliance rates in the garment sector. To facilitate greater change in the sector consider the following: 1) Fully unannounced assessments with factories; 2) Report more non-compliance cases to the MOL and advocate for a stricter ZT framework for the industry; 3) Advertise the public nondisclosure portal widely and publish in both English and Arabic; and 4) During assessments interview workers outside the factory grounds.

10. In developing an M&E approach to capacity building activities for the MOL, consider applying the Kirkpatrick Model to better identify change as a result of training implemented. This would enable the programme to better assess what happened as a result of training and to identify clear areas of contribution of its training and advisory inputs to an intended outcome. Further, it would enable the programme to better identify positive change happening within the MOL as well as make any adjustments necessary. Include in data collection for monitoring purposes the number of persons participating in training, representing which group, and number of person hours of training.

11. Consider hiring an international official to join the BWJ programme to work closely with the Chief Technical Adviser. Given the need and desire for a Phase 3 to advance a more purposeful and ambitious advocacy agenda as part of its work, an international presence in support of a national director position may assist, particularly for bringing experience from other parts of the world. The right international in such a position could provide a balance and a close confidant to the national director, and, in acting as a team, they could then strategize as to how best to put forward an agenda for change vis-à-vis the MOL and the industry.

12. As part of Phase 3, closely monitor the MOL's progress in developing its labour inspectorate. Transferring too many functions to the Labor inspectorate too soon would likely result in increased violations experienced by the migrant workers within the garment sector. The rate of transferring responsibilities should be parallel to the rate of improvement of inspection services across the country in all sectors.