



Better Work, a unique partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), brings together government, employers, workers and international buyers to improve labour standards compliance and competitiveness in global supply chains.

Better Work supports enterprises in improving their labour practices based on core ILO labour standards and national labour law. In addition to helping enterprises compete in global markets where many buyers demand that suppliers comply with labour standards, Better Work also contributes to social dialogue and strengthening labour administration in its country programmes.

Some of the benefits that a Better Work programme may offer governments include the following:

- More accurate payment of wages can mean better livelihoods for workers and their families.
- Increased workplace cooperation can lead to fewer strikes and a more stable industry.
- Increased compliance with labour standards can mean a greater ability to market a national industry as an ethical sourcing location, which can lead to more foreign investment.
- Increased commitment from international buyers can grow an industry and provide jobs.
- Advisory and training services can increase the skills of management, supervisors and workers, helping to develop workforce capacity.
- Improved inspection services can lead to better enforcement of national labour law.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The main goal of social dialogue is to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work. Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability, as well as boost economic progress.

Project Advisory Committee

Better Work's national Project Advisory Committees (PAC) bring ministries of labour and trade together with employer and worker organizations at the sectoral level. These committees promote social dialogue in practical ways that advance the development goals of participating countries, and strengthen practices and policies that will improve working conditions and industry competitiveness.

GOVERNMENTS: SUPPORTING AND SHARING IN SUCCESS

Governments are critical stakeholders in Better Work, and some are taking the initiative to support the programme in a comprehensive and committed way. For example, the Jordanian Government, which also partially funds the programme, has endorsed industrywide participation in Better Work. It sees clear advantages for the industry and the country, such as the following:

- All factories develop the required management systems to improve working conditions, quality and productivity.

- A single benchmark holds all factories to the same standard, promoting positive competition to demonstrate improvements.
- Jordan avoids damage to its image that may arise from bad practices of poorly managed factories becoming public.

And in Cambodia, establishing a strong reputation as an ethical sourcing country has led to a significant increase in the size of the apparel industry as a provider of jobs and an engine for growth for the national economy. Between 2001–2008, the following impacts were seen:

- 160,000 new jobs were created.
- 90% of workers sent remittances to rural-based families (30–50% of wages).
- Exports grew by 151%.

LABOUR ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Better Work's assessment and advisory services identify gaps in compliance with ILO core labour standards and national labour law using a rigorous, credible approach that demonstrates a national commitment to transparency and accountability on labour rights.

During country programme start-up, the ministry of labour advises on and validates the adaptation of the global compliance assessment tool to the national labour law. During implementation, the government plays a leading role in strategically advising the programme, notably by chairing the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). While Better Work will assess the compliance needs of enterprises, only the government can enforce the law, including through the use of sanctions.

As part of the benefits offered by Better Work, in every programme country, Better Work establishes an agreement with the ministry of labour, tailored to the needs and priorities of the government. The agreement typically includes: (i) a protocol on how to address severe human rights violations or life-threatening situations that Better Work may uncover in an enterprise, and (ii) a collaborative plan for improving inspection effectiveness, including for example, labour inspectors receiving on-the-job training with Better Work. Collaboration with ministries of labour may also extend to sharing aggregated compliance data in ways that help inspectors identify workplaces with the most risk of non-compliance. Finally, engagement with Better Work through the PAC and in other areas allows the government to see how the labour law is viewed in practice by workers and employers, which can lead to helpful clarifications or even labour law reform, where needed.

"The Project Advisory Committee is looking forward to partnering with the program to make it successful in achieving the project objectives: better labor compliance, better working conditions, more jobs for laborers, and increased productivity."

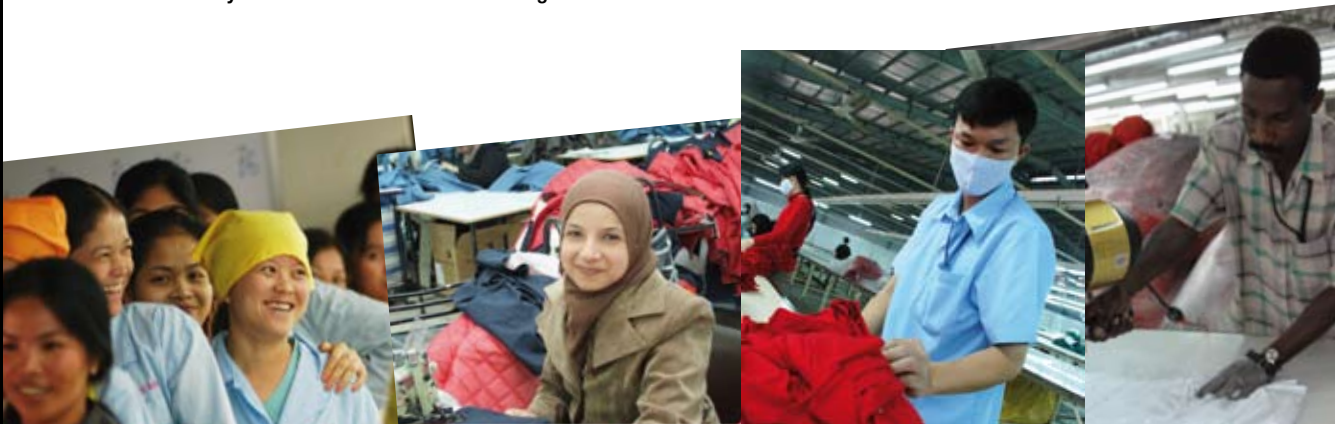
Nguyen Van Tien, Chief Labor Inspector, Vietnam Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs
Chair, Better Work Vietnam Project Advisory Committee

"The Ministry of Labour has been working hard over the past years to improve inspection and compliance in Jordan, especially in the QIZs... An integral part of the Government efforts to ensure the sustainability of the garment sector in Jordan is the ILO Better Work Jordan Project."

HE Dr. Ibrahim Amosh
Former Jordan Minister of Labour

"We all here acknowledge the essential contribution of Better Factories Cambodia to promote reputation and to enhance the growth of garment and footwear industry in Cambodia. Through the project, working conditions within this important industry, which employs hundreds of thousands of workers, have been improved."

HE Oum Mean, Secretary of State
Cambodia Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training



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