



High-level ILO delegation calls for rapid issue of Labour Rules

A high-level, multi-disciplinary delegation from ILO visited Bangladesh 19-21 May 2015 to discuss the proposed implementation rules for the Bangladesh Labour Act with the government and stakeholders. The six-member team was led by Karen Curtis, Deputy Director of the International Labour Standards Department, ILO Geneva. While emphasizing the need for the rules to be issued without further delay, Ms Curtis highlighted the importance that they comply with international labour standards.

“The speed with which the government revised the Bangladesh Labour Act following Rana Plaza sent a strong signal about its commitment to enhance labour rights and working conditions. It is vital that the implementation rules fully reflect this and promote core labour standards. This is an ideal opportunity for Bangladesh to get the rules right and make a statement to the world that it remains serious about improving labour rights,” she said.

For more see [here](#)

National inspection initiative passes 1,000 RMG factory mark

Government efforts to inspect ready-made garment (RMG) factories for structural, fire and electrical safety have passed the 1,000 factory mark. These efforts are supported by ILO with backing from Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. A further 1,904 factories have been inspected by the Accord and Alliance.

Mr Syed Ahmed, Inspector General of the Department of Inspection of Factories and Establishments said, “This is a significant milestone as we seek to create a safer RMG sector for Bangladesh. We are now making concerted efforts to complete as many inspections as possible by the 31 July 2015 deadline. After this date, factories will no longer receive inspections for free and will need to meet the costs themselves if they wish to continue exporting.”

For more see [here](#)

Out of the pharmacy and into the bakery!

Vocational training offers new opportunities for Bangladeshi professionals

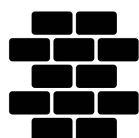
See inside for more



Safety inspections of Bangladesh ready-made garment factories (as of 2 July 2015)

3,508

export-oriented RMG factories targeted to undergo



Structural



Fire



Electrical

safety assessments carried out by three initiatives which to date have undertaken the following number of inspections



Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety

1,291 factories



The National Initiative supported by ILO

1,100 factories



Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety

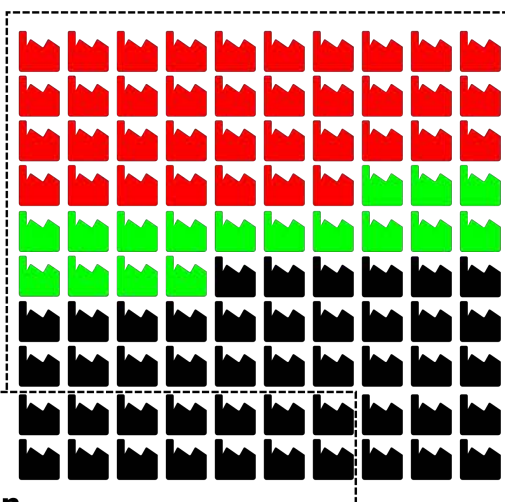
613 factories

Inspection overview



14%

of factories remain to be assessed



3,004

of target factories inspected or

86%

of total



31 July 2015

deadline for remaining factories to be inspected



34

factories closed as result of inspections



emphasis now moving to remediation stage

Rana Plaza commemoration highlights progress made and challenges ahead in the Bangladesh RMG sector

Speakers at a commemoration event held on 23 April 2015 to mark the second Rana Plaza anniversary recognised the progress made towards creating a safer ready-made garment (RMG) sector for Bangladesh while stressing the need for further improvements to working conditions and worker rights in the industry.

Looking back over the past two years, Ms Tomoko Nishimoto, International Labour Organization's (ILO) Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific recognised the progress but cautioned against any loss of urgency in the efforts being made.

“Significant progress has been made but many challenges remain. Completing the remaining factory inspections is high priority and government must verify factories

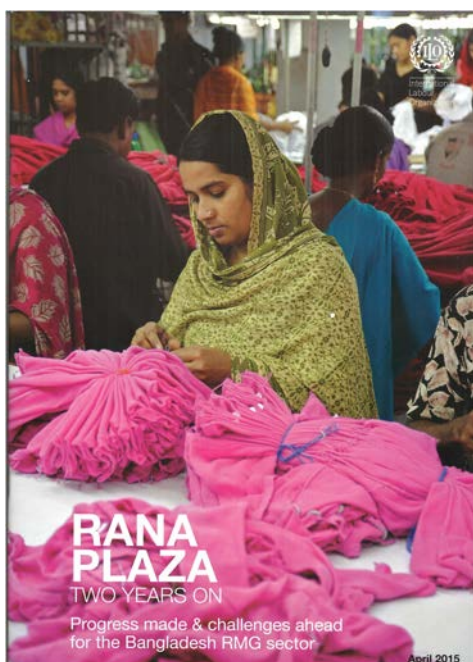
claiming to be closed as well as deal with those which will not cooperate. Progress in enhancing safety needs to be matched by similar improvements in workers' rights. Meanwhile, the Rana Plaza compensation process has highlighted the need for an Employment Injury Insurance scheme that benefits workers and the industry alike,” she said.

For more see [here](#)

‘Rana Plaza Two Years On: Towards a Safer RMG Sector for Bangladesh’ was organised by the Government of Bangladesh and ILO. The event was supported by Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.



Tomoko Nishimoto ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific



What's changed in the last two years?

In two years since Rana Plaza collapsed, considerable progress has been made towards creating a safer ready made garment sector for Bangladesh. This ILO publication looks at what has been achieved and the challenges still ahead.

Download the publication [here](#) or contact needham@ilo.org to receive a copy



RMG update

For an update on the progress of ILO's RMG programme please see [here](#)

DIFE update

Visit the website of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments [here](#)

Rana Plaza two years on

A series of audio visual products capture some of the changes that have taken place since the Rana Plaza collapsed. These products can be viewed at www.ilo.org/dhaka or by clicking the links below.



Building a brighter future

This motion graphic animation captures the progress made and the challenges ahead as a brighter future for the Bangladesh garment industry and those who work in it is forged.

Watch it [here](#)

A day in the life of a labour inspector

The Bangladesh labour inspectorate has undergone big changes in the last two years. Amongst newly recruited inspectors trained by ILO is 27-year-old Farzana Islam. This short video shows her in action. Watch it [here](#)



From worker to owner

Haunted by the Rana Plaza collapse Naseer Uddin Sohel could not face returning to a large factory. After receiving counselling from ILO he used his compensation money to set up his own small garment factory. Watch his story [here](#).

A small shop built on big dreams

Badly injured while helping to rescue fellow workers from the rubble of Rana Plaza, Shahjahan Selim is now permanently disabled. Through ILO medical and business skills assistance Selim has overcome adversity to open a small shop. Watch it [here](#)



ILO and BEF ink agreement to enhance Occupational Safety and Health in the RMG sector



Taking part in the signing ceremony were (from left) Reaz-Bin Mahmood, Vice President (Finance) Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BGMEA); Md. Atiqul Islam, President, BGMEA; Tapan Chowdhury, President Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF); Srinivas Reddy; and Monsoor Ahmed, Vice President, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BKMEA).

The second phase of a two-year plan that will see some 750,000 to 800,000 workers gain practical skills on how to reduce workplace accidents is underway. The initiative is supported by ILO's Improving Working Conditions in the RMG sector project funded by Canada, the Netherlands and the UK. An agreement signed in Dhaka on 28 May 2015 between the Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) and ILO will see a group of master trainers head out to some 400 RMG factories to train supervisors and mid-level managers. They in turn will pass on the skills to the workforce.

BEF President Tapan Chowdhury and ILO Country Director Srinivas Reddy signed the agreement which was also inked by BGMEA President Md. Atiqul Islam and BKMEA Vice President Monsoor Ahmed. **For more see [here](#)**

"OSH is everyone's responsibility and through our joint efforts a large number of managers, supervisors and workers will gain a good understanding about safety issues and what they can do to keep both themselves and their workmates safe." Mr Tapan Chowdhury, President of BEF

Deepening the skills of union master trainers

Since Rana Plaza there has been considerable growth in the number of trade unions in the RMG sector. However there is a steep learning curve for new unions so that they can play an effective role in ensuring workplace safety, advocate workers' claims and defend workers' rights.

ILO Dhaka, in partnership with its ILO/ITC-International Training Centre, Turin and Bureau for Workers Activities (ACTRAV) is providing help for trade union organizations under the National Coordination Committee on Workers Education (NCCWE) to improve the capacity of workers to organize through a workers education programme. Similar training is also being held with the IndustriAll Bangladesh Council (IBC).

A three-day training workshop was held in Dhaka 7-9 May 2015, as a follow up to previously held training for NCCWE members on Freedom of Association, organizing and labour law. Areas covered during the refresher session included core international labour conventions and related Bangladesh labour laws as well as their practical application in the workplace. Helping facilitate the training was Leigh Hubbard of the Senior Industrial officer of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation. **For more see [here](#)**



NCCWE Chairman Abdul Mukit Khan addresses the event

"The union movement needs more competent leaders and this type of training is essential to help us do that." Mr Abdul Mukit Khan, Chairperson of the NCCWE.

ILO joins hands with IndustriALL Bangladesh Council



ILO Country Director Srinivas Reddy signs the agreements along with IBC federation leaders

ILO has joined hands with the IndustriALL Bangladesh Council (IBC) to further strengthen workers' rights and working conditions in the ready-made garment industry. At a ceremony held at ILO's office in Dhaka 12 May 2015, federations affiliated with the IBC signed agreements which will see them receive ILO support to run capacity building activities for their RMG sector members. The agreement with IBC mirrors a similar agreement signed recently with the National Coordination Committee on Workers Education (NCCWE) federations. These activities form part of ILO's worker education programme which aims to create an enabling environment for worker organization and collective bargaining at factory level. **For more see [here](#)**

'The IBC is on the frontline in the RMG sector dealing with workers and employers on a daily basis. This is a great opportunity to mobilize, organise and raise capacity of the workers. It is our responsibility as ILO to take advantage of the momentum that has been created and give you support.' ILO Bangladesh Country Director Srinivas Reddy

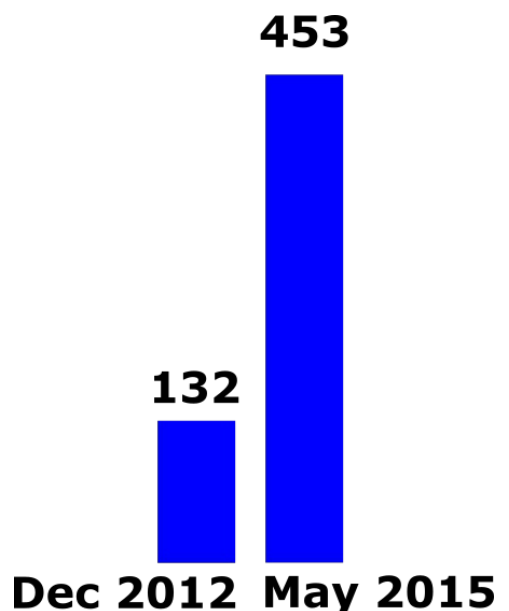
On-line registration system for trade unions launched

An on-line registration system for trade unions and trade union federations was officially launched by Bangladesh's Department of Labour (DoL) with support from ILO in April 2015.

Workers wishing to register new unions are now being encouraged to apply on-line through the Department of Labour website www.dol.gov.bd. Paper-based submissions will also still be accepted in order to maximize the ability of worker groups to make applications.

The system was developed with technical support from the ILO's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in Bangladesh (FPRW) project funded by the US Department of Labor.

Growth in labour unions in the Bangladesh RMG sector



Rana Plaza victims' compensation scheme secures funds needed for final payments

The Rana Plaza Coordination Committee announced 8 June 2015 that it has raised the funds required to make full compensation payments to all victims.

The Committee, which represents government, workers and employers organisations, brands and retailers as well as civil society had estimated that US\$30m was required to ensure that all victims can receive fair and equitable compensation according to ILO Conventions. Further donations, including one significant sum, mean that \$30m has now been reached and all final payments can be made. **For more see [here](#)**



Final compensation payments can now be made to help survivors get on with their lives



"This is a milestone but we still have important business to deal with. We must now work together to ensure that accidents can be prevented in the future, and that a robust national employment injury insurance scheme is established so that victims of any future accidents will be swiftly and justly compensated and cared for." ILO Director-General Guy Ryder

Video - A legacy of Rana Plaza: making employment injury insurance a reality for all

Workers who were victims of Rana Plaza were uninsured and intensive efforts to compensate them had to be made after the fact. The tragedy was a wake-up call to establish national employment injury insurance so all workers are protected when accidents happen. A video produced by ILO's Social Protection Department explains just what an EII scheme is and why it is needed.

Watch the video [here](#)



Rana Plaza compensation scheme: design and lessons

A technical report presenting the design and operationalization of the Rana Plaza compensation scheme as well as lessons learnt has been developed by ILO's Social Protection Department (SOCPRO). **Download the report [here](#) or at <http://bit.ly/1K2brju>**

Professionals begin to see vocational training opportunities in new light

Last year, Comilla-native Jimi Ur Rahman was working as a pharmacist in a multinational company in Pakistan. This year, he is back home in Bangladesh studying baking and could not be more confident about his future.

“My wife and I had good jobs in Pakistan but I came here to do this course because there are so many opportunities in baking, and the National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute (NHTTI) offers nationally recognised qualifications. To learn such skills in such a recognised institute in any other country would cost you thousands of dollars, not taka,” said Jimi.

“Ever since I was a child I’ve always enjoyed cooking. Now it has become a respected profession, one that is actually enjoyable as well as offering good career prospects. I will use the Level 1 and 2 course here as a stepping stone to get accepted into higher level baking qualifications abroad and then I’ll start my own business there,” said Jimi.

Jimi is one of the many already highly qualified trainees opting for the new nationally recognised baking courses offered by the NHTTI.

With the numbers of restaurants and hotels in Bangladesh rapidly growing, demand for skilled tourism and hospitality staff is also growing. The NHTTI is one of the institutions that the ILO, through the Canada-funded Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project, is supporting to deliver nationally recognised qualifications under the new National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework.



Former pharmacist Jimi Ur Rahman



The NHTTI, with the support of the ILO, has become a Registered Training Organisation, hosts meetings of the newly developed Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Council and has recently become a Centre of Excellence for the tourism and hospitality sector. The new training courses are delivered in its new, industry-standard laboratory, equipped with the support of the B-SEP Project, and by teachers trained in competency based training methods through the project. **For more see [here](#)**

“We had 20 seats available in our recent National Technical and Vocational Qualification course but had to accept 22 trainees. We are not talking about uneducated or unemployed people either – many of our trainees have masters’ degrees. The bakers of the future are lawyers, lecturers, pharmacists and doctors,” said NHTTI Principal Ashraful Haque.

ILO supports first public private partnership for Bangladesh Graphic Arts Institute

Graphic Arts Institute and Shamustshuk Printers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 3 May in the presence of industry, ILO representatives and high level officials from the Ministry of Education and Directorate of Technical Education.

The ILO, through the EU-funded Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project and the Canada-funded Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity Project, promotes public private partnerships across all sectors as part of the new skills development system. The Graphic Arts Institute has been a particular focus however, as industry involvement is particularly crucial in the printing sector. Printing is a major area of the graphic arts curriculum, and the institute is equipped with industry-approved machinery, but it is too expensive to operate without external printing jobs.

Dr Sheikh Abu Reza, Principal, Graphic Arts Institute said they want to give their trainees comprehensive practical experience in printing, but the amount of printing jobs available within the institute is not sufficient for that.

“The MOU signing means trainees will have a regular flow of varied printing jobs coming in from industry, giving them practical exposure to a range of different techniques and experience using different, industry machines. They will be much better equipped for the job market upon graduating,” he said.

For more see [here](#)



Dr Sheikh Abu Reza, Principal, Graphic Arts Institute and Mr Saif Shahariar Jaheedi, Managing Director, Shamustshuk Printers Ltd sign the agreement

Public private partnership a lifeline for Amir

From a poor rural background, Amir was the first person in his family to pursue higher education. He chose to study printing and was admitted to Dhaka's Graphic Arts Institute where he achieved good results in his studies. But living in the capital is costly, and try as he might, Amir and his family simply could not afford it. With seemingly no other options, Amir approached his teachers to tell them he would need to drop out due to financial difficulties.

Just a month earlier however, the Graphic Arts Institute had started their first public private partnership with Shamustshuk Printers Ltd. The institute approached the printers and within a few weeks Amir was employed part-time, while still continuing his studies.



Amir at work

“I use what I have learned to ensure the quality of printing jobs. In the institute I have to pay closer attention to the practical side and at work I have to pay closer attention to the theoretical side. My learning helps my work and my work also helps my learning, and I am able to afford to live in Dhaka now,” said Amir.

To read Amir's story see [here](#)

ILO supports Bangladesh's first international conference on technical and vocational education and training

A three-day international conference on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Sustainable Development was held from April 30 to May 2 in Dhaka, with representatives from 17 countries attending.

The event brought together a total of over 1,000 researchers, practitioners, educators and entrepreneurs from SMEs and industrial sectors. The conference was jointly organised by IDEB and Colombo Plan Staff College, along with co-partners Directorate of Technical Education, Bangladesh Technical Education Board and ILO, supported by Ministry of Education, Canada and National Skills Development Council.



The Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina presides over the conference opening

“We have seen significant successes in reforming Bangladesh’s skills development system over the past five years, such as the approval of the National Skills Development Policy, but there is still a lot more to be done on the ground. This conference is an excellent opportunity to promote the government’s agenda of a nationally recognised system for skills, as in addition to international guests, there are principals from over 400 TVET institutions across Bangladesh in attendance,” said ILO senior skills specialist Arthur Shears.



52 new positions created for Bangladesh Technical Education Board to Implement NTVQF

The Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) will be able to recruit 52 new staff now that recruitment rules were published in the Government Gazette on May 28, 2015. The

new staff will be needed to help the BTEB implement the National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework as required by the National Skills Development Policy.

This is a significant achievement for Bangladesh’s new skills development system, as capacity issues at BTEB have hindered more widespread adoption of the NTVQF. The BTEB is responsible for quality assurance of the new skills development system. The existing Competency Based Training Cell at the BTEB will be expanded to house more staff. **For more see [here](#)**

The ILO is currently working with the Government of Bangladesh to reform the skills development system through two major initiatives; the Canadian-funded Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project, and the EU-funded TVET Reform Project.

See the National Skills Development Policy (English/Bangla) [here](#)



Upgrading skills is a key CEBAI objective

CEBAI trainees successfully placed in industry

The Centre of Excellence for the Bangladesh Apparel Industry (CEBAI) has successfully placed its first batch of 30 trainees into different RMG enterprises following their completion of the nationally recognised Sewing Machine Operator Level One course. Training for another 30 is currently underway.

Enterprise based training (EBT) is progressing with a second major producer, Fakir Apparels, coming on

board. Work has begun to build the company's EBT capacity and it will soon begin training its workers in the Sewing Machine Operators course. This will allow their skills to be recognised and positions upgraded. Two NGOs, UCEP and Muslim Aid, are also being prepared by CEBAI so that they can provide training to 480 members of the rural poor, with emphasis placed on including those with disabilities.

Based in Ashulia, a ready-made garment (RMG) cluster area close to Dhaka, the Centre of Excellence helps meet the need for a skilled labour force in the RMG sector by providing competency-based training in areas where demand from industry is greatest.

The Centre of Excellence is an initiative supported by ILO, the Government of Sweden, Swedish fashion retailer Hennes and Mauritz (H&M) and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). Please contact khondker@ilo.org

Bangladesh Bank's employment role studied

The role of Bangladesh's central bank role in promoting growth and employment while maintaining price stability was discussed at an international seminar jointly organized by the ILO and Bangladesh Bank in Dhaka on 14 May 2015.

The seminar saw debate and reflection on an ILO-supported study on Bangladesh Bank's role in pursuing developmental objectives alongside traditional objectives of price and macroeconomic stability. The study, entitled 'Challenges of price stability, growth and employment in Bangladesh: Role of Bangladesh Bank' was presented by its author, former ILO director Dr. Muhammed Muqtada.

"We must reach out and foster linkages with core macroeconomic institutions that reinforce our regular interactions with the Ministry of Labour and social partners." Dr Iyanatul Islam, Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch Chief, ILO, Geneva

For more see [here](#) or to download the study see [here](#)



Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr. Atiur Rahman (2nd left) and ILO's Dr Iyanatul Islam (3rd left)

ILO helps mark Child Labour Day 2015 in Bangladesh

ILO took part in a seminar held in Dhaka 11 June to mark World Child Labour Day. The theme for the 2015 event was “No to child labour, Yes to quality education” which focused on the importance of access to education as a key step in tackling child labour.

Gagan Rajbhandari, Deputy Director, ILO Country Office for Bangladesh said, “There has been very good progress in Bangladesh towards the elimination of child labour in formal sectors such as ready made garments. However additional efforts need to be made with regards to the worst forms of child labour that still exist in certain industries. For this reason we call upon the government to ratify ILO Convention 138 concerning minimum age for admission to employment.”

For more see [here](#)

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) - IPEC is the biggest dedicated child labour programme in the world and the largest technical cooperation programme within the ILO. For more see [here](#)



Mr. Md. Mujibul Haque MP Honorable State Minister for Labour and Employment chairs the Council

ILO supports first meeting of national child labour council

The inaugural meeting of the Bangladesh National Child Labour Welfare Council (NCLWC) was held in Dhaka on 26 May 2015 with ILO support.

Created in 2014, the body forms part of the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to guide, coordinate and monitor the implementation of its National Plan of Action (NPA) on elimination of child labour. Chairing the meeting was Mr. Md. Mujibul Haque MP Honorable State Minister for Labour and Employment.

The mandate of the council is to analyze and review the overall child rights situation in the country and advise on successful implementation of the Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 and the concerned National Plan of Action. ILO will work with the Ministry of Labour and Employment to support the council as an important mechanism to increase implementation of the NPA. For more see [here](#)

ILO's child labour-related activities in Bangladesh take place through its Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labour Project (CLEAR) which is supported by the US Department of Labor. For more information please contact: sultana@ilo.org

First ever job fair for returnee migrant workers

ILO jointly with the Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) organized a first ever job fair aimed at reintegrating migrant workers into the national economy. Over 1,000 returnee migrant workers attended the job fair in Dhaka, 24 May 2015 where they met with employers from various industries looking for experienced staff. The event was organized by the BEF with support from ILO's Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



Migrant workers: a valuable resource for Bangladesh

"I have submitted my resume to the construction companies that are here at this job fair for people like us and hope that they will call me for a job which matches my skills and experience," Dutt Kumar Das, who has returned to Bangladesh after spending five years working in Saudi Arabia. **For more see [here](#)**

"We need to tap into the wealth of knowledge and skills that the returnee migrant workers bring back with them. Eight million trained and experienced migrant workers are a huge resource pool that Bangladesh can benefit from." BEF Vice President Mrs. Sabrina Islam

Migration-related publications from ILO

ILO's "Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh" project sees it assist the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE) and the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) to improve the overall management of labour migration and to ensure protection and decent employment conditions for Bangladeshi migrant workers. Over recent months the project has produced or supported production of the following publications.



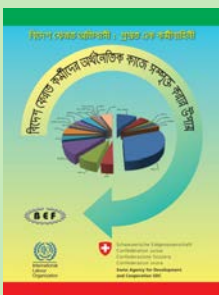
Bangla-language standardized trainers manual to provide pre-departure orientation to workers migrating to Qatar.

Download [here](#)



Bangla-language standardized trainers manual to provide pre-departure orientation to workers migrating to Oman.

Download [here](#)



Booklet, available in English and Bangla, for workers, employers, companies and NGOs to assist in the reintegration of migrant workers returning to Bangladesh.

Download [here](#)



A preliminary study of the impact of labour migration from South Asia on South Asian Employers.

Download [here](#)

For more information please contact nish@ilo.org

Workshop shares experiences of preventing trafficking and ensuring safe migration



Organizations working to ensure safe migration and prevent labor trafficking met in Dhaka 16-17 June 2015 to share knowledge and experiences of their work. The groups are working as part of the “ILO-DFID Partnership Programme on Fair Recruitment and Decent Work for Women Migrant Workers in South Asia and the Middle East” (Work in Freedom) project which is funded by the United Kingdom.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Gagan Rajbhandari, Deputy Country Director, ILO Country Office for Bangladesh said, “Our discussions will help us better understand the links between migration and trafficking and how we should seek to combat this from community to policy levels. We will furthermore be able to share ideas about how to better coordinate and collaborate with the government to ensure safe migration and prevent labor trafficking.”

For more see [here](#)

More about 'Work in Freedom'

A video and brochure provide insight into the objectives of the Work in Freedom project

Watch video [here](#)
Download brochure [here](#)
or contact banu@ilo.org



Community tourism for indigenous communities

ILO facilitated a week long study tour to Indonesia recently for high level officials of the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs of Bangladesh. The aim of the study tour was to gain firsthand experience on how Indonesia has empowered indigenous people through cultural tourism. The team engaged in an exchange of experiences and intensive discussion on how the rights of indigenous peoples have been protected and preserved through the Indonesian legislative framework.

ILO, with support from UNDP, is working with government ministries, Chittagong Hill Tracts institutions the army and police to strengthen their knowledge of legal and governance aspects as well as the cultures and livelihoods of ethnic peoples. Bangladesh is home to around 3 million indigenous and tribal peoples from more than 50 ethnic backgrounds who are amongst the most disadvantaged sections of Bangladeshi society.

(From left) Alex Chicham, ILO Bangladesh; Ms Waty, Secretary, Ministry of Manpower of Republic of Indonesia; Ms. Lusia, Programme Officer, ILO Indonesia; Mr. NBK Tripura, Secretary, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs; Ms. Roostiwati, Secretary General and Head of International Relations of Ministry of Manpower of Republic of Indonesia; Prof. Mesbah Kamal, Chairperson, Research and Development Collective.





Better Work's Louis Vanegas

Better Work Bangladesh: Not just another audit!

Louis Vanegas is the Programme Manager of the ILO/IFC Better Work programme in Bangladesh. He looks at what's been done so far and how Better Work differs to other garment sector initiatives.

What brought you to Bangladesh?

After 27 years of working on worker's rights issues, first as a labour inspector, then a brand auditor and Corporate Social Responsibility Director, I thought it was time to apply my experience in a place where the need to help garment workers is strongest.

What has Better Work been able to accomplish so far?

I arrived in November 2014 when the programme was just getting off the ground and had yet to register factories. Within a few days we opened the factory registration process and today have 75 factories on board representing almost 150,000 workers.

Has it been easy?

Registering factories is the easy part. The challenge is to deliver on the goals of improving productivity, efficiency and working conditions in these factories. It is the responsibility of Better Work to help improve the lives of workers so that they can enjoy decent employment conditions like the rest of us.

How does Better Work differ to the Accord and Alliance?

Accord and Alliance essentially work to ensure safe working environments in RMG factories which are manufacturing for member brands. Better Work, on the other hand, looks at working conditions and productivity. In order not to duplicate efforts, it's a prerequisite for factories wishing to join Better Work that they first undergo Accord, Alliance or government-led structural, fire, and electrical assessments.

Are you just another audit?

Audits alone do not improve compliance. Instead, Better Work works with factories to address compliance issues by providing expert advisory services, specialized training and by building capacity of staff and management. In fact, when a factory joins Better Work the number of buyer audits is immediately reduced. Better Work consolidates numerous buyers' Codes of Conduct, so that everyone follows the same rules and not every buyer in the factory is auditing. This saves the factory time and money.

How successful has Better Work been in other countries?

The Better Work Approach has a proven global track record. In the seven other countries we work we have contributed to improving competitiveness and improving working conditions and skills levels of hundreds of thousands of workers. For example in Vietnam, 65 percent of Better Work factories have seen a rise in sales and 60 percent have expanded employment. The challenge for us is to replicate this success and show results here in Bangladesh.

For more information on Better Work see www.betterwork.org or contact emran@betterwork.org

As of 5 July 2015, Better Work Bangladesh is working with...

Factories



75

Buyers



16

Workers



149,000

Women



54%

ILO's activities in Bangladesh take place with the support of:



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Canada



H&M



From
the People of Japan



SWEDEN



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

New ILO Bangladesh address

ILO Country Office for Bangladesh

House S.E (G) 2, Road 140,

Gulshan 1, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Tel : + 880 2 9883973, 9883978

Email: dhaka@ilo.org

Please note that the location of the ILO RMG Programme Office remains unchanged.



For more information

For more information about any of ILO's activities in Bangladesh: see www.ilo.org/dhaka contact Steve Needham, Senior Communications Officer at needham@ilo.org or call Tel: + 880 2 8881425 or 8881467

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