

Interim Evaluation of the Better Work Jordan (BWJ) Project



Period of Performance:
July 2017 - June 2022



Funding:
\$6.2 million



Implementer:
International Labor Organization (ILO)

Key Findings

Coherence:

BWJ helped build solid relationships of trust among relevant stakeholders

Effectiveness:

The project reached or exceeded most of its targets by April 2020.

Efficiency:

The project has limited staff that cover a wide range of activities and stakeholders

Overall Impact:

- BWJ helped build the capacity of national stakeholders, including labor inspectors.
- Stakeholders report a change in mentality and working methods, more oriented to workers' well-being.
- A decrease in the number of complaints, work-related injuries and disputes have been reported as benefits of compliance.
- Factories introduced improvements in the living conditions of workers' (e.g., food quality, dorm standards, entertainment activities, health and safety measures).

Impact on Marginalized Groups:

Migrant Workers:

- BWJ paid significant attention to address the challenges faced by migrant workers.
- The project tailored some activities, particularly those addressing mental health to migrant workers' needs.
- BWJ enabled trade unions to improve their communication and interaction with migrant workers.
- The 2019 collective bargaining agreement (CBA) unified contracts for both Jordanians and migrants, removing recruitment fees and increasing salaries and accommodation allowances for migrant workers.

Female Workers

- BWJ developed a gender strategy that integrates gender issues at both factory and policy levels.
- The sexual harassment issue was brought to the table by BWJ and included in the most recent CBA.
- BWJ helped reinforce Jordanian labor laws regarding day-care centers, protecting female workers' rights and the continuation of their participation in the garment sector.
- Project efforts led to an increase in the number of female supervisors, as well as to encourage female workers' representation in committees.

Achievements and Sustainability

Achievement of Project's Long-Term Outcomes (LTO)

Outcome 1: By 2022, Better Work Jordan's core service delivery will be expanded and optimized



Outcome 2: By 2022, at the national level, ILO, IFC & WBG will have strengthened national institutions



Outcome 3: By 2022, sustainable mechanisms for policy reform in the garment sector have been established in Jordan.



Components or Practices that are Likely to Remain Sustainable

1. On-the-job training for inspectors from the Ministry of Labor (MOL) and the Social Security Corporation (SSC) (practice related to LTO 2)



2. Building trust: Bringing together buyers, employers, workers' representatives and government for regular meetings and collective action to improve working conditions (practice related LTO 2 & 3)



3. Introduction of Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) (practice related to LTO 3)



RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 outbreak limited the number of factories reached in 2020 by the BWJ. However, several project activities continued to be conducted virtually. BWJ acted as an accelerator for the establishment of health measures in factories as well as to improve their response to the pandemic (e.g., PCR tests provided by factories, introduction of digital payment, repatriation of foreign workers).

PROMISING PRACTICES

- Buyer-centered models are effective in ensuring compliance with international labor standards.
- Project Advisory Committees help gather management and workers around relevant issues.
- Enlarging the secondment project to include inspectors from relevant line ministries (e.g. SSC) helped increase awareness and adherence to international labor standards.
- The presence of a Jordanian Chief Technical Advisor and the continuity of BWJ staff was critical for building trust among participants, allowing more transparency from employers, addressing taboo issues, and involving different stakeholders.

LESSONS LEARNED

- To increase its relevance and effectiveness, the model requires adjustments to encompass other factories within the garment sector (e.g. include non-exporting factories)
- Long-running projects run the risk of creating dependency in the absence of clear sustainability plans and approaches

RECOMMENDATIONS

USDOL BWJ ILO GOJ /MOL

1. Increase Project's Relevance: Expand BWJ focus to non-exporting factories in the garment sector.	•		•	
2. Adapt relevance of capacity building efforts to trade unions' (TU) needs and priorities: Build on the results of the Canada-funded project to ensure adequate training.		•		
3. Ensure alignment of factory top management's work approach with that of trained middle management and workers: Provide training to factory top management.		•		
4. Strengthen workers' bargaining capacity: Develop a strategy for the empowerment of Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICC) and TU in order to foster collective bargaining		•		
5. Strengthen the work of PICC: Develop activities aimed to promote freedom of association and gender equality and build the capacity of workers' circles	•	•		
6. Promote policy reforms to empower the TU: Work with the TU and government to enable TU to play an active role and promote freedom of association (also addressed to trade unions)		•	•	•
7. Review BWJ's Results Framework: In addition to BWJ's existent quantitative indicators, develop qualitative indicators to monitor change and impact	•	•	•	
8. Review BWJ's funding modality: Ensure availability of funds and consistent investment for project activities over multiple years, instead of annual funding.	•	•	•	
9. Focus on policy change: Reallocate more resources to policy reform related activities, such as enhancing the role of TU and promoting freedom of association	•	•		•
10. Draw lessons learned from BWJ process to ensure sustainability: Review and institutionalize PAC and CBA-related methods and approaches		•		•
11. Activate the BW unit at the MOL: Ensure that it has enough resources and capacities for its independent functioning		•		•
12. Gradually phase-out BWJ from the role of managing employer-buyer relations: Increase the capacity of employers' associations to engage directly with buyers in project-related matters; consider resource implications of this action (also addressed to employers' associations)	•	•		
13. Strengthen the role of employers' associations and enhance sustainability: Develop a project with buyers through which big factories coach and train smaller ones (non-compliant ones) to strengthen commitment and adherence to ILS (also addressed to buyers)	•	•	•	

