



Canada



Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-Made Garment Sector



AT A GLANCE

→ Partners

Government of Bangladesh: Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Ministry of Home Affairs

Employers' Organizations: Bangladesh Employers Federation, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association

Workers' Organizations: National Coordination Committee of Workers Education and IndustriAll Bangladesh Council

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET)

→ Donors

Canada, Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

→ Duration

October 2013 - December 2016

→ Geographical focus

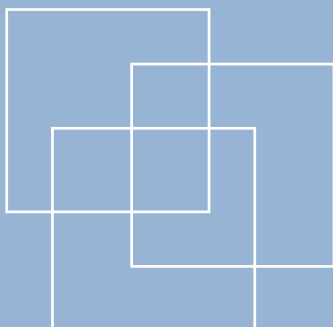
Bangladesh

PROJECT CONTEXT

Bangladesh has experienced rapid economic growth in the last two decades. Since the 1980's the country's ready-made garment (RMG) sector has grown exponentially. The number of export-oriented garment factories has grown from nine in 1979 to more than 3,500 in 2014 - employing an estimated four million workers, mostly women.

Along with this rapid growth significant challenges have arisen. Poor working conditions, discrimination, violence, a lack of labour rights and social protection are among the labour issues that need to be addressed urgently.

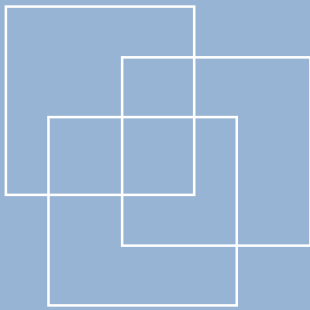
In 2012 and 2013 three major garment factory accidents resulted in the deaths of more than 1,200 people. This led to unrest among workers and captured international attention. Subsequently, the Government of Bangladesh, employers' and workers' organizations committed to undertake immediate and long-term changes to improve working conditions in the garment factories.



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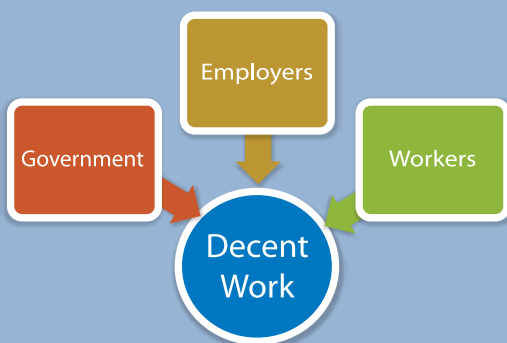


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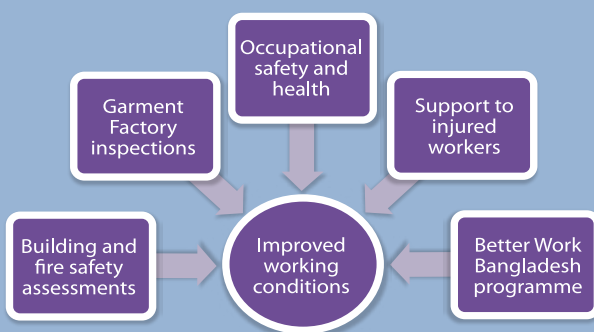


STRATEGIC APPROACH

The Government of Bangladesh, employers' and workers' organizations are working together to achieve one shared goal; decent work. The ILO is supporting their efforts by playing a coordination role and acting as a neutral partner to achieve the desired changes.



The ILO RMG Programme will be implemented over three years and will include activities in five areas.



Oversight of and guidance to the RMG Programme will be provided by the National Tripartite Committee on Fire and Building Safety. This committee is chaired by the Secretary of Labour and Employment, and includes representatives from the Government, employers' and workers' organizations.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

During this three-year programme the implementing partners will be working to contribute to improving the lives of more than four million workers in the garment sector. The anticipated results include:

- **COMPONENT 1: To assess building integrity and fire safety.** Increasing the capacity of Government, Employers' and Workers' organizations to conduct assessments of building integrity and fire safety at the garment factories.
- **COMPONENT 2: To strengthen the labour inspections system.** To ensure effective implementation of labour laws and policies with the aim of improving labour conditions for garment workers.
- **COMPONENT 3: To ensure occupational health and safety in the workplace.** Working with occupational health and safety (OSH) committees at garment factories, and increasing OSH awareness among workers, mid-level managers and supervisors at factory level, so that these committees can advocate for positive change.
- **COMPONENT 4: To rehabilitate injured RMG Workers.** Providing support to the RMG sector workers injured or disabled in recent accidents so they can return to work, secure new jobs or pursue self-employment.
- **COMPONENT 5: Better Work Bangladesh: To improve working conditions and competitiveness.** Building labour-management capacity to work together to improve compliance with national labour laws and respect for international core labour standards while promoting the competitiveness of factories.

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