



Improving Working Conditions in the Bangladesh Ready-Made Garment Sector Programme

Phase 2

The collapse of Rana Plaza in April 2013 highlighted the need to enhance workplace safety in the ready-made garment sector of Bangladesh. The International Labour Organization (ILO) responded to this crisis by launching the Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-Made Garment Sector Programme in September 2013.

By June 2017, the first phase of the programme had been concluded. While progress was made in many areas, it was realised that the process of enhancing workplace safety in the Bangladesh garment sector needs to continue. For this reason, a second phase of the programme has been developed to run from July 2017 to June 2023.

Building on the first phase

The second phase of the RMG programme was built on the achievements of its first phase.

The first phase saw the inspection of 1,549 garment factories for structural, fire and electrical safety; increased capacity of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE); training of over 800,000 garment workers on workplace safety; reintegration of 300 Rana Plaza survivors into the workforce through livelihood and psychosocial support; and the launch of Better Work Bangladesh.

More information on the first phase of the programme can be found at this link: <https://bit.ly/2vMLkLg>

How will the RMG programme benefit Bangladesh?

The programme fosters safer working conditions for both women and men in the Bangladesh RMG sector. The strengthened capacity of regulatory agencies responsible for ensuring safety will ultimately benefit workers in all industrial sectors.

Implementing partners

The programme is being implemented by the ILO in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh as well as employers and workers organisations. It is funded by Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

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Four strategic areas

1 Ensuring factory safety through remediation



The programme supports the operations of the Remediation Coordination Cell (RCC) which was established in May 2017 to oversee remediation of garment factories under the government's National Initiative.

Factory owners will be made more aware of potential sources of remediation financing.

Capacity of national regulatory bodies will be further enhanced through training and the development of an internationally recognised Fire Professionals Certification Programme.

Consultations with the industry, workers and academics will be held on 'model factory design' to promote best practices related to industrial safety.

2 Improving occupational safety and health (OSH)



The second phase of the programme supports a continuation of efforts to improve OSH in both policy and practice. A review of national OSH regulations/policies, including gender specific issues will take place. Further support will be provided to the government, employers and trade unions to implement OSH initiatives at enterprise level.

3 Governance building



An analysis of national policies on building and fire safety will take place and recommendations for revisions and amendments will be made.

The capacity of national regulatory bodies including the labour inspectorate will be strengthened further to reinforce their effectiveness, accountability and governance.

A one-stop-shop supported by an integrated knowledge management system will be established to facilitate factory licensing and registration.

4 Better Work Bangladesh



Better Work Bangladesh will continue to scale up its programme and act as a model of compliance for the garment sector. The main focus will remain on advisory, assessment and learning in order to support sustainable and factory owned improvements in the garment sector.

An essential element of this programme is ensuring equal participation of women in the workplace with emphasis on addressing their voice and representation, leadership, paid work and care, and discrimination.

A gender responsive garment sector



Gender mainstreaming is integral to the second phase of the RMG programme. Emphasis will be on making policies and regulations more gender responsive as well as promoting women workers' voice and representation, maternity rights, and health and safety issues at all levels within regulatory bodies and in factories. Greater awareness on gender equality will be developed within the labour inspectorate, and employers and workers organizations.

Supported by:

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