

Keeping SCORE with Better Work Indonesia; how one factory improved its production

There's a hum that emanates from the halls of PT Logos Indonesia as rows and rows of sewing machines whirr to life. The small building houses 233 workers who stitch logos destined to adorn garments of famous brands.

PT Logos is considered one of Jakarta's smaller factories. It made for a perfect pilot location for ILOs Better Work Indonesia and Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programmes to implement a training series that seeks to improve productivity while upholding workers' rights.

In only three months since SCORE delivered the first of five training modules, changes in PT Logo's production system is visible. Management said they learned by doing.

"You can see how clear the pathways are," said M. Manalu, PT Logos' SCORE liaison. "We have limited space so we have to be smart with how we use it."

Prior to SCORE, the factory had a certain level of organized chaos with samples and patterns scattered around the workspace, but afterwards, management had created a system that made it easier for workers to access materials they need when they need it.

"The programme has helped increase the cleanliness and neatness of the factory," M. Manalu said.

According to senior management, the training results were also good for the bottom line.

"We've seen a decrease in the reject rate from three percent down to 2.5 percent, but we'd like to see it at zero," said Hendrawan, Chairperson of the bipartite cooperation institution within PT Logos.

Better Work Indonesia began conducting independent assessments of garment factories in Indonesia in 2011 and is committed to improving workplace conditions. An appropriate training programme is one way to reach this objective.

Partnering with SCORE, another ILO initiative, Better Work Indonesia is able to offer companies tried and tested training methods.

"There's already a good training system established with experienced trainers (SCORE)," said Simon Field, Better Work Indonesia's Programme Manager. "Let's use this existing framework and create synergy between ILO programmes."

The packet has five modules that include leadership and workplace cooperation. One common complaint from workers in Indonesian garment factories is that management and unions sometimes lack communication skills. This is something PT Logos' management is looking forward to the most.

"Communications between workers and management is really important to address issues in the workplace," Hendrawan said. "Right now we have information boards but we need to make it more fluid."

While many of the workers have adopted the company's safety protocols because of good communications, managers say they still have challenges in convincing workers to wear the safety masks in one particularly high-risk chemical area. Most of the workers easily adopted the mask and ear plug policy; but to complete one higher-risk chemical job, managers say workers are reluctant to don the larger bulky black plastic mask.

"They think it makes them look ugly, like a pig," Hendrawan said. "We need to communicate the safety rules better."

Better Work Indonesia will offer the SCORE training programme to its willing partner factories in the future.

"Logos can lead the way," Field said.