

## Supporting Workers' Rights and Mitigating Child Labor Risks in Small and Medium Enterprises in the Garment and Textile Sector in Turkey

*Project Update – June 2020*

### **Project Background**

FLA's first-hand field experience in Turkey's garment and textile sector indicates that support for internationally recognized worker rights standards is usually limited to Tier 1 suppliers. The upper tiers of the supply chain are often invisible.

A multi-stakeholder project launched in October 2018 goes beyond Tier 1 in the garment and textiles sectors in Turkey to enhance workers' rights with a focus on issues including child labor, occupational health and safety, grievance mechanisms, and compensation.

### **Project Partners & Activities**

The FLA is partnering with the Turkish Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services (MoFLSS), five global companies who operate in Turkey, three Turkish trade unions, and the Istanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters' Association (IHKIB).

Company partners include adidas, Espirit, New Balance, Nike, and PUMA. The trade union partners are Leather, Weaving, and Textile Workers' Trade Union (DERITEKS), Textile Workers' Trade Union (DISK-Tekstil), and Trade Union of Textile, Knitting, and Apparel Workers (TEKSIF).

Within the framework of the 24-month project, partners meet quarterly in Project Steering Committee meetings to discuss lessons learned and future activities. The fourth committee meeting was held online in April 2020 due to COVID-19 precautions.

Project accomplishments include:

- A desk review supported by stakeholder interviews was conducted to collect background information on the general dynamics of garment and textiles sector in Turkey, main issues faced at different levels of supply chain, elements that may increase probability of risks and regulatory framework governing this sector. Key learnings were compiled in a Sectoral Background Analysis Report.
- The project team kicked off fieldwork activities with project partner brands and their nominated Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers. Five Tier-1 suppliers and seven Tier-2 factories agreed to participate and pilot field-level activities.

- Baseline assessments were conducted in seven Tier 2 factories in Istanbul and Izmir. Each Tier 2 factory's system and practice were evaluated from a social compliance perspective based on local law and FLA code requirements.
- A worker demographic profiling survey was implemented at seven factories. Demographic and household information were collected from 337 workers.
- A mobile application offering worker resources and a grievance channel has been developed. The app will be tested in Tier 2 factories.
- Capacity building training began in March 2020. The training, based on findings from the baseline assessment, includes sessions for Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers on occupational health and safety and lean production and energy efficiency.

## **Next Steps**

Project partners suspended fieldwork activities temporarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project team is finalizing the aggregate supplier report that will summarize findings from the baseline assessments and worker demographic profiling surveys.

Training modules are in development on topics such as "Better Supply Chain Management," "Decent Work in Textile and Garment Sectors," "Creation of Communication Channels Across the Supply Chain," and "Train the Trainers."