



PREPARE: PROMOTION OF RESPONSIBLE REPRESENTATION OF WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Final report of a pilot project to test an action-based learning approach to worker integration and representation in the ready made garment sector in Bangladesh

Bangladesh
2008 - 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several reports regarding Bangladesh’s Ready Made Garment (RMG) sector—including from independent external monitoring (IEM) visits conducted by the Fair Labor Association (FLA); staff of FLA-affiliated companies; independent experts; and civil society organizations—brought to light incidents of collective retrenchment, dismissal and threats experienced by workers in Bangladeshi garment factories exporting to the United States and European markets. These reports raised three questions: 1) the effectiveness of the existing Worker Rights and Welfare Committees (WRWC); 2) the readiness of workers’ representatives to communicate, consult and negotiate as members of the Workers’ Association (WA); and 3) the willingness of the employers to accept the role of the WA.

In recognition of the low level of worker organization and representation in Bangladesh’s garment factories, the FLA launched the PREPARE project in 2008. The key objectives of the PREPARE project were to:

1. raise awareness about the role and importance of communication structures in promoting sustainable compliance within factories;
2. provide capacity building training for workers’ representatives;
3. provide factory-specific training on improving communication, consultation and negotiation systems; and
4. work with all levels within factories – owners, managers, workers and worker representatives – in a top-down, bottom-up approach.

This project was conducted in three factories in Bangladesh (mostly located in and around Dhaka) supplying FLA-affiliated companies. It followed the FLA’s 3.0 methodology, promoting sustainable compliance by enabling workers and managers to jointly develop internal communication and dialog structures to support trouble-shooting and problem-solving mechanisms.

At the start of the project, a baseline assessment of the efficacy of existing communications structures and channels was conducted using SCAT (a self-assessment tool for management) and SCOPE (a tool for assessing worker perspectives on the same issues examined by SCAT). A total of 369 workers participated in the worker survey. Capacity building training was then imparted to the members of the existing WRWC or other Worker Committees and key management staff. A total of 15 managers and 67 worker representatives were trained over a period of three months in four daylong workshops organized specifically for them. The above-mentioned managers and workers were required to participate in all four workshops to complete the training. Workshop participants received training on problem solving, analysis of communications channels, root cause analysis, role awareness, determination of goals, innovative techniques for improving communications, approaches to finding solutions, and better awareness of their role as trainers and facilitators in the supplier factory. Progress Measuring Charts (PTCs), embedded in the methodology, periodically measured the impact of training and capacity building. At the end of the project, FLA conducted Independent External Assessments (IEA) in all three factories with 394 workers participating in an additional survey.

The project led to the development and testing of several assessment tools on Worker Integration. It also advanced FLA's mission to train and build in-country capacity of local organizations to sustain project activities after the end of the project. With the successful conclusion of the PREPARE Project, several tools — SCAT, SCOPE, PTCs and Impact Assessment — and training materials are available as part of a standard toolkit and are currently being used in factories in Bangladesh, Vietnam and China, countries where lack of worker representation and dialogue in garment export factories are chronic problems.

I. BACKGROUND

The FLA Workplace Code of Conduct provision on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining stipulates: “Employers will recognize and respect the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining.” FLA-affiliated companies are responsible for implementing all provisions of the FLA Workplace Code of Conduct in their supplier factories around the world.

The Government of Bangladesh is a signatory to the core ILO Labour Conventions on Freedom of Association (FoA), namely C87 and C98 (See Box 1). However, in 1989, Bangladesh's five Export Processing Zones (EPZ) were exempted from the application of certain national legislation, inter alia, the Employment of Labor (Standing Orders) Act, the Industrial Relations Ordinance, and the Factories Act - 1965, thereby excluding workers in the zones from the right to organize and bargain collectively and from coverage by laws governing wages, hours, and safety and health standards.

Box 1: ILO Core FoA Conventions

The two ILO Conventions that set out the basic principles of Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining are:

1. Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948, (No.87) and;
2. Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No.98).

The EPZ Workers Association and Industrial Relations Act of 2004 (EPZ Act) allowed limited freedom of association in EPZs by allowing for the establishment of Worker Representation and Welfare Committees (WRWCs). While the WRWCs do not have collective bargaining rights, they can negotiate with employers on working conditions, remuneration or payment for productivity enhancements and worker education programs.

The EPZ Act sought to bring about limited FoA to EPZ workers in two phases. The first phase, which ended in October 31, 2006, involved the election of Workers Representation and Welfare Committees (WRWCs). The second phase, which ended in October 31, 2008, allowed workers to elect Workers Associations (WAs), which would have collective bargaining rights. The elections of WAs, considered mandatory, are to be carried out by the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA).

Independent external monitoring visits of Bangladeshi factories conducted by FLA monitors between 2006 and 2008, coupled with field reports by FLA-affiliated companies, independent experts and civil society organizations, brought to light incidents of collective retrenchment, dismissal

and threats experienced in factories and raised to light three basic questions: 1) the effectiveness of the WRWCs; 2) the readiness of workers' representatives to communicate, consult and negotiate as members of WA; and 3) the willingness of the employers to accept the role of WA.

It was clear that the absence or poor quality of in-house communication structures and channels had a significant negative impact on the effectiveness of worker participation and representation, which in turn could lead to an increased risk of conflict, barriers to continuous improvement and masking of inefficient work processes.

In recognition of the low level of worker organization and representation in Bangladeshi factories, the FLA designed and launched the PREPARE project in 2008 to raise the level of awareness about the importance of establishing effective communication structures within these factories. This project was implemented in keeping with the FLA's sustainable compliance methodology, which promotes collaboration between workers and managers to jointly develop internal communication and dialog structures to support the troubleshooting and problem-solving processes.

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the PREPARE project are to: 1) raise awareness of the role and importance of communication structures in promoting sustainable compliance within factories; 2) provide capacity building training for workers' representatives; 3) provide factory-specific training on improving communication, consultation and negotiation systems; and 4) work with all levels within factories – including owners, managers, workers and worker representatives – in a top-down, bottom-up approach.

Box 2: FLA 3.0 Methodology

The FLA's 3.0 sustainable compliance methodology was introduced in 2007. This innovative approach aimed at filling the gaps left by the pure audit method, which mainly identifies compliance violations and provides "quick fixes" to improve the next round of results. FLA 3.0 overcomes this weakness of pure auditing and strengthens the capacity of suppliers and workers to improve and eventually achieve self-sustainable systems through capacity building.

The FLA 3.0 methodology is a combination of self-assessment and participatory approach that aims at identifying the root cause(s) of persistent and serious non-compliances and devises means to overcome these problems. It maps the differences in perceptions between management and workers in a work place regarding various issues.

FLA 3.0 consists of four main elements: (1) needs assessment that provides an in-depth analysis of the causes of non-compliances, (2) capacity building activities specifically targeted at the root causes of the issues that impart skills and knowledge to management and workers alike, (3) measurement of progress at periodic intervals, and (4) impact assessment that measures the impact of successful implementation of capacity building efforts.

III. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The FLA's 3.0 methodology (See Box 2) was used in the project. At the start of the project, a baseline assessment of the efficacy of existing communications structures and channels was conducted using SCAT (a self-assessment tool for management) and SCOPE (a tool for assessing worker perspectives on the same issues tested by SCAT). Capacity building training was imparted to the members of the existing WRWC or other Worker Committees and key management staff. Progress Measuring Charts (PTCs) were embedded in the methodology, periodically measuring the impact of training and capacity building. At the end of the project, Independent External Assessments (IEA) were conducted to measure the impact of the project.

IV. SELECTION AND PROFILE OF FACTORIES

During 2007, the FLA discussed the concept of the project with its affiliated companies; some of the affiliates voluntarily proposed involvement of their key suppliers in the project. In early 2008, a series of meetings were conducted with the factory management of six suppliers in Bangladesh to make them aware of the project objectives and methodology.

Three factories decided to participate in this project. The factories supplied one or more of the following FLA-affiliated companies: adidas, Phillips-van Heusen, and Zephyr Graf-X. All factories are located in and around Dhaka, the capital and the largest garment-producing hub in Bangladesh. Of the three factories, one was located in the Savar Export Processing Zone and two were located outside EPZs. A brief profile of factories is presented in Table 1.¹

V. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Several consultations, trainings and field visits took place over the course of the project. Activities undertaken during the project are described below.

TABLE 1: PREPARE PROJECT FACTORIES' PROFILE			
	FACTORY A	FACTORY B	FACTORY C
Total Workforce	2,356	750	245
Number of Worker Welfare Structures	1 (Worker Welfare Committee)	2 (WPC* , HSE Committee)	4 (WPC, HSE Committee, Fire Fighting team and Rescue team)
Year of Establishment	1985	1999	2006
FLA Companies	Phillips-van Heusen, adidas Group	adidas Group	Zephyr Graf-X

* Worker Protection Committee

¹ This information was provided by the factories at the start of the project.



A training session in a factory.

1. CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

A series of meetings and consultations were held from February to October 2008, with country representatives of the FLA affiliates; factory management; local service providers; the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA); and civil society organizations such as the Solidarity Center, Awaz Foundation, BLAST (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust), NUK (Nari Uddug Kendra) and Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity (BCWS).

The objectives of these meeting were to: 1) present and discuss the project concept with stakeholders; 2) solicit advice on the project objectives and methodology; 3) solicit feedback on the worker survey questionnaire (SCOPE) to be used during baseline assessment in the factories; and 4) solicit advice on extending training beyond factories and in worker communities.

The last item was not among the initial objectives of the project and was added based on the needs described by stakeholders. The consulted CSOs believed that the worker awareness program outside the factory and in the community would

enhance the effectiveness of the project.²

A project seeking to enhance in-house dialogue structures and communication skills was welcomed by all stakeholders. The assumed reluctance on the side of the factories did not surface during the meetings. Regardless of the political situation in Bangladesh, business representatives and civil society organization representatives alike perceived that a strategy promoting dialogue and reduced tensions would be positive. Contradictions between the EPZ regulations and Codes of Conduct (CoC) of brands were discussed, as well as ways in which the PREPARE project could help deal with them. It was made clear that every activity had to be conducted within the framework of EPZ regulations. Middle management and workers were permitted to participate in project activities; for example workers' speakers from existing workers' committees could participate in the workshops.

It is important to develop effective participatory structures to help convince management and workers to enhance and formalize the structure (through legal regulation). Success depends on the practice and effectiveness of the developed structure, irrespective of what it is called. WAs were perceived as being associated with trade unions and in general were not welcomed by the suppliers. Setting up WAs during

² Even though the CSOs reported that extending training to the worker communities was an important intervention, the FLA could not conduct this activity under the scope of this project. Further consultations were conducted with organizations that were already running awareness programs in the communities. According to the organizations, if the FLA were to start another training program, mixed messages might confuse workers. The organizations working in this space are proposing WAs, whereas the FLA Project is more focused on dialogue and negotiation. Therefore, the FLA encouraged the ongoing campaigns in the communities and requested that CSOs inform the FLA about ways in which the FLA could strengthen their message in the long term. At the time, BCWS was conducting a program with the Solidarity Centre that covered WA awareness.



A training session in a factory.

the project was neither a realistic goal nor a legal mandate for the FLA. The authority to establish WAs in the factory was a prerogative of the BEPZA. Nevertheless, a need to consult local workers' organizations on this was established.

Middle management is the link between employers and workers. Based on past experience, local service providers expect that this group will play an important role in the way workers are involved and in the process of dialogue and consultation that will continue in the factory after the project is concluded.

Suppliers wanted to learn more about the tools and methodology, e.g., about training materials, methods and goals. As they are used to labor compliance auditing, it was challenging for the suppliers to understand the self-assessment methodology and imagine an ownership approach to compliance. Some of them kept referring back to the brands and audits. They had specific questions regarding the level of transparency; sharing of the results with the buyers; and fear of losing business if they admitted that certain issues existed in their factories. These concerns were addressed

during the introductory meetings in the factories and first suppliers' workshop. The suppliers were also registered on the FLA Training Portal³ and walked through the FLA's online self-assessment questionnaire.

2. TRAINING-OF-TRAINERS

Sustainability Agents, a Berlin-based organization specializing in implementation of social and labor standards in global supply chains, was selected as the training expert for the project. Phulki,⁴ a Dhaka based civil society organization with 15 years of work experience in the Bangladeshi garment sector, was selected as service provider. Phulki's role was to assist the factory in conducting the baseline assessment (SCAT) online, imparting PREPARE training and collecting data from workers on progress.

PREPARE Toolkit

A key element of the project was the training-of-trainers workshop on the PREPARE toolkit, conducted in late April 2008 in Dhaka. Sustainability Agents, in association with the FLA staff, conducted a one-week workshop for the local trainers to prepare them for their tasks in the project, build informal networks among participants, and share learning, skills and techniques. The PREPARE training program is based on the Action-Based Learning Approach (Box 3).

The PREPARE Toolkit consists of nine modules (See Box 4). The first provides an introduction to the project; the remaining eight modules are tools that the trainers can use in the field. The modules were presented in a way that the trainers could adapt them

³ www.tp.fairlabor.org

⁴ A FLA accredited monitor based in Dhaka.



Training-of-trainers workshop in progress.

Box 3: Action-Based Learning Approach

Action Learning is both a concept and a form of action which aims to enhance the capacities of people in everyday situations to investigate, understand, and, if they wish, to change those situations in an ongoing fashion, with a minimum level of external help. Action learning is concerned with empowering people in the sense that they become critically conscious of their values, assumptions, actions, interdependencies, rights, and prerogatives so that they can act in a substantially rational way as active partners in producing their reality (Howell 1994).

The concept of Action Learning builds on the truth contained in the proverb: ***“Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may not remember, involve me and I will understand.”***

to the local context and were translated into Bengali. Several role-play and group work exercises were included in the workshop content with the objective of preparing workshop participants for future interactions with factory management and workers. The training included a visit to the Dhaka Export Processing Zone and a meeting with the three factories participating in the project.

3. NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

The first step of the project activities in the factories was to conduct a baseline (needs) assessment. In order to do so, a SCAT and SCOPE on Worker Integration were developed by the FLA's survey and assessments department after extensive research and information collected during stakeholder consultations. The assessment was conducted in the factories through a two-way process:

1. Factory management completed an online Sustainable Compliance Assessment Tool (SCAT)⁵ that asks questions regarding internal management systems and covers areas such as policies and procedures, training, implementation, documentation and communication, worker integration and awareness. This tool not only checks for presence of internal management systems, but also assesses the perspective of management about the workplace and their own performance as managers.
2. Once the SCAT was completed, a second step was undertaken to collect information about workers' perceptions using the SCOPE tool. This consisted of administering a worker survey in the factory within one week of the completion of the SCAT.

All the factories completed the SCAT questionnaire by April 2009. The FLA-trained SCOPE service provider, Timeline Consultancy, then carried out the SCOPE worker survey in three factories in May 2009. A total of 369 workers participated in the worker survey in the three factories.

⁵ <http://tp.fairlabor.org/en/introductions/prepare-project>



Visit to Bangladesh Export Processing Zone.

The SCOPE reports compare the responses presented in the SCAT by the management with those obtained from the survey of workers. Once the gaps in the communication and dialogue process were identified, management became more receptive towards the project as this differed from the usual compliance audit results.

5. IN-FACTORY TRAINING PROGRAM

A series of training workshops was conducted in the three factories. It was kicked off by a daylong workshop held for top and middle management and key worker representatives in each factory in May 2009. Trainers from Sustainability Agents and Phulki carried out this induction and first training session which mainly presented an overview of the PREPARE project, and analyzed potential and existing communication channels in the factory. Subsequently, Phulki trainers conducted three more daylong training sessions in each factory to cover the various modules presented in the PREPARE Toolkit (Box 4).

Box 4: PREPARE TOOLKIT**TOOL 1: Overview of the PREPARE Project**

Introduction to the PREPARE Project and the dialog approach. Explains the action learning approach and provides an overview of the toolbox.

TOOL 2: Identifying Problem

This tool is used to help participants to find out which is the most important problem for them at the moment, which requires a jointly negotiated solution.

TOOL 3: Cause Analysis

This tool helps participants find out about the causes of their problems.

TOOL 4: Goal Analysis

This step is about analyzing participants' goals. Although the factory may have an overall aim (e.g., to remain profitable), within the company each individual or group of individuals may have different goals, which contribute to the overarching company goal. This tool helps participants look at the individual goals in more detail.

TOOL 5: Finding Solutions

This step helps managers and workers participating in the training to come up with a list of solutions for the problem they have jointly identified.

TOOL 6: Agreeing on Solutions

This tool helps the managers and workers to jointly choose which solution they will work on to solve their problem. The methods contained in this tool are also used in Tool 3 (Cause Analysis).

TOOL 7: Action Planning

This step makes sure that everyone has a task and a deadline to work towards implementing the solution agreed upon in Tool 6 (Agreeing on Solutions). It can be used to train managers and workers in action planning.

TOOL 8: Communication Channels

This tool is useful to help managers and workers visualize the communication channels within their workplace. How is information passed from one group to another? Where are no information exchanges taking place? This tool also contains guidance on labor rights and workers' associations in Bangladesh.

TOOL 9: Communication and Negotiation Skills

This tool provides managers and workers with introductory training on communication and negotiation skills.

A total of 15 management staff and 67 worker representatives (representing various committees present in the factories) participated in the trainings. A comprehensive description of the issues discussed, as prioritized by participants—and tools used to build action plans—are presented in Table 2.

6. MEASURING PROGRESS

Each workshop and training activity had specific Key Performance Indicators (KPI) attached to them, against which the performance of the factories was measured at different intervals. The KPIs were devised to measure progress and allow for intervention in the process if factories were falling short of progress targets. Progress was measured in two ways.

1. Participants (both management and workers) were asked to complete a short questionnaire (KPI I) after each training session that asked the following questions:

- a. Since the last training session, have there been developments that you were happy about with regard to communication between workers and management?
- b. Since the last training session, have there been developments that you were not happy about with regard to communication between workers and management?
- c. Have there been any changes and/or developments with regard to communication between workers and management?

TABLE 2: DETAILS OF TRAINING AND AREAS COVERED

	TOTAL # OF TRAINING SESSIONS CONDUCTED	# OF MANAGERS TRAINED	# OF WORKERS REPRESENTATIVES TRAINED	ISSUES IDENTIFIED	PRIORITY ISSUE CHOSEN BY WORKERS AND MANAGEMENT TO WORK ON DURING PREPARE PROJECT	AGREEMENTS REACHED BY MANAGEMENT AND WORKER REPRESENTATIVES	ACTION PLAN DEVELOPED	TOOLS USED
Factory A	4	5	35	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of health and safety 2. Late payments 3. Excessive overtime 4. Poor product quality 5. Discrimination 6. Lack of discipline in following factory rules and regulations 7. Lack of awareness of workers on their rights 8. Inadequate transportation facilities 9. Lack of Interest in attending trainings 	Lack of discipline in following factory rules and regulations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Everybody should follow the rules and regulation very actively. 2. Everybody should be aware of self-duty. 3. Everybody should be present in any awareness training. 4. Everybody should respect each other. 	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role play 2. Meta-plan 3. Voting-by-dots 4. Root cause analysis (using tree-diagram) 5. Prioritization matrix 6. Action planning template
Factory B	4	4	13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of health and safety (inadequate medicine stock, polluted drinking water, unclean dinning area) 2. Late payments 3. Excessive overtime 4. Poor product quality 5. Discrimination 6. Lack of discipline in following factory rules and regulations. 7. Transportation 8. Lack of awareness of workers on their rights 	Lack of health and safety (inadequate medicine stock, polluted drinking water, unclean dining area)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Everybody should dump waste in dustbin. 2. Everybody should pursue the rules and responsibility very actively. 3. Elected person should take initiative to discuss clean environment in factory with all workers. 4. Responsible person should fulfill their responsibility in a timely manner. 5. The responsible person should monitor diligently. 	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role play 2. Meta-plan 3. Voting-by-dots 4. Root cause analysis (using tree-diagram) 5. Prioritization matrix 6. Action planning template
Factory C	4	6	19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of health and safety 2. Wages and benefits issues (late payments, performance based compensation, promotions and appraisals) 3. Excessive overtime 4. Poor product quality 5. Discrimination 6. Transportation and conveyance 7. Separate toilet for child care center 	Wages and benefits issues (late payments, performance based compensation, promotions and performance appraisals)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Factory's Managing Director (MD) should have a dialogue with all employees. 2. All workers and management to maintain rules and responsibility to be more productive. 3. Everyone should ensure quality work to decrease rejects. 4. The management should follow performance appraisal. 	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role play 2. Meta-plan 3. Voting-by-dots 4. Root cause analysis (using tree-diagram) 5. Prioritization matrix 6. Action planning template

Feedback received (from June–August, 2009 after each training workshop conducted by Phulki) were collated and presented to the factory management, worker representatives and the FLA affiliates in order to improve the next round of KPIs. The responses in the first KPI report indicated that a high percentage of workers (87%, 77% and 96%)⁶ were positive about the training and the communication tools used. However, they were not pleased with the slow progress and change in the attitude of management. In the second KPI report, the workers reported that management is gradually becoming more responsive towards dialogue. In the final questionnaire (after the completion of the training program and development of action plan for the priority issue identified), 89%, 85% and 63%, respectively, of workers and 91%, 90% and 65% of managers thought that there had been some positive changes in the communication and dialogue process between workers and management since the project started. Both workers and management alike started using communication tools taught during the training regularly in their meetings.

2. After the completion of trainings, the factories were given 6 months (November 2009–April 2010) to continue working on the project goals and use the tools without external intervention. A set of KPIs (KPI II)⁷ was designed to measure progress during that time.

For KPI II, two separate KPI forms (one for managers and one for workers) were developed and translated into Bengali.

⁶ Corresponds to three different factories, Factory A, B and C.

⁷ KPI II is a structured progress-tracking tool that tracks changes taking place over time. It is meant to be used on a monthly basis. After the entire cycle is completed, management and companies will receive data; both hard figures (collected through KPIs) and soft information (comments, statements etc.) to see progress.



Training session in the factory.

Management added data on the progress and data from workers was collected by Phulki trainers. Both data sets were sent to the FLA.

The progress tracking charts (PTC) collected from the three factories for the six-month period November 2009–May 2010 show enhanced worker management dialogue in the factories. Two factories reported regular meetings and better worker/management relations subsequent to the PREPARE trainings. Factory A reported consulting workers on eight issues and Factory B, on 22 issues; Factory C did not provide the information. There were positive reports on negotiations in two factories, where the workers were able to secure salary increases, performance appraisals, appointment letters on the day of joining for new workers, and increase in food allowance as well as an attendance bonus. Two factories organized a code awareness training, factory rules training, and health and safety training. Workers at one factory reported regular engagement of worker representatives in grievance handling. The worker report from one factory indicated that management engaged with them, but the details were not provided in the PTC. None of the factories had updated/changed their policies or

procedures regarding worker integration or representation within the six-month period. The report from one factory indicated lack of consistency in management and worker perceptions and further suggested that management and workers are retracting to their original way of conducting business. The sourcing FLA affiliates were advised to intervene in that situation.

A field visit was made by FLA staff to check on progress in February 2010. Meetings were held with workers' representatives (from WRWC), management and local trainers. Worker representatives shared that PREPARE offered them and the management an opportunity to sit together in training for the first time; and that they felt more empowered to talk to management after participating in PREPARE. Worker representatives also expressed that they would like to receive some refresher training since the last training session was in August 2009, and they would like to learn more communication skills as well. Management expressed their satisfaction with the impact and implementation of the project and their confidence in having a self-sustaining system in the factory; management also echoed workers' request for refresher training.

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT [INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT, (IEA)]

The final activity in the FLA 3.0 methodology is an impact assessment. A local assessor (Rebeka Khatun) in Bangladesh was identified, trained and contracted by the FLA to conduct an IEA in each factory. The IEA process was delayed until November 2010 due to political unrest in the country, followed by the festival season.



Training session in the factory.

The factories completed an online SCAT by end of October 2010. The SCOPE conducted at the end of the project to measure impact was a combination of worker survey, document review and face-to-face interviews with management, to verify the information. A total of 394 workers participated in the SCOPEs. Detailed reports for the three factories are attached to this report. The key findings and conclusions from the IEA were translated into Bengali and shared with all the workers present in the training. The worker representatives posted the Bengali summary on the factories' notice board so that other workers were also aware of the final outcomes.

VI. LEARNINGS AND CONCLUSION

In order to foster an exchange of ideas and experiences, a project-end workshop was organized by the FLA in association with Sustainability Agents, Phulki and key participants from the three supplier factories involved in the project. Key learnings, processes, challenges and best practices were

discussed. All suppliers felt that the project enhanced worker-management dialogue in the factories. Of particular use are the communications and planning tools that keep the process of identifying issues and finding solutions focused. All suppliers expressed their gratitude to the project partners for the training and guidance during the project. They inquired if Phulki could provide them with refresher training even after the project and suppliers were informed that they are most welcome to directly work with the local partners in further strengthening communication structures in the factories.

As mentioned earlier, the workers also felt more confident in approaching management to discuss issues and present their opinions in a structured manner. Even though the project did not look into creation of Workers' Associations (WA) per se, the objective of enhancing the process of communication, consultation and negotiation was successfully achieved. The FLA hopes that these structures, training and tools will help worker representatives when they become part of the WA.

Additionally, the project led to the development and testing of assessment tools on Worker Integration, within the FLA 3.0 framework. The FLA was able to

train and build in-country capacity of local organizations to carry out project activities (training and worker assessments) beyond the project's conclusion. Building on the successful completion of the PREPARE Project, the tools (SCAT, SCOPE, PTCs and Impact Assessment) and training material (PREPARE TOOLKIT) have been made available as standard toolkits and are currently being used in factories in Bangladesh, Vietnam and China.