



Strategic plan Bangladesh 2010

Introduction

At the end of 2009 8 affiliates produced in approximately 17 factories. Bangladesh is one of the 4 priority countries for FWF. It is a low income country, ranking 147 in the Human Development Index. A little less than half of the population lives below the poverty line. The minimum wage expressed in international dollars using purchasing power parity (PPP) rates is 69 which is far below a realistic subsistence income. This confirms that it is a low wage country which is being used as an asset in competing also in the garment industry. The garment industry is one of most important industries in the current economy.

In the field of labour rights it can be stated that apart from the ILO norm on minimum age, Bangladesh ratified all core labour standards referred to also in the Code of Labour Practices. Nevertheless several restrictions exist in laws on trade union rights and violations of the right to organize and bargain collectively are common.

A factor which makes the situation more complex is the high rate of corruption.

In 2010 key steps for FWF will be to conduct the country study, and following that invest in networking with local stakeholders.

Country study

For every country where FWF conducts verification activities, a country study with key indicators regarding the industry, labour law, the state of labour conditions and industrial relations is published.

The Country Study for Bangladesh was last updated in 2008. Cooperation started with the FNV, one of the stakeholders in the board of FWF, who is also preparing a background document on Bangladesh and with Solidaridad. Contact has been established with an investigator in India who will lead this project and with two consultants in Bangladesh.

Deliverables 2010

- A new country study has been executed and is published on the website.

Audit training and audits

FWF conducts factory audits at its members' manufacturing companies. In the course of three years, factory audits are conducted on behalf of FWF at factories that together represent 10% of the production of the affiliate. The purpose of these factory audits is to assess working conditions at factories in order to check whether the monitoring activities are effective and whether corrective action plans are executed. In addition, factory audits are a tool to check whether the terms and conditions of trade between the affiliate and a manufacturer are conducive to implementation of the standards.

FWF has an active relationship with 3 auditors who have been trained and are able to carry out FWF audits. Furthermore agreements have been made with an organisation to handle complaints.

Deliverables 2010

- The information of the new complaints handler has been posted on the information sheets in the factories.



Fair Wear Foundation

- Complaints handler started to work.
- 3 new candidates are trained to work as auditor.
- 4 audits will be conducted.

Stakeholder consultation and engagement

Cooperation with stakeholders in production countries is aimed at improving labour conditions in the countries where production for affiliates takes place. FWF cooperates with stakeholders in production countries particularly for consultation on FWF policies and on local labour conditions. Thus, the stakeholders FWF works with are organisations that have a role in influencing or shaping the social dialogue in a production country. Stakeholders in production countries can provide policy advice to FWF. Advice can be solicited and unsolicited. FWF will consult the stakeholders in production countries on important issues within their field of competence.

FWF maintains contacts with stakeholders in Bangladesh, amongst which the exporters association of the garment industry, trade unions NGWF, GTWL, and several other organisations active in the field of labour conditions like NUK, Phulki, AMRF, solidarity centre and OSHE.

Deliverables 2010

- Relations with stakeholders are renewed/intensified.
- Input of the stakeholders is integrated into the country study.
- A stakeholder meeting/consultation has been organized

Complaints procedure

FWF has a complaints procedure, which can be used by workers and their representatives to file complaints about their working conditions and the way the Code of Labour Practices is implemented in factories, which supply members of FWF, if the internal grievance mechanism of the factory failed or is absent. Unions, NGOs, local authorities, companies, employers' organisations, and others who are concerned with the implementation of FWF labour standards also have access to this procedure.

FWF currently has a complaints handler for Bangladesh whom is appointed in 2009.

Deliverables 2010

- Complaints handler is functioning well.

Promotion of social dialogue

In its strategy plan 2010-2015, FWF committed to develop best practice examples on improving industrial relations in its four priority countries.

Deliverables 2010

- Stakeholders are consulted on how best to promote social dialogue.
- Inventarisation has been made of organizations providing workers trainings/factory trainings.