

## **Complaint – Takko– India**

### **Status: Under remediation**

*FWF is responsible for setting up a complaints procedure in production countries where FWF is active. The complaints procedure allows third parties to make complaints about the working conditions or the way the Code of Labour Practices is implemented in factories which supply FWF members.*

*The responsibility of FWF includes investigating the complaint, verifying whether the agreed corrective action plan is implemented and public reporting. This complaint report gives an overview of a complaint filed to FWF, the investigation and agreed corrective action plan as well as how the outcome is verified. For more information on the complaints procedure see the FWF website. FWF also publishes an overview of complaints received in its annual reports.*

### **1. Member company involved**

Takko

### **2. Accused party**

A factory located in India supplying Takko.

### **3. Date of receiving complaint**

8<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

### **4. Filing party**

A former worker of the factory.

### **5. The complaint**

The complainant claimed that a line supervisor in the sewing department is verbally abusing workers. According to the complainant, other workers, especially women workers, are bothered by this as well.

### **6. Admissibility**

FWF decided that the case is admissible on 9<sup>th</sup> January.  
The factory is an active supplier of Takko, a member of FWF.



The case is relevant to the following labour standards of FWF's Code of Labour Practices:

- Safe and healthy working conditions

## 7. Investigation

Takko sent their audit team to the factory for an investigation on 11th January 2017. The team was accompanied by a female member of a NGO, which takes part in the anti-harassment committee meetings of the factory.

Prior to the on-site investigation, the audit team interviewed 10 workers off-site.

During the on-site investigation, the team randomly selected 52 workers who are working in the sewing department and had a detailed meeting in the factory. They discussed about the committee functions and grievance handling procedures. In addition, management was interviewed and documents as well the workspace were inspected.

As several complaints had been received from the same supplier, FWF decided to conduct a verification audit on 2nd and 3rd February.

## 8. Findings and conclusions

The findings and conclusions based on the investigation by the Takko audit team as well as the FWF verification audit are:

**Verbal use by one supervisor:** Takko's investigation concluded that no verbal abuse had been taken place as workers both during off-site and on-site interviews indicated no verbal abuse. During the off-site interviews conducted by FWF, three workers reported verbal abuse. They reported that the supervisors do not scold them, but address them disrespectfully if targets are not met. The interviewed workers also said that the line supervisor who engaged in such kind of activity has left the company some days before the audit. This was confirmed by management.

FWF concludes that there has been inappropriate behavior by at least one supervisor, but it seems that the person has resigned.

**Training supervisors on communication:** During Takko's investigation, management claimed that all supervisors are well qualified, educated and have managerial skills. None of them has a habit of verbally abusing workers. During FWF's audit, management said that they educated all supervisors to handle work situation in a pleasant manner after the complaint. Several supervisors and female workers have participated in FWF's supervisor training programme.

FWF concludes that management has undertaken efforts to ensure that supervisors are not verbally abusive.

**Functionality of Internal Complaint Committee:** Takko's audit team found that Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) meetings have been conducted in December 2016 and January 2017 with the presence of an external NGO representative. No complaints related to verbal abuse had been registered. FWF's audit confirmed that the ICC is in place, but that the NGO representative is not an official part of the committee (as

required by Indian legislation), but attended as a trainer. In addition, management and worker interviews indicated that some of the committee members had been selected by management (instead of an election by workers) as some members left the committee after Diwali.

FWF concludes that the ICC is in place, but not fully functional as not all members are democratically elected and formally no external representative is part of the committee. However, it is clear that the factory has made efforts to establish a committee.

**Awareness of workers on committee:** Takko's investigation concluded that workers are well aware about the committee functions and grievance procedures. FWF's audit team concluded that many of the workers are not aware of the Internal Complaint Committee.

FWF concludes that some workers are informed about the committees and available grievance procedures, but a considerable amount of workers do not have sufficient knowledge.

## 9. Remediation

FWF recommends the following remediation steps:

- The factory must conduct an election to ensure all committee members are democratically elected by workers instead of selected by management. An external representative who is knowledgeable on the subject of anti-harassment should be a formal part of the committee.
- Workers must be actively informed about the committee and other available grievance procedures as well as anti-harassment in general.

## 10. Verification

FWF will verify progress on remediation steps at the next audit. FWF recommends Takko to follow-up with its own audit team in the meantime to validate improvements.

## 11. Evaluation by the complainant

The complainant has not been reached yet by the FWF complaint handler after the investigation.