

Strategic plan Turkey 2011

Introduction

The lack of social dialogue and the obstruction of the right to organise in the garment industry are the biggest structural challenges in Turkey. Improving social dialogue has been identified as one of four country priorities by the ILO and the Turkish government in their 2009 Memorandum of Understanding on the Decent Work Country Priorities.¹ The importance of improving the social dialogue in Turkey is also highlighted by the 2009 Survey of violations of trade union rights by the International Trade Union Confederation² listing numerous cases of workers being fired for union activities.

The most common problems found in FWF's audits in Turkey over the last year are falsification of wage records to avoid paying social security costs. This affects the workers' pensions and severance payments negatively when they are dismissed or retire. Other common problems found concern working hours, payments of overtime and annual leave. Furthermore some factories have been found to use false apprenticeship schemes in order to pay a part of the workforce less than the legal minimum wage.

Turkey is the second biggest supplier country for FWF affiliated companies and through FWF's work in the Joint Initiative,³ the organisation has worked extensively in Turkey. This combined with the challenges for the garment industry in Turkey makes the country a high priority for FWF.

In 2011 the work of FWF in Turkey will focus on strengthening communication and social dialogue at suppliers of FWF member companies. Awareness raising and trainings will be arranged for both management and workers over the year.

The verification will focus on factory audits with the local FWF audit teams and effective complaints handling. The joint complaints handler installed together with Fair Labor Association will continue to facilitate communication with local stakeholders and handling complaints.

Country study

To remain aware of recent trends in the Turkish garment industry, to support member companies in the process of code implementation, and to contribute to the dissemination of information that supports local stakeholders in their work, FWF will publish a report on the important challenges in the Turkish garment industry based on stakeholder interviews and desk research.

Deliverables

- A new version of the country study on Turkey based on key indicators on industrial relations and working conditions as well as stakeholder information and relevant regulation.

¹ Memorandum of Understanding signed for Decent Work Country Priorities, 10 February 2009

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/ankara/publ/memorandum.htm>

² ITUC Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations 2009 <http://survey09.ituc-csi.org/survey.php?IDContinent=4&IDCountry=TUR&Lang=EN>

³ Jo-In was the first effort to bring together key multi stakeholder organisations in a programme of collaborative work over a period of four years (2005 to 2008) in Turkey. The participating organisations were: the Clean Clothes Campaign, Ethical Trading Initiative, Fair Labour Association, Fair Wear Foundation, Social Accountability International and Workers Rights Consortium. For more information on the Jo-In project see, www.jo-in.org.



Fair Wear Foundation

Audit training and audits

FWF verifies the process of code implementation in production countries by among other things factory audits done by local audit teams.

Deliverables

- During 2011 about ten factory audits will be carried out in Turkey.

Stakeholder consultation and engagement

FWF tries to find a workable and effective way to involve local partners in the work of FWF in Turkey. During 2010 FWF and FLA employed a joint FLA-FWF Liaison in Turkey. The primary responsibilities of the Liaison includes developing and maintaining relationships with civil society organizations and assisting with third party complaints.

During 2011 part of the stakeholder consultation will also be done through the project on social dialogue that will gather several different stakeholders.

Deliverables

- Stakeholder dialogue included in the updated country study.

Complaints procedure

FWF has a complaints procedure enabling workers or their representatives in garment factories supplying FWF member companies to make complaints about their working conditions and the way the code is implemented. FWF and Fair Labour Association (FLA) has a joint liaison having the position of FWF complaints handler (see also partner network above).

Deliverables

- The Liaison will develop an awareness raising program for CSOs around the complaint mechanisms.
- The Liaison will assess the effectiveness of and promote different legal and other routes available for workers.

Project on social dialogue in the garment industry

FWF is doing a project proposal to help promote an active and functioning social dialogue and industrial relations in the garment industry in Turkey. The project aims at installing factory level grievance mechanisms at ten Turkish garment factories involving workers representatives. The outcomes of the project will provide a hands on example on how to involve trade unions in improving industrial relations that will be rolled out to other regions and countries.

Deliverables

- 3 workshops on social dialogue for Turkish garment companies.
- Trainings at 10 factories on social dialogue.