

Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry (PSES)

Background

While there are clear statutory requirements for compliance with social and environmental standards, many businesses are still not able to fulfil them. Regulatory frameworks are weak and government actors need expertise and personnel to enforce the legislation, while factories and tanneries require knowledge and qualified staff familiar with social and environmental norms.

Objective

The project “Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry (PSES)” supports the government and actors of the private sector as well as civil society to pursue a course of sustainable economic growth in the textile, Ready-Made Garments (RMG) and leather industries in Bangladesh.

Approach

The project is supporting Bangladesh’s textile, RMG and leather sectors to manage sustainable growth. PSES is primarily concerned with developing sectoral strategies for sustainable growth as well as legislation and standards for safeguarding the environment and the rights of workers, including provisions for the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

As a partner to business, government and civil society, PSES contributes to strengthening the systemic competitiveness of Bangladesh’s textile, RMG and leather industries in their sustainable economic, social and environmental dimensions. PSES contributes towards implementation of the government’s vision of further

industrial growth by the industry through building business associations’ capacities on strategy development and implementation, especially regarding operationalization of road maps. Another entry point is on facilitating among key public, private and civil society actors to implement different shared responsibility cooperation models. One focus is to enable workers, especially female workers, in participation and co-determination in sustainability monitoring in the industry, like operational safety, environmental issues or social standards.

The project works closely with the main textile production associations in developing realistic strategic plans that lay out concrete steps to be taken to maintain and increase market share while respecting workers’ rights, improving their working conditions, and minimising environmental impact. At the same time, the project supports workers to learn about and assert their rights and responsibilities in the factories, amplifying their voice in

Project name	Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry (PSES)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Commission value	EUR 7.8 million grant (current phase)
Project region	Bangladesh
Partner ministry	Ministry of Commerce
SDG contribution	No poverty (SDG 1), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9), Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17).
Duration	2017 to 2020



Employees have access to safe drinking water, which is a legal requirement and contained in most codes of conduct provided by buyers



To maintain environmental standards water samples are being collected for analysis

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Skill development, comfort and acceptance at work - a washroom for employees with disabilities.

factory decisions and promoting a cooperative approach to factory management following a co-determination model.

Consequently, the project is assisting to enhance safety, create a healthy working environment, and reduce pollution.

Additionally the project works with two national NGOs to provide injured workers and persons with disability a chance to re-enter the workforce through the Inclusive Job Centre (IJC), which provides counseling, training and job referral services.

Cumulative Results (from January 2010 to June 2019)

- More than 1,000 partner factories have delivered measurable improvements in their working conditions through PSES' factory improvement programme in the RMG and leather sectors.
- More than 270,000 workers, mostly female, have been provided information of their rights as well as responsibilities through women's cafés, for improvement of social dialogue and industrial relations in the RMG and leather sectors.
- More than 10,000 disputes between workers and management in the garments sector have been resolved amicably through women's cafes.



The estimated value of saved property in the first year of the Mini Fire Brigade's operation is about EUR 2.4 million.

- A mini fire brigade has been piloted that shows the effectiveness of locating professional fire response teams and resources directly in industrial areas, reducing the risks to workers.
- More than 300 persons with disabilities have received support in successfully finding a suitable job in a factory.
- More than 2100 persons were trained on vocational qualifications to obtain employment in the garment and textile industries. Among them 286 were persons with disabilities.
- More than 300 factories have improved their environmental standards in areas such as solid waste and wastewater management, electrical safety, water reduction, chemical management and energy consumption.
- National standards and guidelines for sludge management have been developed jointly with the Department of Environment (DoE).
- The International University of Business Agriculture and Technology (IUBAT) now offers a certificate course on wastewater management using toolkits, training modules and training provided by GIZ.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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As at January 2020

Printed by PATHWAY, Dhaka

Design PATHWAY, Dhaka

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GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

In cooperation with Ministry of Commerce