

 **better
factories**

Cambodia

Information Management System



International
Labour
Organization

Better Factories Cambodia

Better Factories Cambodia is a unique International Labour Organization project that has been reporting on working conditions in Cambodian garment factories, against national and international standards since 2001. The project helps factories improve working conditions, comply with labour standards, and increase productivity through monitoring, factory-level remediation, training and capacity building. *Better Factories Cambodia* works with government, factory managers, employers' organizations, unions and international buyers to ensure that monitoring, reporting and improvement systems are sustainable over the long term.



The new Information Management System (IMS)

Better Factories Cambodia has now developed a world-first information management system (IMS) for monitoring and reporting on working conditions. The IMS is a totally computerized system for collecting, storing and analyzing data. It enables the generation of reports tailored to user needs, and provides enhanced security, easy access to information, and greater transparency.

The IMS streamlines and integrates the data collected during factory monitoring visits on working conditions and labour standards. By compiling this information electronically, *Better Factories Cambodia* now automatically generates reports for individual factories that show their current compliance, progress over time as well as suggestions for improvement. But the IMS goes further than this. Because of its electronic database, the IMS also provides reports on groups of factories or on the entire industry. It can compare performance across different types of factories, rank major issues, and detail different combinations of information that may be required for analysis. The IMS also stores data on *Better Factories Cambodia's* training programs, and can track the participation of factories as well as the outcomes of these programs.

The IMS makes it possible for *Better Factories Cambodia* to produce reports in Khmer, English and Chinese. Reports are more user-friendly. Because the system is web-based, accessing information is quick and easy.

What does Better Factories Cambodia Monitor?

Better Factories Cambodia monitors against Cambodian labour law, which includes commitments to meet core international labour standards. The project monitors over 500 separate items from a checklist that has been endorsed by the government as well as by employers and unions involved in the garment industry. *Better Factories Cambodia* monitoring of core international labour standards covers forced labour, child labour, freedom of association, right to collective bargaining, and discrimination. *Better Factories Cambodia* also monitors Cambodian legal requirements on wages, hours of work, contracts of employment, leave, occupational safety and health, welfare and labour relations.



Factories benefit because the IMS

- generates streamlined as well as detailed monitoring reports
- improves the speed, quality and consistency of reporting
- produces reports in English, Khmer and Chinese
- reduces the need for multiple factory audits by different buyers
- enables factories to manage compliance proactively through using the IMS tools for self-assessment
- measures a factory's progress on compliance against the industry average
- helps trainers design specific programs to address recurring compliance issues



Buyers and vendors benefit because the IMS

- provides better quality, easy-to-read reports
- provides convenient, on-line access to factory reports
- enables factories to decide who will have access to their individual reports
- generates tailored reports comparing compliance levels for selected factories
- reduces duplicative monitoring and cuts costs
- facilitates better buyer and vendor coordination
- enables more effective remediation, training and capacity building



Employer organizations, unions and the public benefit because the IMS

- contributes to the garment industry's sustainability
- provides online access to timely, user-friendly information
- increases the transparency of monitoring and reporting
- generates analytical data, which can be used to improve policy and program development
- meets their information needs
- is a powerful tool for analysis of particular issues

How does the IMS work?

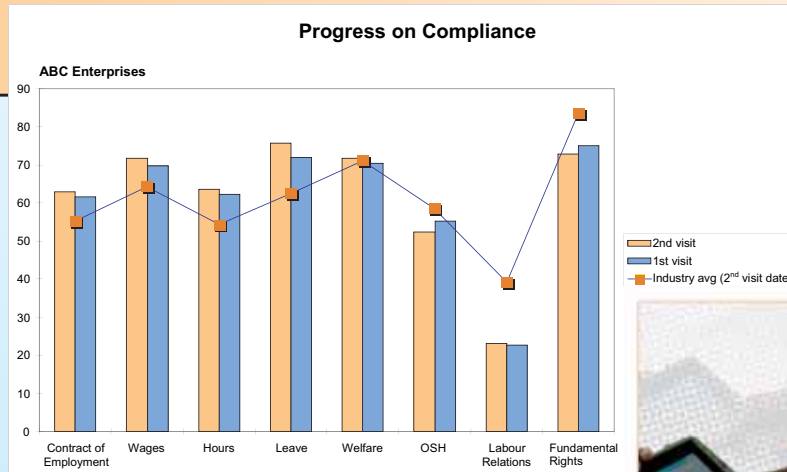
While ILO monitors still visit factories as before, they now directly record results on small tablet PCs that are specifically designed to collect the data. After each factory visit, monitors review and edit the information collected.

The Chief Technical Advisor, who is head of the Project, then provides final approval. Once a factory report has been approved and uploaded to the IMS, *Better Factories Cambodia* notifies the factory by email. Factories can log onto the IMS's limited access website (extranet) to view their own detailed reports using a password. Other users (e.g., head office, buyers or vendors) can also access reports for specific factories, provided they have been granted access. Factories that do not have email or internet access receive paper copies of their reports.

The IMS continues the practice of naming factories and reporting on their progress in implementing ILO monitors' suggestions for improvement. The public can access this summary information from the ILO *Better Factories Cambodia* website. These summary reports will be posted as soon as the factory report has been finalized.

The IMS also allows for better analysis of compliance. The new synthesis reports now include easy-to-read graphs highlighting compliance trends, employment figures for the garment industry, and progress made on improving working conditions. They are issued quarterly in English, Khmer and Chinese – the languages spoken by most users. As the system evolves so will the reporting capacity. *Better Factories Cambodia* expects that in the future, users will be able to design reports to meet their own needs.

For more information, see our website at www.betterfactories.org/ilo



Source: Fictional Example



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