

Concept Note

Fire and General Building Safety Training Module Development Validation Workshop

Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence
In close collaboration with
USDOL Improving General Building and Fire Safety Project,
International Labour Organization (ILO)

Venue : TBD
Date : October 18 - 20, 2015

Context

Ready-Made Garment (RMG) is a strategic sector for the Bangladeshi economy, with an estimate of 3,500 export factories in operation, providing a source of employment for over 3.5 million workers. The industry exports totalled \$21.5 billion in 2012-2013¹, which makes Bangladesh one of the world's leading apparel exporters. However, repeated massive industrial accidents indicates hazardous working conditions in the sector, and made clear that building, fire and occupational safety and health (OSH) need urgent attention.

Key contributors to the problem are: multiple responsibilities for town planning, a weak enforcement of standards for construction, insufficiently developed inspection systems, absence of collaboration among authorities at the different levels, chronic lack of adequate numbers of trained staff in both the building and factory approval and inspection processes, and lack of a culture of compliance. At the factory level, there is a lack of awareness among workers, supervisors and mid-level managers on working conditions and OSH issues. As a result, managers are not equipped to handle crisis situation.

To translate the commitments into action, in collaboration with the Government and the social partners, the ILO is implementing the Fire and General Building Safety Project under the national initiative designed to improve fire and building safety in Bangladesh.

The underlying message in this initiative is to ensure that sustainable mechanisms are in place to prevent future tragedies and ensure safe working conditions. Much has been accomplished in this effort. The three initiatives of the National Tripartite Committee, The ACCORD, and the Alliance are working diligently to complete pre-assessment on time and move immediately into the remediation. This requires regulating authorities to have capacity to carry out much needed inspections during and after projected life cycle.

One of the major objectives of the aforesaid project is to provide support to the Fire Service and Civil Defense) in its efforts to bring increase capacity of inspector and ensure they are well versed in internationally accepted standards. In October, fire inspectors received training on factory inspections with a few being selected to continue with advanced training. It is with this backdrop, that the next level of training is to develop competency-based training that include familiarization off fire and building code, case-studies and reacting to scenarios. Project funds are committed to ITC Turin to further developing a training module for fire and general building safety that can be used as a training tool for fire and labour inspectors.

¹ BGMEA - COMPARATIVE STATEMENT ON EXPORT OF RMG AND TOTAL EXPORT OF BANGLADESH

ITC, Turin was selected to develop four training modules as part of a systematic approach to building capacity of government regulators to address fire safety issues. These training modules will be part of the larger fire and labour inspection training programs. This will prove valuable to support building capacity amongst government regulators in their effort to develop a cadre of highly trained inspectors who can feel confident that they obtained the knowledge and skills to successfully conduct inspections in accordance with internationally accepted practices

Objective

The objective of the workshop is to bring relevant stakeholders together to provide input and validate the course developed by ITC-Turin.

Expected Outcomes

1. Valuable input from stakeholders
2. Validation of the course objectives and content

Participants

BFSCD, DIFE, RAJUK, Accord, Alliance, UNOPS, JICA, GIZ, BGMEA, BKMEA, BEF, NCCWE, IBC, ILO