



Freedom of association and social dialogue



Tools for brands

FAIR
WEAR

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Introduction to the tools for brand action on freedom of association and social dialogue

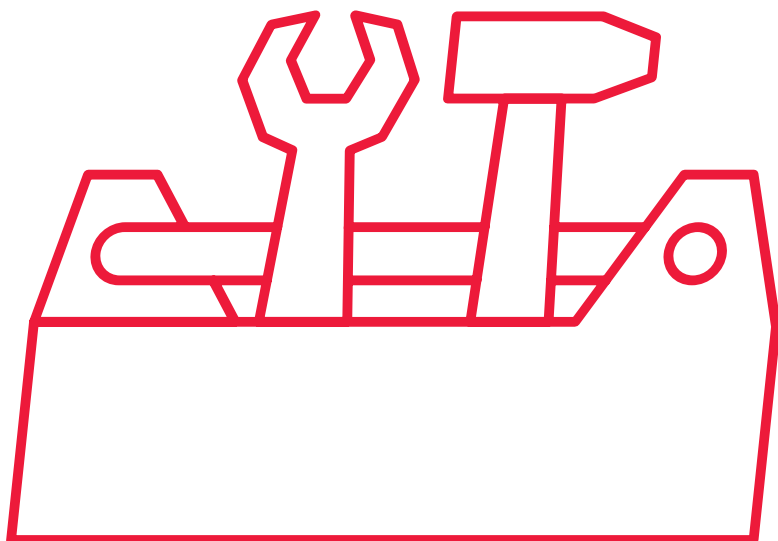
This collection of Tools for Brands accompanies Fair Wear's Brand Guide for Freedom of Association and Social Dialogue, which provides important background on key concepts and the 6 key actions brands can take to create an enabling environment for freedom of association and social dialogue. The two publications are designed for use in tandem. Use the Guide to understand how & when to use the tools, and the Tools to implement the Guide. Any questions? Please contact your brand liaison.

We seek to continuously improve on the guidance and tools as we all learn more together. This set of tools will be updated on an ongoing basis.



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Tool 1

Country information on freedom of association and collective bargaining

Fair Wear members commit to source from suppliers where workers' freedom of association and right to collective bargaining are respected. However, in most garment-producing countries, these rights are at risk. Therefore, in line with Fair Wear's process approach, Fair Wear members are called upon to take concrete, verifiable action to advance these rights. A brand's greatest influence is through their sourcing decisions. As such, this tool is designed to help brands steer production to ideal locations, where freedom of association is fully respected, or, when the ideal is not possible, to locations where there is more potential to advance these rights. Where such possibilities are highly limited, it is difficult – if not impossible – for brands to stand by their commitments to these fundamental rights.

The following pages provide an overview of the current situation in Fair Wear's focus countries with regard to freedom of association and collective bargaining. The information is taken from:

- › the most recent Fair Wear Foundation Country Studies, which are developed in consultation with stakeholders in each country;
- › statistics from the [ILO STAT database](#) on trade union density and collective bargaining coverage on a country level (not specific to the garment industry);
- › the [2022 International Trade Union Confederation Global Rights Index](#) rating per country. This Index ranks 145 countries on the degree of respect for workers' rights, based on 97 indicators, many of which focus on freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively; and
- › the most common Fair Wear audit results and complaints received through Fair Wear's complaints hotline.

The information in this tool will be updated annually based on information available in Fair Wear's country studies and the other reference sources listed above.

Based on this synthesised information, Fair Wear has created a 'Continuum of Advancement of Freedom of Association,' which ranges from the low end, where workers are not free to organise or collectively bargain, to the high end, where these rights are realised. To help members, Fair Wear has grouped its focus countries into three categories that fall on this continuum. Group 1 includes countries where possibilities for advancing freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are extremely limited, while groupings 2 and 3 offer progressively more potential for workers to realise these rights. It is worth noting that none of Fair Wear's focus countries have strong freedom of association and the continuum continues significantly beyond the three country groupings included in the graphic below (for example in countries where these rights are protected and exercised without risk).

Continuum of freedom of association (and potential to advance it)



The continuum represents the potential in various countries to progress freedom of association and collective bargaining. On the farthest left of the continuum workers would not be free to organise or bargain collectively; conversely at the farthest right of the continuum would be a country where workers are completely free to organise and collectively bargain. We have attempted here to group Fair Wear's focus countries on the continuum based on the possibilities of progressing freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Fair Wear calls upon its members to develop sourcing strategies that ensure that as much production as possible is taking place in facilities where workers are free to organise and collectively bargain. In this sense, brands should be seeking that their overall production falls as far down the continuum as possible towards the full realisation of these rights. Where production is unavoidable in countries from groupings 1, 2, or 3, additional action is required to mitigate against and compensate for the systemic obstacles to freedom of association that are in place in those production countries. Below, see the groupings and suggested action per grouping – based on Fair Wear's freedom of association policy and six actions.

Grouping 1

China, Myanmar and Vietnam

In grouping 1, there are very limited possibilities of progressing freedom of association or collective bargaining due to restrictive laws or practices. It will likely be very difficult, if not impossible, to be in full compliance with freedom of association and collective bargaining.

As of October 2022, after extensive research into working conditions and social dialogue in Myanmar following the February 2021 coup, Fair Wear is adapting its requirements for all member brands to disengage and exit responsibly from all sourcing locations in Myanmar. Member brands that are not currently active there should refrain from starting business relationships in the country. Members can access further guidance on Fair Wear's position on Myanmar from their brand liaisons.

Brands furthermore have a due diligence responsibility to question sourcing from countries like China and Vietnam, where FoA has been systematically restricted. Legal restrictions are no excuse for brands to avoid their due diligence responsibilities to create an enabling environment for social dialogue.

To the contrary, in such countries, brands have even greater obligations to play active roles to ensure workers have access to independent representation. If your brand is sourcing in these countries, you should consider:

Assessment:

- Given the risks, can you responsibly source here and commit to freedom of association and collective bargaining? Wherever possible, brands are advised to consider alternative sourcing decisions to support freedom of association. In this group, the restrictions are very high and the violations are severe.

Influence:

- If you are already sourcing there, do your supplier partners have an open attitude and willingness to engage on this topic? Do you have sufficient leverage or a strong relationship with them to influence their behaviour? If your supplier shows commitment to engaging and supporting democratically elected workers' representatives, it may be possible to make (some) progress, at least on improving workplace dialogue, if not true freedom of association and collective bargaining rights.
- Do you have the resources (staff time and finances) to develop an approach per factory that could allow progress to happen? Because of the challenges in law and practice, working towards promoting freedom of association and collective bargaining will take a nuanced and careful approach in these local contexts as part of prevention and improvement plans. For example, a standardised training programme may not be suitable given the political and social climate. Some approaches may even be detrimental to workers. Developing a strategic approach will require time, staff, and financial resources.
- If you are willing to work on the systemic challenges, this may mean engaging with other stakeholders or government to promote more inclusion of these rights. Without systemic changes in these countries, real progress of freedom of association and collective bargaining will likely be limited.

Impact:

- Given the restrictive laws, will you be able to make an impact on the working conditions? If you can make progress with a supplier on

How to move forward in China?

In principle, Chinese laws afford extensive trade union rights. However, given that the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) is not independent of the government and is the only recognised trade union body in China, all such laws are undermined by the reality that all other trade unions are subject to ACFTU. This does not necessarily mean that no independent trade unions are allowed, or that workers cannot freely elect their representatives, but it does prove a very challenging climate to exercise these rights.

In March 2019, Fair Wear, with ETI, held a seminar on 'Engaging Worker Representatives in China.' From that meeting, a list of recommended actions for brands was developed, and is included here:

- As the first step, it is advisable that brands assess the functionality of ACFTU's grassroots union and industrial relations in the factory. For instance, is there a union? Are the workers' representatives democratically elected? Is the union leader independent of the HR manager? Does the union have meetings? What topics do they discuss? Do they offer feedback to the workers they represent?
- If there is a functional union, it is advisable to work with the existing one to build up their capacity to conduct a social dialogue.
- If there is none, or it is not functional, which is very likely in SMEs in supply chains, brands can help facilitate alternative methods of engaging workers, e.g. consultation and information sharing.
- Provide step-by-step guidance on organising elections. In a country where there is no election culture, it is worthwhile providing essential operational tips and dos and don'ts. (Potential future Fair Wear/STITCH tool.)
- Given the current repressive climate, it is advisable to build up WC's capacity with a particular focus on two-way communication and equip them with skills and knowledge rather than jump to big terms like freedom of association and collective bargaining. This could include:
 - how to hold a meeting,
 - how to provide feedback to other workers,
 - how to negotiate,
 - how to track progress,
 - how to compromise,
 - how to record an agreement and track its implementation (for example, a collective contract, as a fruit of collective bargaining, needs to be registered to become legitimate. It is also monopolised by ACFTU).

promoting social dialogue and/or the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining, will that translate into a change for the workers? In this group, the restrictive laws, supplier attitudes or beliefs, and, often, workers' fear to engage, in case of retribution, make the chances high that hardly any impact can be achieved.

When sourcing from a country with very limited possibilities and working towards promoting freedom of association and collective bargaining, Fair Wear would highly recommend that you work with locally-based stakeholders who have a clear understanding of the legal and cultural context. Fair Wear can support with developing strategies, in partnership with local stakeholders.

It is important to note that in 2019 Vietnam ratified [ILO Convention 98: Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining](#) and has committed to ratify [ILO Convention 87: Freedom of Association](#) by 2023. The Labour Code was also amended and now allows workers to form or join an independent worker representative organisation (WRO) of their choosing, which does not have to be affiliated with the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour. These steps show a commitment and willingness by the Vietnamese government to increase space for workers to exercise these rights and allow new unions to be formed. It is a promising development, which may see an increase in possibilities for these rights to be realised. However, monitoring implementation over the coming years is key.

Grouping 2

Bangladesh, India, and Turkey

Grouping 2 is made up of a variety of countries where Fair Wear considers there are some (albeit in some cases limited) possibilities for advancing freedom of association. While there is significant divergence among the countries that fall into grouping 2, with some likely arguing that some of these countries actually align de facto with workers' freedoms in countries

listed in groupings 1 or 3 (in reality, there are not clean lines between these groupings), Fair Wear has grouped these countries based on analysis across Fair Wear focus countries. If your brand decides to source in these countries, it is crucial to further understand the situation at the specific supplier and in the area where you work as part of your risk assessment. In these countries, the laws generally protect the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, but in practice, the implementation is either weak or hindered in other ways. Here are some steps to take if you are starting to (or currently) sourcing from a supplier in one of these countries:

Assess:

- 1 Understand that there are deep-rooted challenges to trade union organising and collective bargaining. Be willing to commit to a long-term process to support the implementation of these rights.
- 2 Gather key supplier level information using the 'Supplier Questionnaire on Freedom of Association' and follow up on those responses. For example, if there is no union at a supplier, ask why there isn't, what has previously been done by management to allow unions to engage with workers, whether there is another form of democratically elected worker representative, etc. If there is a CBA in place, ask what provisions in the CBA go beyond what is protected by law, ask how it was negotiated and how long it is valid for, etc. (See [Tool 2: Supplier Questionnaire on Freedom of Association](#) for more.)
- 3 Ask about any previous complaints or audit findings related to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Try to engage with other brands sourcing there to address factory-level violations of these rights.

Influence:

- 1 If there is not currently an independent union or CBA in place, consider whether you have adequate resources (staff time and finances) to develop an approach per factory that could create a more enabling environment for a workplace dialogue and freedom of association. This may require financing training, helping to facilitate dialogue, engaged follow up on CAPs and complaints, etc. If there is not an independent union or CBA, consider sourcing from a

supplier where there is already an independent union and/or CBA in place.

Impact:

- › Based on your assessment of the risks, will you be able to make an impact on the working conditions? Are there positive examples of workers' conditions improving because they have been able to exercise these rights? In this group, we see there are possibilities to make improvements and have an impact on workers. However, there are many factors per situation that can make this challenging.

Grouping 3

Bulgaria, Indonesia, North Macedonia, Romania, Tunisia

Grouping 3 is made up of a variety of countries where Fair Wear's analysis indicates there are generally decent possibilities of progressing and implementing freedom of association and collective bargaining. In these countries, there is likely a better climate for workers to organise and bargain collectively, however, it is by no means guaranteed or straightforward. There are still challenges based on mistrust or systems that are not functioning. Committing to promote these rights will still require time and effort, and the six steps in the brand guidance all equally apply here. Here are some steps to take if you are starting to (or currently) sourcing from a supplier in one of these countries:

Assess:

- › Gather key supplier level information using [Tool 2: Supplier Questionnaire on Freedom of Association](#) and follow up on those responses. For example, if there is no union at a supplier, ask why there isn't, what has previously been done by management to allow unions to engage with workers, if there is another form of democratically elected worker representative, etc. If there is a CBA in place, ask what provisions in the CBA go beyond what is protected by law, ask how it was negotiated and how long it is valid for, etc.
- › Ask about any previous complaints or audit findings related to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Try to engage with other brands sourcing there.

Influence:

- › If there is not currently an independent union or CBA in place, consider whether you have adequate resources (staff time and finances) to develop an approach per factory that could allow progress to happen. This may require financing training, helping to facilitate dialogue, engaged follow up on CAPs and complaints, etc. If not, consider sourcing from a supplier where there is already an independent union and/or CBA in place.

Impact:

- › Monitor the situation at the factories where you source from to see if they are leading to improvements in working conditions for workers. Is the union able to truly negotiate on behalf of workers? Has a CBA been negotiated, and does it give workers rights beyond what is in law?

Fair Wear is aware that this listing is not exhaustive – it does not include some countries that are key production countries for members and other garment-producing brands. It also does not identify those countries that fall at the end of the spectrum that would signify a brand's fulfilment of its commitment to freedom of association.

As a starting point for gauging freedom of association in countries not included here, Fair Wear points brands to the [International Trade Union Confederation Global Rights Index](#) rating per country. Ideally, brands would steer production to locations that receive as low a score as possible, based on that index. Please contact your brand liaison with further questions and watch this space for improvements upon these groupings and other suggested actions.

Tool 2

Supplier questionnaire

Below are the key questions that brands should ask all potential new suppliers before deciding whether to source from that location, as part of their risk assessment. These questions should inform your decision on whether or not to source from that supplier. Similarly, they should be addressed to all existing suppliers if the information is still unknown. The answers will provide you with more information to guide your next steps in working with your supplier in promoting these rights.

These questions were derived from the '[Questions on freedom of association and social dialogue](#)' checklist created by CNV Internationaal and Mondiaal FNV. The full checklist can be used as a further resource to find out even more about the situation at your production locations.

Questionnaire on FoA, CB and SD

Does the company have a written policy regarding freedom of association?

Does the company openly communicate with its workers on the rights related to freedom of association? How?

Are trade unions active in your company? If yes, which one(s)?

Are union representatives and leaders regularly elected? Precisely how were the union representatives elected? How were nominations for candidates sought and verified? Was the election undertaken as a secret ballot or a show of hands in the canteen overseen by the HR Director? Who organised ballot-counting if there was a ballot?

Does the union membership include managerial and supervisory staff?

Does your company recognise any trade union of its workers for negotiating purposes?

What percentage of your workforce have permanent contracts?

Does the company operate under a collective bargaining agreement? If so, how was it established, who were the parties involved? How often is it revised?

If there is a CBA, what does it cover? Does it represent an advance on standard statutory terms and conditions for the sector?

If the company does not have any collective agreement with a recognised trade union, does the company permit trade union representatives to have access to their members in the workplace?

If there is no trade union present, are there democratically elected worker representatives? Does the company management have regular meetings or other contacts with these representatives? Are any records kept of those meetings?

Does the company have a (written) procedure to process complaints and grievances? What is the procedure? How are workers made aware of this grievance mechanism?

Tool 3 Sample non-retaliation letter

Dear {name of worker here},

We, {name of supplier here}, commit to upholding the following statements regarding freedom of association and collective bargaining:

- Freedom of association and collective bargaining rights of the workers are under protection by both local law and international standards, including the Fair Wear Code of Labour Practices.
- Employers and management recognise and respect the right of workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining. All workers have a right to register or not to register with any union without the interference of employers or management. No worker can force others to register with any union.
- Workers won't be dismissed based on their union membership status.
- Workers and workers' representatives won't be subjected to any form of discrimination on hiring, compensation, promotion, demotion, job reassignment, or disciplinary actions based on their union membership status. Union membership status does not allow any worker to act against the standard work procedures and/or to break them or slow down the production.
- The presence of a union and/or a valid collective bargaining agreement in this workplace is appreciated by sourcing brand {insert name} and will not have any negative effect on the relationship between said brand and the factory.

If any of the above points are not upheld, workers may choose to access the factory grievance system to seek remedy. If no remedy can be accessed at the factory level, workers can access the sourcing brand {insert name} through the Fair Wear complaints helpline {insert local number}.

Signed by

{Factory Management}

{Brand Management}

Name:

Name:

Date:

Date:

Tool 4 Violations, root causes and examples for brand action

Violation: Workers cannot freely form or join unions.

Possible root causes:

- Workers may fear retaliation, may not know what the process is, may not know of any unions open to them.
- Workers may be barred from joining trade unions, for example, if they are temporary workers (based on either national law, regional regulations, or supplier regulations).
- Management may fundamentally mistrust unions and not allow workers to join freely, may not understand the value of freedom of association, may have had a negative experience with unions.

Examples of brand action

- Ask management if they have a policy on freedom of association (if not, encourage them to develop one), ask them to distribute non-retaliation letters to workers, ask if they would be willing to post or share information for workers on options for unions.
- Support and finance or co-finance training for the supplier on freedom of association and social dialogue. Management, supervisors, and workers should all be trained.
- Engage with local unions and/or labour rights organisations to further understand the local context and see if facilitating dialogue is possible.
- Encourage the supplier to join a Fair Wear supplier seminar, which brings together local stakeholders, including unions. Encourage them to interact with unions in this 'neutral' setting.

Violation: Management punishes, threatens, intimidates, or harasses workers or workers' representatives due to their union membership or their participation in union activities.

Possible root causes:

- Management does not trust unions, does not see the value in workers joining a union, fears that unionisation will lead to increase costs or disruption of production.

Examples of brand action

- Discussion with the supplier to explain the brand's commitment to this right and requirement of the supplier to not punish workers for joining unions or workers' representatives for their representative work.
- Regular follow up with supplier AND union to ensure actions have stopped and that any punishment to worker or workers' representatives has been compensated (i.e., moved back to the original workstation, monetary compensation for hours missed, etc.).
- Support and finance or co-finance training for the supplier on freedom of association and social dialogue. Management, supervisors, and workers should all be trained.
- Share best practice examples with the supplier on the business case for freedom of association and collective bargaining – why these rights are good for them.
- Encourage the supplier to join a Fair Wear supplier seminar, which brings together local stakeholders, including unions. Encourage them to interact with unions in this 'neutral' setting.

Violation: Workers are not aware of the function of union.

Possible root causes:

- Workers have not learned about freedom of association or unions, may have a negative impression of unions, the union is present but not active in factory.

Examples of brand action

- Support and finance or co-finance training for the supplier on freedom of

association and social dialogue. Management, supervisors, and workers should all be trained.

Violation: Union or worker representatives are not democratically elected.

Possible root causes:

- Workers are unaware of how to organise elections, fear retaliation, the union is state or factory-controlled.
- Management wants to retain some control, so nominates workers to committees, does not allow workers to campaign leading up to the election (or dismisses or threatens workers for trying), does not allow appropriate time or space for elections to take place (i.e., giving all workers paid time to vote).

Examples of brand action

- Ask how elections were organised, if there was an oversight from the Labour Department (or other independent organisation) during the elections.
- Leading up to an election, ask how workers are receiving information about the candidates and election, ask how secure voting is being ensured, ask if workers are receiving paid time off to vote (and offer to support in covering these costs), ask for an independent third party to oversee the elections (Fair Wear or another NGO could potentially take on this role or an independent union).

Violation: CBA is not implemented by management.

Possible root causes:

- Management doesn't take the CBA seriously, there are elements they do not know how to implement, they did not negotiate in good faith, and, therefore, don't intend to uphold the negotiations.
- Management felt forced into signing a CBA and does not see the benefit.

Examples of brand action

- Ask for a copy of the CBA and have conversations with both the union and the factory management on what elements are not being implemented and where suppliers might need brand support linked to their purchasing practices (ask for Fair Wear support if needed).

- › Re-confirm with the supplier your expectation that CBAs be implemented fully.
- › If the elements not implemented are linked to brand purchasing practices (i.e., payment of workers, overtime hours, etc.), examine what practices you can change to support them.

Violation: Management deducts union dues from wages not in accordance with national law.

Possible root causes:

- › Management is unaware of the national law, management deducts dues to retain control over the union activities, management is in fact ‘part’ of the union.
- › Workers are unaware of how union dues should be deducted and who should control them, workers do not receive detailed payslips, unions have not properly informed workers of their functions and fees.

Examples of brand action

- › Ask your supplier how union dues are deducted and where those dues go; ask if/why they control union dues rather than pass them along to appropriate sources; inform them of the national laws (Fair Wear can be a resource).

Tool 5

Parameters for impactful workplace social dialogue training

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report aims to provide the parameters that Fair Wear deems necessary for a factory level training program on social dialogue. We envision this being a practical guidance for brands and their suppliers who are looking for a factory level training program to promote social dialogue, to assess potential trainings programmes or training organisations against these parameters. Additionally, we envision this as a useful resource for trainers or organisations to understand what Fair Wear and its member brands believe are the requirements for any impactful factory level training on social dialogue and incorporate them as necessary.

Fair Wear member brands are expected to support the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining, as well as the process of social dialogue, as laid out in the Policy on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining. The accompanying Brand Guide on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining’ provides guidance to member brands on the steps they should be taking to create an enabling environment. One action required of brands is to ‘Support and finance workplace training for workers and management to build an understanding of their rights and skills to engage in workplace dialogue and collective bargaining. Recognising that women garment workers are under-represented in union structures, extra emphasis should be placed on encouraging and supporting women in this process.’ Factory level training on social dialogue could be included in a brands’ human rights due diligence work as part of a prevention or improvement programme. This document outlines what an ‘impactful’ training on social dialogue at factory level should look like, as part of that programme.

Fair Wear believes that trade unions are the most legitimate and sustainable form of worker representation, and therefore should be partners or participants in any training on social dialogue. However, in many instances trade unions are either not present at the workplace or do not have the capacity to deliver training. In these cases, democratically elected worker representatives and workplace councils or committees are the best place to start capacitating for social dialogue. Fair Wear envisions a workplace social dialogue training that can lead to increased opportunities for trade union presence in suppliers.

‘Trade unions’ specifically refer to independent organisations of workers, who can be legally recognised and registered as the collective representatives of workers (at company, industry, or national level, for example. In most countries, trade unions are afforded legal rights and protections – meaning that their work and the collective bargaining agreements they negotiate are protected by law. Subsequently, those decisions hold more weight, and employers cannot simply choose to ignore those agreements.

Workplace committees’ or works councils can also be a very important tool or mechanism for workers to express their concerns or influence workplace policy. These committees are legally mandated in some countries and are often viable and successful ways for workers to engage in workplace dialogue with management. However, they do not offer workers the opportunity to join as a member and be part of that organisation, and their decisions are (usually) not upheld by law. Most often, workplace committees discuss issues such as health and safety, grievances, or anti-harassment policies; they do not focus on negotiating the terms and conditions of work (such as wages, hours of work, benefits, etc.).

Special thanks to Victor Thorpe, Stirling Smith and Jyrki Raina from the Just Solutions Network, whose extensive expertise and generous share of their training materials were fundamental for the writing of this guidance. Also thanks to Ruben Korevaar (FNV), Hanneke Smits (CNV), Abil Bin Amin (ETI), Jane Pillinger (LSE), Jozef Stoop (European Works Councils), Minna Maaskola (Better Work), Lars-Åke Bergkvist, and Stefan Guga (Syndex). Finally, thanks to all Fair Wear trainers for their contributions.

INTRODUCTION

Worker representatives and trade unions are still underrepresented at garment factories (10% according to Fair Wear data analysis). Often, worker representatives might be elected but are missing the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil their role to represent and defend workers’ rights to management. On the other hand, if management lacks the skills themselves or dismisses the importance of engaging in forums of dialogue with employees, even a well-informed, highly skilled worker representative would not succeed in representing workers’ voices in the factory. Developing knowledge and building skills for both groups around social dialogue structures and practices is fundamental to overcome the existing power imbalance. This can be done through a long-term, comprehensive workplace social dialogue (SD) programme.

The goal of a workplace SD training is to stimulate effective worker-management dialogue including ensuring workers representatives are freely elected, free from management interference and able to exercise their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. It should put workers in the driving seat of their own working conditions. In order for workers to do so, they need channels through which they can voice their vision, needs and priorities, as well as the capacity to do so. Management (including HR, CSR staff, supervisors) need to believe in the value of social dialogue and have the skills to engage in functional dialogue with worker representatives and unions.

To understand what the parameters of an ideal workplace SD training are, this report draws on secondary data analysis of SD trainings reports, evaluations, modules, and scientific and corporate literature, as well as on first-hand accounts collected through 22 semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted online with industrial relations and SD experts, trainers, and training advisors within the Fair Wear network and beyond. Interviewees’

expertise spans from training research, design and delivery to training program management and implementation. Interviewees work with trade unions, workers councils, factory management and workers, on trainings commissioned by international organisations, trade union confederations, global brands, NGOs, and MSIs.

PRECONDITIONS TO SETTING UP A TRAINING

A workplace SD training is a long-term learning process requiring consistent engagement from the participants, the trainers, the supplier as a whole, and the sourcing brand(s). It should not be thought of only in terms of content, methods, and outcome. Instead, those implementing the training should carefully consider the concrete context in which the participants will learn, and the trainers will operate. To ensure the highest possible impact and create an enabling environment, it is essential that specific preconditions are met. Brands promotion of an enabling environment for SD and freedom of association, brands and suppliers' willingness to pay workers for their time in the training, a commitment of all parties to long term engagement, the assessment of and engagement with existing factory-level dialogue channels, and the selection of capable trainers are the preconditions that set the tone for the entire learning experience. Brands and suppliers should also engage in discussion to ensure there is a common understanding of the objectives and outcomes expected from a training. These objectives should be set and agreed upon between brands, suppliers and ideally worker representatives prior to a training beginning.

Brands promotion of an enabling environment

Social dialogue encounters several structural obstacles across all tiers of the global garment supply chain. A SD training alone cannot suddenly improve workplace industrial relations, unless efforts are made first and foremost by the sourcing brand(s). An engagement from brands in promoting freedom of association at the systemic level, as well as in their brands and suppliers, is key.

As outlined in Fair Wear's Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining Policy, brands should :

1. Commit to a sourcing strategy that privileges countries and suppliers where workers are free to choose to form or join a trade union and/or to bargain collectively.
2. Participate in direct agreements with trade unions that ensure worker participation in identifying, addressing and remediating issues related to the conditions of their work.
3. Use their voice and influence to encourage governments to promote and protect – and certainly to halt violations of – international standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining (ILO Conventions 87 and 98).
4. Develop contractual agreements with suppliers in which 1) the brand commits to orders in the long-term (several years or more) so as to provide the financial stability/predictability needed for workplace dialogue and freedom of association to thrive; 2) suppliers contractually agree to provide all workers stable contracts to make it possible for them to join a union and 3) supplier and brand jointly distribute non-interference and non-retaliation letters or a declaration to the workforce, underscoring workers' right to organise.
5. Urgently address violations of freedom of association and collective bargaining (from complaints, audit findings or other sources), including a strategy for addressing the root cause of violations.
6. Support and finance workplace training for workers and management to build understanding of their rights and skills to engage in workplace dialogue and collective bargaining. Recognising that women garment workers are under-represented in union structures, extra emphasis should be placed on encouraging and supporting women in this process.

These are among the most important steps for brands to take to create an enabling environment for SD processes, and for strengthening freedom of association. For more detailed guidance on the steps that Fair Wear expects brands to take to promote an enabling environment for freedom of association and social dialogue, please refer to Fair Wear Freedom of Association Brand Guide 2021.

Commitment to cover the costs

Workers and all factory staff involved in the training should always be paid for the time spent on it.

It is key to clarify between brand and supplier:

- › Who will pay the workers for their time in the training?
- › Who will pay for the training?
- › Does the supplier have a budget for training? And the brand?
- › Is the brand willing to pay a fair share of wages of the workers involved in the training?

Fair Wear's Brand Guide on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining calls for brands to **'support and finance workplace training for workers and management to build an understanding of their rights and skills to engage in workplace dialogue and collective bargaining.'**

Ensure participants know they are paid. Participants should be fully aware of the fact that they will be paid for the hours spent in the training. This ensures their attention is fully on the training.

Commitment to long term engagement

Brands and suppliers should be willing to commit to long term engagement: before, during, and after the training. Training is an input: if there is no long-term commitment and real willingness to create change from all sides (brand,

supplier, trainers, and participants), the training will not be impactful. All parties involved should acknowledge that creating change is not simple, nor linear, but possible.

Keep in mind:

The engagement starts before the beginning of the programme itself. As laying the foundations for an effective training may take time and investment, impatience is understandable. Yet, without the right preconditions in place, even if a training takes place, it is not clear that it would have impact at the supplier level.

It is key to clarify between brand and supplier:

- › How long the training will last.
- › How the training will fit into the production schedule.
- › The frequency of the follow ups.

Ensuring participants are aware and motivated

Before the start of the training, awareness should be raised about the goal, contents, methods, and duration of the training. Participants, and especially worker representatives, should be motivated and willing to engage with trainers in the learning experience. Managers should be aware of what is expected of them in terms of best practices in engaging in functional social dialogue with employees.

Make the case for the training. Make a case for the importance of participants to join in the training and for how it will benefit each of the audiences. Case-studies sharing, especially with managers, reinforces the business case for a SD training. A few key points:

- › Managers should understand that training is not a disruption to production, not a compliance requirement – a box ticking exercise to satisfy the business partner demands. It is an investment of time and resources that

will create short- and long-term benefits, such as enhanced capacities to prevent risks through dialogue, reduced turnover, etc.

- › Workers should understand that the training is an opportunity, not an obligation. That it will create chances to address ever-recurring issues as well as smaller ones, and that it will support them in developing the knowledge and skills to engage in processes to improve their working conditions, etc.
- › Emphasis should be placed on the benefits for female workers, as they encounter several challenges in engaging in SD (e.g., care duties and gender imbalances limit their voice and possibilities to participate in workers representation).

What experts say:

Adults learn best when they actively come to the conclusions, instead of passively assimilate notions. Participants, and especially factory management, should come to the conclusion that engaging in such a training will bring benefits to their company and improve employees' relations. They should not just be exposed to an explanation of SD benefits but should be actively engaged in a reflection about it. This reflection may be intellectual but can also be developed through practical exercises and games.

Assessment of current social dialogue structures

Before the start of the training, it is important to:

1. Assess what formal and/or informal structures of workplace dialogue are in place, e.g. factory-based trade union (TU), management-workers bipartite committees, etc.
2. Ensure that the existing workers representation structures, e.g. workers committee, are independent from management and that they were established through democratic elections. NB: ensure that workers' committees are actually composed of workers; in some countries, e.g. Romania, often the role of workers representatives is filled by middle managers.
3. Engage with the most appropriate workplace dialogue structures. The key

question is: what structure is best suited for an internal dialogue role? For example, if both a health and safety (H&S) committee and a grievance committee are in place, involve the members of the grievance committee in the training first. In fact, national and/or internal supplier's policies may prescribe the latter with an internal dialogue role, and not the H&S committee.

Keep in mind:

It is key to involve those representation structures in the training. Almost all national legislations prescribe the existence of some form of committee (be it bipartite, health and safety, grievance committee, other). There might not be internal policies and/or national legislations prescribing an internal dialogue role to any of those committees (e.g., health and safety), but that should not prevent that committee from being involved in the training. The ultimate goal is the strengthening of existing social dialogue structures, and the creation of new, functional structures where needed.

The following are some practical guiding questions and principles that should be put in place to ensure that the members of the most appropriate dialogue structures are involved in the training:

Trade unions:

Is a factory TU established?

- › If yes, it should be involved in the implementation of the training (particularly the training of workers). If needed (e.g., lack of capacities), TU reps could participate to the training with other participants.
- › If not, the best practice would be to contact a local/international TU and discuss if they are interested in collaborating on the training – either by giving input to content or co-facilitating some worker rep training sessions. This may not always be possible or feasible, but should be explored on a case by case basis.

Worker representatives:

Does a workers committee exist?

- › If yes, was it democratically elected?
- › If yes, worker representatives should be the main recipients of the SD training, alongside management.
- › If it was not democratically elected, the SD training should start with making workers and management aware of the importance of democratically elected worker representatives and support workers to take steps to elect worker representative, if they choose to do so.

No TU nor other worker representation structures:

Do national laws and or/internal policies prescribe the presence of a worker committee?

- › If yes, then the first step of the training should be to support in the establishment of the legally mandated committees. This will need to start with awareness and knowledge raising for workers and management on benefits and process. National laws and the brand's encouragement are important to make a strong case for the establishment of a committee, but the decision is ultimately up to workers themselves.
- › If there is no legal requirement for a committee and there are no democratically elected worker representations yet in place, then the first step is to build workers' awareness of their rights to freedom of association and the benefits of having elected worker representatives. At this stage a training should focus on information sharing and increasing awareness, as well as providing workers with the support and advice on how to democratically elect worker representatives. Ultimately workers themselves have the right to choose whether to join trade unions or elect worker representatives – neither brands nor suppliers should force this on workers.

Fair Wear believes that if there are no democratically elected worker representatives, then it is not possible to conduct a training on social dialogue (beyond the basic awareness raising as described above). This is a precondition for any in-depth SD training.

Management:

- › Who are the top management/decision makers? Ensure they are included in training.
- › Is management foreign or local? Is there a language barrier? Important considerations for both the delivery of the training and also how social dialogue will take place in the future.
- › It is important that supervisors as well as top management participate in the training. This should include HR representatives. This is to ensure that the decision makers (top management), policy makers (HR) and those in direct contact with workers (supervisors) all have consistent training and common understanding.

Are the right people available to conduct the training?

The ideal trainers should be invested and committed to workers' causes and know workers' daily struggles and general work life circumstances. They should also be aware of and understand the job of management and the business challenges that they may face. The following are the criteria that should guide the trainers' selection:

- › Concrete understanding and knowledge of social dialogue and processes involved (including consultation and negotiation).
- › Hands on experience of engaging in or facilitating social dialogue highly desirable.
- › Understanding of the local labour laws and practices related to social dialogue, freedom of association and collective bargaining.
- › Understanding ILO standards and conventions related to Freedom of Association, Collective Bargaining and Worker Consultation
- › Understanding of the garment industry in its complexity, including sensitivity to structural unequal power dynamics and in-depth knowledge about how those translate into the socio-cultural context in which the training is implemented.
- › Ability to demonstrate expertise and/or capacity for adult teaching methods.

- › Ability to be creative and flexible in adapting the training materials to the needs of the audience.
- › Background in interactive, learner-centered training methods (e.g., games, dramas, and role plays).
- › Sensitivity to linguistic variations across socio-economic backgrounds and ability to communicate in participants' language:
 - › Ability to empathise with factory management and to adapt the training's language to a more formal register.
 - › Ability to empathise with garment workers and translate theoretical concepts into a language that is familiar to them. This includes being able to support the delivery of knowledge with examples based on experiences that workers can relate to.

What experts say:

Participants should understand that they can trust the trainers because of their living experiences, and not only because of the knowledge they bring to the training. When interacting with workers, labour activists might be fitting for this role. However, a labour activist trainer should not just talk politics: they should be concrete, rooting the knowledge delivered in experiences lived by the workers.

SETTING UP THE TRAINING

Establishing a safe and comfortable space for training

A note on in person vs virtual training:

As a SD training necessarily focuses on improving dialogue between parties, in-person training is the highly recommended option. Face to face interaction allows participants to engage in interactive activities, connect with and learn from other participations and practice simulated in person dialogue. Conducting this type of training online would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, and the impact of such a training is questionable. However given the current and ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is recognized that in-person training may not be safe or possible. In this case it will be necessary to work with the trainers and supplier to determine if an online or virtual option is feasible and adapt the training accordingly. Postponing the training until it can be done in person may be the better option.

Ideally, a SD training should happen offsite from the factory, in a neutral space. Experience shows that this ensures participants are less distracted and become more committed to the training.

If offsite training is not possible, and training has to happen in the factory premises, it should be ensured that:

- › Managers are not reachable by phone and can fully concentrate on the training.
- › Workers are in a quiet space, where they are not distracted by seeing or hearing their colleagues work while they are trained.
- › The room in which the training happens is spacious enough for participants to be able to sit in a circle and to move around. It should be possible to change the setting of the space by removing or repositioning furniture.
- › The learning process begins with building participants' **trust towards trainers** (i.e., trainers are not auditors) – that is why *participants should know that the issues raised during the training will not be disclosed to any sourcing brand*. Ensure that management are not suspicious of the fact that

workers receive separate training. The trainer should gain the trust of the audience by showing that they are knowledgeable and can be respected, and that they have a real interest for what happens at the factory floor. But most importantly, participants should learn how to **trust each other**. That is not an easy, straightforward process. Power dynamics between managers and workers are unbalanced, and the two groups tend to perceive their own interests as opposed or different to the other side's. However, building trust among participants should be the core of the training – the foundational step without which SD cannot happen. When engaging participants, at the very start of the training, this should be made clear.

What experts say

Bringing together management from different factories in a neutral, off-site space, and following the same approach for workers representatives and supervisors, has shown to be beneficial for the learning experience of all participants. It allows the trainer to compare benefits across suppliers. The moments in the breaks are also important because participants can share personal experiences with each other in a more informal way.

Who to involve in the training?

Select the participants. Depending on the existing dialogue channels, select and break down the different groups of participants (worker representatives, management, human resources staff, supervisors etc). Participants should be selected prior to the training date and informed on the reasoning of the training (and assured they will be paid for their time). Deliver training sessions tailored to the role and responsibilities of each group. The number of participants per session/group should be kept fairly small, around 12 people. The number of worker representatives trained should not be less than the management group.

Gender. Ideally, the group of worker representatives should be gender representative. This will not always happen spontaneously, so ensure that all participants (including female workers, but especially management) are

aware about the importance of considering female worker representatives as legitimate as their male counterparts. Training modules addressing gender-specific issues and power dynamics should be tailored to the local socio-cultural context.

Management. Ensure that production managers, as well as HR and CSR staff, are present. Participants from management should include the people who will be engaging in dialogue with worker representatives – if this includes top management (such as general directors) they should also be included in the training. Trainers should ensure they know which management colleagues to include in the training, based on who has decision making power and will be involved in regular dialogue with worker representatives. Management should receive additional separate training, before being included in joint workers-management sessions.

What experts say

Explain to management what is expected of them. The discussion should not be moral, but practical: explain that there are clear laws, as well as expectations from the buyers; social dialogue is key for sustainable development and has been linked to increased productivity. This type of skill building can give the supplier a competitive advantage, or conversely their business could be hurt if they are not willing to engage. Trainers should be sensitive enough to understand with which individual managers they can start discussing moral aspects too.

Not only elected workers representatives. When selecting participants, also involve general workers that colleagues define as potentially good representatives. In any factory there are natural spokespeople, informal leaders among the employees. Prior to the training date, trainers can organise short interviews with workers to understand who they believe would stand up for other colleagues. Sometimes, workers with potential leadership inclinations do not stand for election to the workers committee. On the other hand, random selection of workers participants does not guarantee impactful results.

How much time to allocate to training?

When choosing the time to implement the training, organisers should always ensure:

- ▶ Care responsibilities (particularly for women workers) and any other possible after-work responsibility. Training should always happen during work hours.
- ▶ The supplier's production timelines are taken into account. If production pressure is an obstacle to the delivery of the training, the training should not be conducted until the factory, management and worker reps can all commit to full participation.
- ▶ There shall be no deductions from participants wages for the time spent in training. All time in training should happen during work hours and therefore compensated as normal.

▶

The ideal timeline

A SD training should happen over a period of ideally 1-1.5 year and could be divided into three phases: preparation, main training, and follow up. This timeline does not have to be linear – many tasks can be executed simultaneously. The following is a suggested timeline however the exact schedule should be determined by the organisation delivering the training.

Suggested Training Timeline					
Phase 1 – PREPARATION			Approx 3 months		
	Find and engage with training organisation	Engage with Supplier	Trainer preparations – including training of trainers, module adaptation, material preparation		Baseline and needs assessment
WHO	Brand	Brand + trainer/training organisation	Trainers		Trainer
TIMING	1 month	2 months	3 days – 2 weeks		1 day
Phase 2 – MAIN TRAINING SESSIONS			Approx 3 months		
	Train managers	Train supervisors	Train worker reps	Additional days for female	Train workers + managers/supervisors jointly
WHO	Trainers	Trainers	Trainers		Trainers
TIMING	1-2 full days	1-2 full days	3-5 full days	2 full days	2 full days
Phase 3 – FOLLOW UP			Approx 1 year		
	3-4 follow ups over 1 year of training; additional follow ups after end of training		Endline assessment		
WHO	Trainer		Trainer		
TIMING	1 year		1 day		

A few key points:

- ▶ Before, during and after the implementation of the training, the sourcing brand(s) should maintain their commitment to promoting freedom of association and creating an enabling environment for the training through improved sourcing dialogue, purchasing practices and maintaining long term business relations with their supplier(s). It is highly unlikely that a brand is best positioned to deliver in the training to management or workers – this is in fact not the role of a brand. Brands should partner with experienced organisations or trainers for this.
- ▶ Firstly, the brand, with the support of an experienced trainer, should engage its supplier over a period of 3 months (indicatively) in a conversation about the benefits of a workplace SD training. That is the time to make the business case about SD and for building top management trust and initial awareness.
- ▶ Once an agreement is established, organise an introductory meeting with managers. That is the time for managers to be guided by the trainer in sharing and reflecting about daily challenges, worries, concerns about the training, and current management practices, so that they can be addressed during the training. This information will serve as a baseline for the monitoring and evaluation of changes in management behaviour.

Keep in mind:

Management's training is key: if they are not equipped and on board, it does not matter how well trained the worker representatives are. Social dialogue requires both sides to be engaged, committed, and trained.

- ▶ A minimum of three full days of training should be devolved to sessions for workers representatives only. That is the time for participants to strengthen their knowledge about their roles and responsibilities as representatives of workers, and to learn about consultation and negotiation techniques.
- ▶ Female workers-focused sessions should happen over two full days, in addition to the general worker representatives' sessions. That is the time for

this group of participants to focus on learning how to collect and raise female workers specific issues to management. Although female workers should be given a time and space to do so, it is important that all training modules (for all audiences) address female workers' needs and challenges in accessing representative structures and grievance channels.

- ▶ A workplace SD training can be impactful only if worker representatives and management are brought together in joint sessions, following their individual training. That should happen over one to two full days. It is the time for both groups to put in practice their learnings in a worker-management consultative meeting simulation.
- ▶ During the training cycle (1-1.5 year), follow ups should be organised: trainers should go back to the factory and engage with participants for informal assessments/monitoring of the current situation. Trainers should also be encouraging towards participants to put into practice the learnings from the training sessions. If it is noted that either worker representatives or management/supervisors are unclear on the role or unengaged, more formal follow up trainings should be conducted. This period and the follow ups are the opportunity for the trainers and brand to ensure that the training and process of dialogue is being embedded in the factory. Exactly what these sessions should look like will very much depend on how each factory is doing with implementation.

WORKSHOP CONTENT

A workplace SD training should equip workers and management to understand the value of gender representative SD and build the skills necessary to engage in information sharing, consultation, and negotiation. It should also promote freedom of association and collective bargaining. Knowledge delivery and capacity building should happen in parallel. Privileging one over the other carries the risk of creating frustrations among participants (e.g., if workers become aware of representation benefits, but do not know how to engage with management, set meeting agendas, etc).

What participants need to know

Worker representatives and all management

Bipartite SD: what it is, why it is important and who the participants are

The benefits of workplace social dialogue: for workers (especially female workers) and management

Independent worker representation (TU & worker reps): what worker reps and trade unions do, why are they important for workers' rights and how they function

Gender representative social dialogue: why gender balanced social dialogue is important and how social dialogue promotes the rights of women workers

Freedom of association & collective bargaining: what these rights are and why they are important; focus on relevant local and international laws: rights and responsibilities of managers and workers

Factory-level grievance mechanisms as SD driver: what is a good mechanism; how workers can participate in its design and monitoring; raising or receiving grievances is always positive

Focus for workers representatives:

- › Being a worker representative: roles and responsibilities

- › Labour law (basic knowledge of relevant parts of the law)
- › Gender issues in the factory. The workers involved in the training might approach female workers to learn more about those issues. Focus on: child-care and links to working hours and overtime, maternity leave, gender pay gap, gender-based violence

Focus for management:

- › Workers' voice and workers' engagement: what they are and why they are important
- › Labour law (basic knowledge of relevant parts of the law)
- › Management style: importance of managing workers through a non-authoritative approach (focus on supervisors)
- › Importance of collaborating with worker representatives for decision making and grievance handling

For supervisors only:

- › Importance of passing information accurately from managers to workers and vice versa

What participants should be able to do

Worker representatives and all management

- › Problem solving
- › Consultation and negotiation techniques
- › Focus on gender-representative worker representation: how to conduct democratic elections, how to ensure that the gender distribution of elected members is proportional to the workforce
- › Consultative meeting skills: listening to each other; agenda setting; minutes writing; consultation in a meeting; defining a solution among different points of view; suggesting the solution; self-reflection on how the

consultation happened; monitoring and evaluation of process and outcomes

- › How to collaborate in grievance handling investigation and resolution

Focus for worker representatives:

- › How to read the national law
- › How to review factory policies (focus on gender-specific policies)
- › How to apply the factory law
- › How to communicate with managers and other workers (focus on consultation with female workers)
- › How to solve problems: listening to colleagues, investigating, resolving grievances
- › How to participate in meetings
- › How to report back to the other workers
- › How to recognise when an issue should be raised in a bipartite meeting (factory-wide issue) or raised to a supervisor or other staff (issue of individual worker)

Focus for management:

- › How to listen to workers
- › How to listen to female workers
- › How to integrate workers' views in decision-making
- › How to collaborate with worker representatives to take decisions and solve grievances

Supervisors only:

- › How to pass information accurately from managers to workers and vice versa

What experts say:

One of the cores of a good SD training should be to increase workers' confidence. Many workers do not have a high opinion of their abilities. By acquiring the skills above, alongside the patient, constant encouragement of the trainer(s), workers can become more confident – this is key for empowering workers to engage in SD. Female workers' confidence needs to be addressed particularly carefully, as the perception of their own capacities is influenced by unbalanced power dynamics inside and outside of the workplace.

Methods

The methods used in a workplace SD training are fundamental for the success of the learning experience and its longer-term impact. Experiential learning (or 'learn by doing'), learner-centered approach and active learning methods are proven to be the most successful approaches to adult learning. Workers and management should be engaged in practical exercises, games, group works, dramas and role plays. Training is most effective when participants are not taught in a didactic way, but when they are the creators of their own learning experience through their active involvement in the training. The role of the trainer is key in guiding this process, ensuring that all participants are comfortable, supporting those who encounter challenges, and encouraging everyone to take part in the activities.

What experts say:

Most factory managers and workers do not value abstract knowledge, which is also difficult to assimilate – especially for individuals coming from a low socio-economic background. Avoid using long power point presentations, and instead keep the slides and written parts to the very minimum. Engage participants through practical exercises, role plays and dramas. Adults learn by doing and remember best through repetition (at least 3 or 4 times during a single session) of a limited selection of key concepts. Every concept should be rephrased creatively every time it is repeated. After repetition, test the knowledge with a short quiz or practical exercise.

Key points:

- › Break down the most important concepts in smaller, more easily digestible notions (e.g. social dialogue = reciprocal listening, collaboration to find solutions to factory's and workers' issues, negotiation to improve working conditions etc.). Do not just "tell" the concepts, but "show/demonstrate" them through plays and dramas.
- › Key topics should be brought up consistently during the training, in creative ways.
- › The trainer should provide participants with tasks to put in practice after the training sessions. For example, ask workers to talk to their supervisors about a small issue and report back on the comments they receive.
- › The trainer should provide participants with feedback and encouragement, acknowledging that concrete situations are not like the simulations in the training room. Participants will encounter challenges in putting in practice what they learnt. Trained workers might not even have the chance to do so, as they might be hindered by managers.
- › Make participants be physically active and involved, as that helps assimilating the learnings.
- › Use the same methodology with workers and managers. Justify this to the managers by saying that in this way they know exactly what the workers are learning too. This ensures trust from the management side.
- › Provide participants with real life examples and/or study-cases of functional social dialogue processes in other suppliers (but into participants' local labor context), effective grievance handling procedures that were beneficial for the supplier and the workers, etc.
- › The trainer should understand what topics and issues participants are passionate and/or most worried about and adapt the training content on those.

MONITORING AND FOLLOW UPS

Training should not be thought of as a one-time event that will automatically lead to change. It is fundamental that all involved groups (brand, trainers, and participants) commit to common objectives and outcomes, follow up sessions and continuous (informal) monitoring. Monitoring allows us to understand what short- and long-term impacts the training has, if it has achieved the stated objectives and whether it would be beneficial to enhance efforts and devolve resources towards a certain area that might need improvement.

As a formal monitoring and evaluation practice, one baseline and one end line assessments should be conducted before and after the training. As an informal monitoring practice, trainers should regularly (maximum every 3 months) engage participants in follow up sessions during the first year of the programme. That is the moment for trainers to observe and interview participants about changes in management behaviour and practices, etc., as well as to encourage participants (especially workers) to put in practice the key learnings. Continuous encouragement is key to reinforce workers' self-confidence, but also their trust in the trainers and in the SD programme.

Possible monitoring tools

Quantitative tools:

- › Baseline: workers engagement survey and management beliefs and practices survey.
- › Endline: workers engagement survey and management beliefs and practices survey.
- › The supplier and worker representatives should be involved into the monitoring by asking managers to monitor labour turnover rates, changes in unauthorized absences, increase in productivity and quality of products. The collected data should be revised and confirmed by worker representatives.

- › Measure the number of grievances raised. An increase of reported accidents, structural and individual issues is an indicator of the positive impact of the training (Important to raise management awareness about this).

Qualitative tools:

- › Focus groups, interviews, qualitative on-site research.
- › Monitor collective bargaining agreement.
- › Measure the responsiveness of management and workers' perceptions that their grievances are being redressed fairly and swiftly.
- › Check whether meetings minutes are available, and that their quality is consistent over time.
- › Collect worker representatives' perspective about the best ways to monitor changes, and integrate their suggestions in the monitoring plan.

CONCLUSIONS

Social dialogue needs long term efforts to be established and/or strengthened, and to eventually lead to increased freedom of association. A workplace SD training is an input, but only the engagement of all parties will lead to real impacts. Ensuring that key preconditions are met, and that the training contents and methods are tailored to the participants' needs, will facilitate the effectiveness of the training. Brands looking to support workplace social dialogue training at the suppliers they work at should partner with local training organisations to ensure the above parameters are met in all social dialogue trainings.

The following two tables summarise the most important parameters that should guide the design and implementation of a workplace SD training.

Summary: indicative parameters for an impactful SD training

B = brands

S = suppliers

T = trainers

A = all parties (brands, suppliers, trainers, participants)

	Non negotiables	Local context considerations where applicable
Pre-conditions	B: Promote an enabling environment for SD (see Fair Wear Freedom of Association Brand Guide 2021)	
	B&S: Commit to cover the costs of training and workers' time	
	A: Commit to long term engagement	
	S&T: Ensure participants are aware of training goals and motivated to participate	
	T: Assess current social dialogue structures	Consider national law requirements for factory-level dialogue structures (e.g., bipartite committees)
	T: Expertise for SD training	Expertise on local labour law and local context (gender, socio-cultural)

	Non negotiables	Local context considerations where applicable
During the training	Space: quiet, comfortable	
	Content: tailor contents to audiences	Tailor contents to local context: gender, management-workers relations, etc.
	Time: consider workers' other/care responsibilities; consider production timeline	
	Methods: interactive, learner-centred approach; dramas, role plays, etc.	
	Process: management trained first; management and workers trained in parallel tracks; final joint sessions workers-management	
During and after the training	Assessment: baseline and end line before and after programme	
	Follow-ups: 3-4 follow up sessions during the year of training	

Timeline

Follow ups refer to the first cycle of training; there should be ideally refresher trainings on an ongoing basis, after the end of the training. The following is an indicative timeline :

Suggested Training Timeline					
Phase 1 – PREPARATION			Approx 3 months		
	Find and engage with training organisation	Engage with Supplier	Trainer preparations – including training of trainers, module adaptation, material preparation		Baseline and needs assessment
WHO	Brand	Brand + trainer/training organisation	Trainers		Trainer
TIMING	1 month	2 months	3 days – 2 weeks		1 day
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	3-4 follow ups over 1 year of training; additional follow ups after end of training		Endline assessment		
WHO	Trainer		Trainer		
TIMING	1 year		1 day		

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Have further questions around freedom of association and social dialogue? Check out Fair Wear's [Freedom of Association and social dialogue Brand Guide](#), which includes further resources.



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For more information, please visit www.fairwear.org

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