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**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
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# Transferring Known Techniques to an Overlooked Sector



A woman wearing a red headscarf and a black face mask with white polka dots is working at a pink industrial machine in a factory. She is looking down at her work. The machine has various buttons and a control panel. The background shows other parts of the factory, including a white light fixture.

While many processes and support structures in Bangladesh are implemented for the textile and garment industry, the smaller leather and footwear sector is often overlooked. Processes, such as trainings on digital platforms, like LIMA or courses at NOSHTRI, have been designed for the prominent textile and garment sector, working on making the industry comply with international standards. However, the leather and footwear sector on the other hand has areas that have been neglected.



## Making Use of Existing Techniques

GIZ therefore aimed to transfer processes that are already common in the textile and garment sector to the leather and footwear sector. Under the Factory Improvement Programme (FIP), one of the important supports provided to the factories was an initial assessment to identify compliance gaps, weak points, and risks in accordance with the social and environmental standards for further improvement.

Most of the workers were previously unaware or did not know about their salary structure, overtime payment or leave regulations. They were not aware of the resignation or termination process, maternity benefits, dining and canteen benefits and the duties of safety officer & welfare officer.



**Leathergoods And Footwear Manufacturers  
& Exporters Association of Bangladesh**



## Knowledge Transfer for Compliance

GIZ worked with a total of 100 factories dividing into two phases. Each phase encompassing 50 factories. FIP covers a wide range of areas including social management and employment conditions, wages and benefits, maternity leave, dining and canteen facilities, occupational health, electrical safety, fire safety and chemical management. As the program covers all these areas i.e. social, technical, chemical etc. factories can gain an understanding of the compliance standards of various audits and buyers.

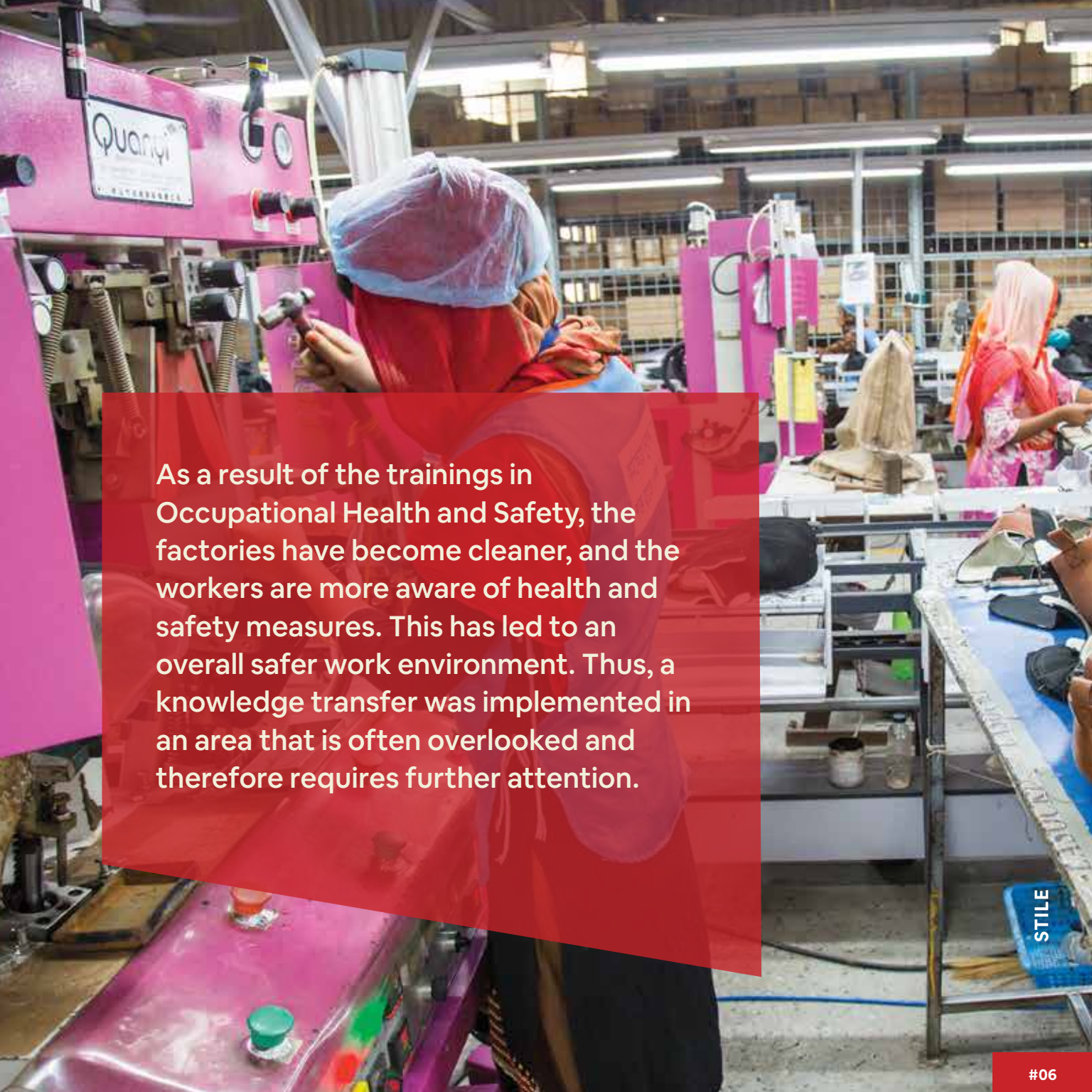
With the support of a consultancy, GIZ prepared a number of policy guidelines. These included the following:

- Employees' personal files
- Service book of workers including their service history
- Working hour policy
- Overtime policy
- Leave record keeping policy, wages and benefits policy
- Maternity benefit policy
- Dining and canteen policy

As various kinds of chemicals like adhesives, hardeners, softeners and thinners are being used in the production floors of leathersgoods and footwear factories, an appropriate chemical inventory with appropriate storage system is now maintained. Factories were instructed to provide proper training for those who are assigned to chemical handling and storage process. Utilization of PPEs for chemical handling & storage was ensured.



After completing the initial, follow-up and final assessment, the Golden Union Leather Products Ltd. Company upgraded by a grade. This means that the initial assessment revealed that the electrical installation of the factory was in a hazardous condition, electrical layout diagram was not found, proper grounding or earthing was not done for the generator and substation, utilization of appropriate PPEs were not ensured. Additionally, there were instances of non-compliance with national labour laws, including the absence of wage deduction. The management provided a CAP to upgrade their compliance status on those issues and our consultant team both social and technical guided the management to comply.

A woman wearing a red hijab and a blue hairnet is operating a pink industrial machine in a factory. The machine has a label that reads "Quanyi". In the background, other workers in hijabs are visible at their workstations. The factory environment appears clean and organized.

As a result of the trainings in Occupational Health and Safety, the factories have become cleaner, and the workers are more aware of health and safety measures. This has led to an overall safer work environment. Thus, a knowledge transfer was implemented in an area that is often overlooked and therefore requires further attention.

Extra information on the factory assessment progress:

The so-called factory assessment progress is based on a grading system

- A=Higher grade and
- D= Lower grade

## Phase 01

50 factories were enrolled in FIP. Eight factories improved from grade B to A, five factories improved from grade C to A, one factory improved from grade D to A. 1 factory was upgraded from a C to B, four factories were upgraded from D to B. factories were upgraded from D to C. The remaining 22 factories remained in the same grade, but their score increased.

## Phase 02

50 different factories were assessed and consecutively worked on improving at regular intervals. The follow-up stage is ongoing. Five factories were improved from C to B, one factory was improved from D to C, one factory was improved from D to C.

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