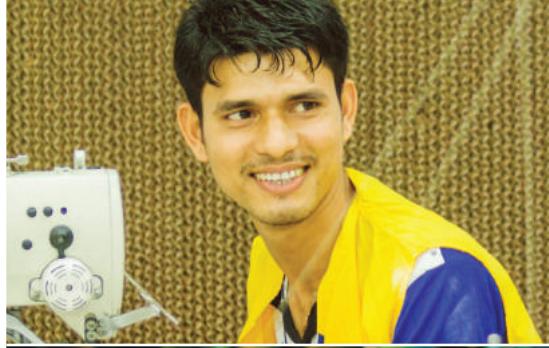


An Industry Transformed: Leaving a Legacy of Safety in Bangladesh's Garment Sector

Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety
Fifth Annual Report
November 2018



ALLIANCE
FOR BANGLADESH WORKER SAFETY



Message from the Executive Director, Amb. Jim Moriarty

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

Just over five and a half years ago, the eight-story Rana Plaza factory complex collapsed on the outskirts of Dhaka, Bangladesh, killing 1,134 people and injuring thousands more. It was a devastating symbol of an industry synonymous with tragedy, that had already seen the likes of the deadly 2012 Tazreen Fashions fire—an industry in which safety only came as an afterthought. It also marked the start of our journey to transform Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry into one of the safest in the world.

Now, after five years, we have reached a turning point in the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety's (Alliance) bold mission. Initial remediation of the nearly 700 factories under our purview is nearly complete. More than 1.6 million workers, security guards and factory managers have been trained—and retrained—in fire safety. The Alliance's 24-hour confidential worker helpline reaches more than 1.5 million workers, with plans to expand to millions more across the entire ready-made garment industry. And Alliance-supported Worker Safety Committees have now given workers a seat at the table to discuss important workplace concerns with factory management.

As an organization made up of 29 brands and retailers that are competitors in the marketplace, we can proudly say that working together, we have helped establish a culture of safety among Alliance-affiliated factories and across the industry.

We are grateful to our partners, without whom much of this success would not have been possible. We thank the factory owners that have invested substantial resources in improving safety in their factories, our NGO and civil society partners that have helped advance the cause of worker safety, the government of Bangladesh, and the numerous technical consultants, industry associations and other organizations that have supported us in this work.

Beginning in 2019, most Alliance member brands plan to work through a locally-based organization to collectively monitor safety in the factories from which they source. Safety must always be an ongoing effort—and for our member brands, it will remain a top priority long beyond the Alliance's departure.

As we close our tenure in Bangladesh, I am proud to lay out in this report the achievements we have made over the past five years, and share the stories of the people who have helped drive them. Thank you for your unwavering support of our mission.

Sincerely,

Ambassador James F. Moriarty (ret.)
Executive Director, the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety





Table of Contents

Progress at a Glance	7
Alliance by the Numbers	9
Remediation	11
Remediation Progress	13
Suspensions	19
Training & Empowerment Initiatives	21
Basic Fire Safety Training	21
Security Guard Fire Safety & Responsibility Training	23
Mid-Level Management & Factory Owner Safety Training	25
Graduate-level Engineer Training	27
Worker Safety Committees	29
Expanding Training Programs Across Bangladesh	33
<i>Amader Kotha</i> , the Alliance Helpline	35
Leaving a Legacy of Safety in Bangladesh	43
Closing Letter from the Alliance Board of Directors	45
Alliance Member Companies and Supporting Associations	46



Progress at a Glance

After five years, the Alliance is proud to have dramatically improved safety for millions of men and women who earn a living in Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry, and to have created a culture of safety that can be sustained over the long term.



93 percent of remediation is complete across Alliance-affiliated factories.

428 factories have achieved completion of their initial Corrective Action Plans.



Nearly 1.6 million workers have been trained in fire safety.

More than 28,000 security guards have been trained in fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures.



More than 1.5 million workers in 1,017 factories now have access to the Alliance's 24-hour confidential worker helpline, which has been transferred to local leadership and will soon be available to factories across the entire industry in Bangladesh.



Worker Safety Committees have been formed and are operating in **181 factories**, giving workers a seat at the table with management in resolving safety issues within their factories.



The Alliance **developed local training providers** to expand its worker training and safety committee programs beyond Alliance-affiliated factories and create a sustainable ecosystem of safety in Bangladesh.



Safety reforms have **rebuilt confidence in Bangladesh** among foreign buyers and solidified the country's standing as a global leader in garment exports.



Alliance by the Numbers

714 Total Factories

654 Currently Active Factories

1,305,310 Total Workers

428 Factories with all Material Items (Initial Corrective Action Plans) Completed

93% of all Remediation Items Completed

90% of High-priority Remediation Items Completed

178 Factories Suspended

1,596,682 Workers Provided with Initial Basic Safety Training

1,305,532 Workers Provided with Refresher Training

28,559 Security Guards Provided with Initial Fire Safety Training

22,631 Security Guards Provided with Refresher Training

1,508,007 Workers with Access to Helpline

87% Percent of Helpline Issues Resolved

6,676 Workers who have Received Wage Compensation

181 Factories with Democratically-elected Safety Committees



Remediation

Factory monitoring and remediation is at the heart of the Alliance's mission to dramatically improve safety in Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector. Creating safe workplaces for the millions of women and men who work in Alliance-affiliated factories is critical to establishing a sustainable culture of safety—because no worker should have to risk his or her life to earn a living.

"The major sustainable impact that the Alliance and partners have made is to raise fire safety awareness in the garment sector."

— Kathleen Almand, Vice President, National Fire Protection Association

At the time of the Tazreen Fashions fire in November 2012 and the Rana Plaza disaster in April 2013, consistent standards for factory safety had not been implemented in Bangladesh. The Alliance worked collaboratively with local and international experts—including the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), the Bangladesh government's National Tripartite Plan of Action (NTPA), the Accord on Fire and Building Safety (Accord) and other partners—to develop the Fire Safety and Structural Integrity Standard, a strict set of guidelines based on the Bangladesh National Building Code, to guide factory remediation. The standard is used by the Alliance, the Accord and the NTPA in all factory inspections across Bangladesh.



After completing independent inspections of all factories from which Alliance members source, individualized Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) were developed for each factory. These CAPs outlined the detailed structural, fire and electrical safety improvements required to be made by each factory in order to create a safe workplace for their workers and drastically reduce the chances of any injuries or other incidents. CAPs also give special priority to issues most critical for life safety, such as reinforcing structural columns and installing fire doors and sprinkler systems. Those factories that do not comply with the actions outlined in their CAPs, or do not make the required reforms within a reasonable time frame, are suspended by the Alliance and removed from our list of compliant factories.



Remediation Progress

Over the past five years, the Alliance has completed remediation in the vast majority of its affiliated factories, marking an enormous step forward in creating a safer industry for millions of workers. Currently, 93 percent of total remediation items are complete across all Alliance-affiliated factories, and 428 factories have completed their initial CAPs, with new CAP completions occurring almost daily. These numbers underscore the commitment of factory owners to instituting real change in the industry.

“Workplace safety in Bangladesh’s garment sector has witnessed a dramatic transformation due to inspection and remediation by two foreign agencies, the Accord and the Alliance.”

— *Marcia Bernicat, Outgoing US Ambassador to Bangladesh*

The pace of CAP completion has accelerated dramatically during the past two years as many factories that began several years ago are now nearing completion of remediation. At this pace, we expect to complete CAPs in the vast majority of factories in which the Alliance leads remediation by the time the Alliance transitions its operations this December. The exceptions will primarily be new factories that join the Alliance or expand shortly before the transition.

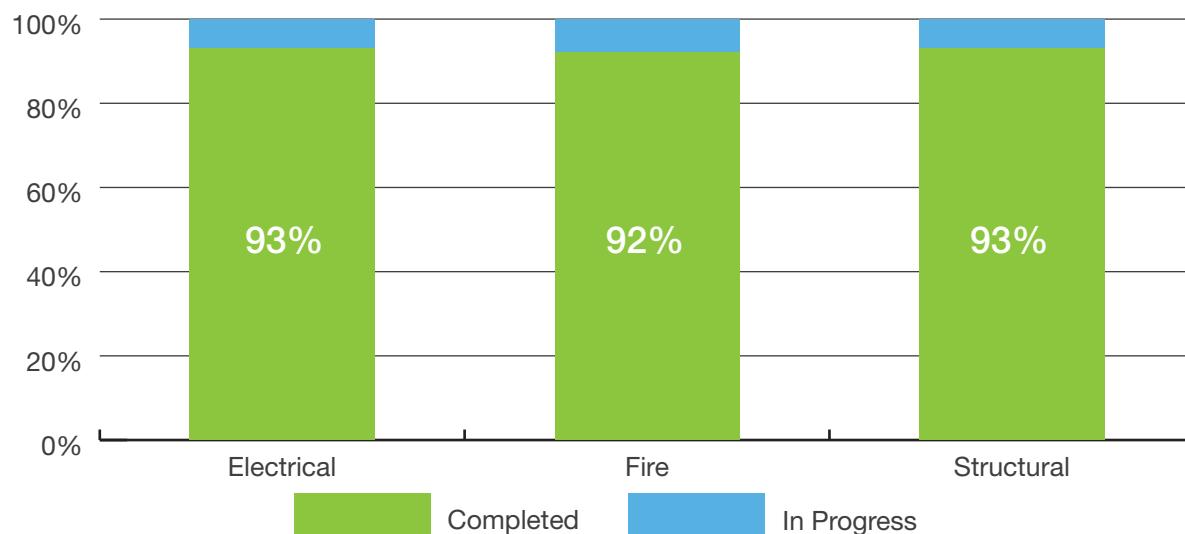
Factories Completing Initial Corrective Action Plans (CAPs)





Another key indicator of remediation progress is the completion of high priority items, defined as safety deficiencies that are most critical to life safety, such as the lack of sprinkler systems and fire doors, or the presence of structurally unstable columns. While these items are often the most costly and burdensome to factory owners, for workers they can mean the difference between life and death. Currently, 90 percent of these high-priority items have been completed across all Alliance-affiliated factories, a further sign of the commitment of factory owners to creating safe workplaces.

Status of Remediation Items Across Alliance-Affiliated Factories



In a small number of cases, it has been necessary to temporarily cease factory operations until repairs are completed. Over the past five years, the Alliance has partnered with factory owners to provide wage compensation to nearly 6,700 workers displaced by temporary factory closures.



Case Study: Remediation

Initial inspections of factories reveal specific safety concerns, which are included in factories' Corrective Action Plans. The following photos show several before and after photos from an Alliance-affiliated factory in Chittagong.

Condition in December 2015



Before remediation, the factory had a locking, collapsible gate with no easy opening mechanism in case of an emergency.

Condition in March 2018



The factory has replaced all exit gates with side-hinged swinging doors equipped with panic bars for easy exit from inside the factory, even when locked.

Condition in June 2015



Before remediation, the combustible storage area was not separated from workers on the factory floor.

Condition in March 2018



The factory has properly separated the combustible storage area with a fire-rated door.



Suspensions

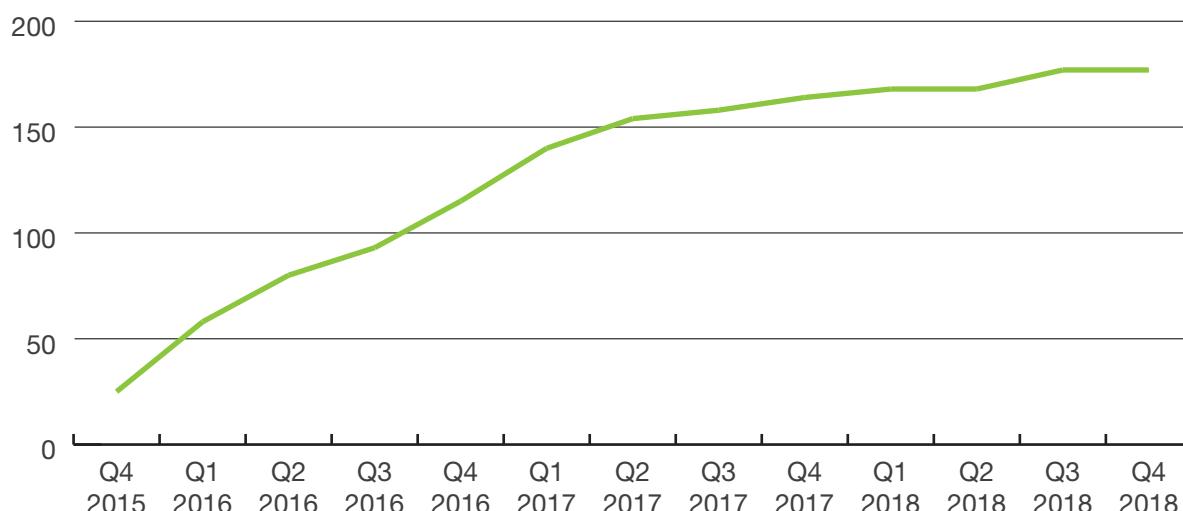
The Alliance works closely with factory owners and managers to provide support to complete all safety improvements required in their CAPs. When, through our regular independent inspections, we find that a factory has not made adequate remediation progress or is not complying with our worker training or helpline programs, we escalate the issue and warn the factory that further inaction will result in its suspension from the Alliance-approved factory list. Alliance member brands have committed to source only from factories that comply with the Alliance's strict standards—so if the situation remains unresolved after multiple roundtable meetings and follow-up visits, the Alliance suspends that factory. If a suspended factory makes sufficient progress on remediation it can apply for readmission to the Alliance list.

“People need to have three numbers in mind: zero, zero and zero. That is the number of electrical, structural or fire-related deaths that have occurred in Alliance-affiliated factories since our work began.”

— Jim Moriarty, Executive Director

To date, the Alliance has suspended 178 factories for failing to make adequate remediation progress. The rate of suspensions has slowed drastically in the past year, however, with just 13 suspensions in 2018. This decline in non-compliant factories, along with the dramatic increase in CAP completions, shows that a foundation of safety is becoming ingrained across the industry.

Factories Suspended by the Alliance





Training & Empowerment Initiatives

The Alliance believes that safety education and training for workers, security guards and factory management is critical to building a culture of safety in Bangladesh that is sustainable over the long term. Over the past five years, we have made substantial investments toward creating a knowledgeable and empowered workforce through our groundbreaking training programs. Now, millions of workers and security guards in Alliance-affiliated factories can recognize safety concerns and respond to emergencies quickly and effectively, which has translated directly into lives saved.

“The Alliance Basic Fire Safety Training has resulted in a significant increase in worker knowledge and awareness of fire safety.”

— *The University of Texas Health Science Center School of Public Health*

Basic Fire Safety Training

The Alliance, in collaboration with our partners, pioneered a basic safety training program for workers and factory management that teaches them the basics of fire prevention, fire protection and emergency evacuation. These interactive trainings educate participants on the roles specific to workers and management, and outline the communications channels for reporting fires and hazards, including the Alliance helpline. To date, nearly 1.6 million workers across 1,103 factories have been trained in basic fire safety, and nearly 1.3 million have received a refresher course, which has helped keep the principles top of mind and made sure that new employees also receive training.

Perhaps the most important indication of success is that hundreds of ready-made garment factories outside of the Alliance’s purview have begun following the Alliance’s training program, a highly encouraging sign for the uptake of worker education across Bangladesh. We are actively working with our local partners to encourage the growth of worker empowerment programs across the entire industry.



Sample training materials provided by the Alliance



Case Study: Training & Empowering Workers

Alpha Clothing, a factory located in Ashulia, has been a shining example of the success of the Alliance's worker training and empowerment programs.

At the time of its CAP completion certification visit in July of 2018, the factory had completed 50 out of the 50 required basic fire training sessions for its roughly 1,500 employees. Since then, it has completed an additional 22 new sessions for 620 new employees. All three of the Alliance-certified trainers that originally conducted safety courses still work in the factory, a sign that management has created an environment conducive to the education and retention of workers. The factory maintains an up-to-date database of training activities, including photo forms and attendance sheets.

In a recent visit by the Alliance training team, 90 employees—both workers and managers—were interviewed about training activities. Ninety percent could articulate key fire safety content and learnings, including the importance of maintaining unobstructed aisles and fire exits. The findings indicate that both workers and senior management have a broad understanding of their responsibilities in creating and preserving a safe workplace.

Security Guard Fire Safety & Responsibility Training

Factory security guards play a critical leadership role during emergencies. Beginning in April 2015, the Alliance launched a training program for security guards that educates them to identify hazards that could cause fires and make sure that evacuation routes remain clear. Most importantly, security guards are taught to prioritize human lives—rather than property—during fires, and lead safe and orderly evacuations. More than 28,000 security guards have undergone these trainings, and more than 22,000 have received refresher trainings.

"We have learned that the safety of lives is more important than the safety of property."

— MD. Iqbal Hossain, Security Guard, R-Pac Ltd.

For both worker and security guard training programs, the Alliance conducts consistent follow-up to verify that factories are holding regular, effective training sessions, and to provide any support needed to improve the quality of these sessions or overcome any obstacles to the training process.



10/10/15

How to Ensure All Safety Arrangement that are installed in factory & It's maintenance—

- 1- Organize a Central Safety Monitoring team at Corporate head office.
- 2- They will make a checklist & monthly checklist monitoring Program and Carryout checking Accordingly.
- 3- During monitoring they will check all Safety devices Like— F.P.S. (F.D.S., Pump Sets, Sprinkler, Control panel. They also Carryout test run of all Systems.

Mid-Level Management & Factory Owner Safety Training

While educated workers and security guards are critical to creating safer workplaces, the Alliance identified that safety awareness was lacking among many mid-level managers in factories across Bangladesh. To address this knowledge gap, the Alliance worked with partners from government, industry and academia to develop a custom safety curriculum and training program for mid-management—currently being rolled out—that provides them with the tools and awareness to recognize safety concerns and address issues raised by workers. Managers gain a comprehensive understanding of safety—including management systems, roles and responsibilities, root cause analysis, sustainable remediation and other issues—allowing them to take greater ownership within their factories and maintain safer conditions for workers.

“Before, we ignored some safety concerns, but after the Alliance training we learned not to ignore even minor issues regarding safety.”

— *Md. Kamruzzaman, Senior Operator, R-Pac Ltd.*

To encourage a culture of safety that spans the entire factory hierarchy, the Alliance also pioneered monthly safety seminars for factory owners. Participants discuss safety-related issues in a setting that encourages group discussion and knowledge exchange. Alliance staff facilitate the sessions, guiding managers and owners through a series of discussion questions on the importance of remediating factories, training workers and creating safe workplaces for their employees. Alliance staff provide technical input on specific safety issues and challenge participants to think more broadly about their role in building and enforcing a culture of safety. Participants are encouraged to ask questions and share their own experiences, allowing them to learn from each other, as well as experts in the field.



Graduate-level Engineer Training

A major challenge to enforcing fire safety standards in Bangladesh is the lack of engineers with sufficient education and knowledge to carry out inspections and factory remediation. To address this issue, the Alliance partnered with the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) to train graduate-level engineers in advanced fire safety in Bangladesh.

In 2016, the Alliance funded six engineering professors from BUET to travel to the United States to participate in a four-week graduate-level course at the University of Maryland's Department of Fire Protection Engineering, in collaboration with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The Bangladeshi professors were able to learn and interact with leading experts on fire safety to build their knowledge and capacity to train other engineers in Bangladesh.

“The Alliance’s initiatives have brought a massive increase in awareness around safety in Bangladesh’s ready-made garment sector.”

— *Dr. Ishtiaque Ahmed, Professor, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET)*

Upon returning home, the Bangladeshi fellows developed a landmark fire safety workshop and certificate training course, which is now offered at BUET and run in partnership with the Alliance, Accord, ILO, the Bangladesh government and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). The workshop trains graduate-level engineers in advanced fire safety, including fire dynamics, code provisions, fire detection and alarm systems, and industrial fire safety and risk assessment. The Fire Safety Program launched in 2017, and since then has featured several multiple-day workshops, as well as a separate workshop for members of Bangladesh’s Fire Service and Civil Defense. BUET plans to continue expanding the program to introduce new training programs, establish fire testing laboratories to certify materials used in the Bangladesh ready-made garment industry and collaborate with the Alliance, Accord and Bangladesh government to build a fire data collection system.

“Each and every worker, even management, are aware of safety issues. I sincerely believe the Alliance has played a strong role in this matter.”

— *Brigadier General Ali Ahmen Khan, Director General, Bangladesh Fire Service & Civil Defense*



Worker Safety Committees

In addition to knowledge of fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures, it is important that workers have channels through which to raise safety concerns and resolve disputes with management. To facilitate this, the Alliance supports the formation and training of Worker Safety Committees, which provide workers a seat at the table with factory management to monitor safety and other issues in the workplace.

“Workers are the heart of this industry, and any effort to achieve change must put them front and center. We applaud the Alliance for prioritizing the needs of the workers and their families.”

— *Wajedul Islam Khan, General Secretary, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra*

Worker Safety Committees are democratically-elected bodies consisting of an equal number of both management and worker representatives. Required to meet at least quarterly, the committees aid in monitoring and implementing health and safety policy within their factories, and increase the level of safety awareness among their fellow workers. The Alliance provides specialized training to select committee representatives—called committee ambassadors—and interactive in-factory trainings that feature training materials designed to be understood by representatives regardless of literacy level.

Currently, there are 181 active safety committees across Alliance-affiliated factories, representing 238,809 workers. The Alliance has trained more than 600 committee facilitators and nearly 3,000 committee members to date.

From 2017-2018, Laura Boudreau, a researcher from the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, conducted an independent, randomized impact evaluation of the Alliance’s Worker Safety Committee program, which found that the program has played a positive role in promoting compliance with Bangladeshi labor law:¹

“The Alliance’s Safety Committee Program has had a significant, positive effect on factory compliance with Bangladesh’s safety committee labor regulation, and the Alliance and its members have played an important role in encouraging factories’ compliance with the labor law.”

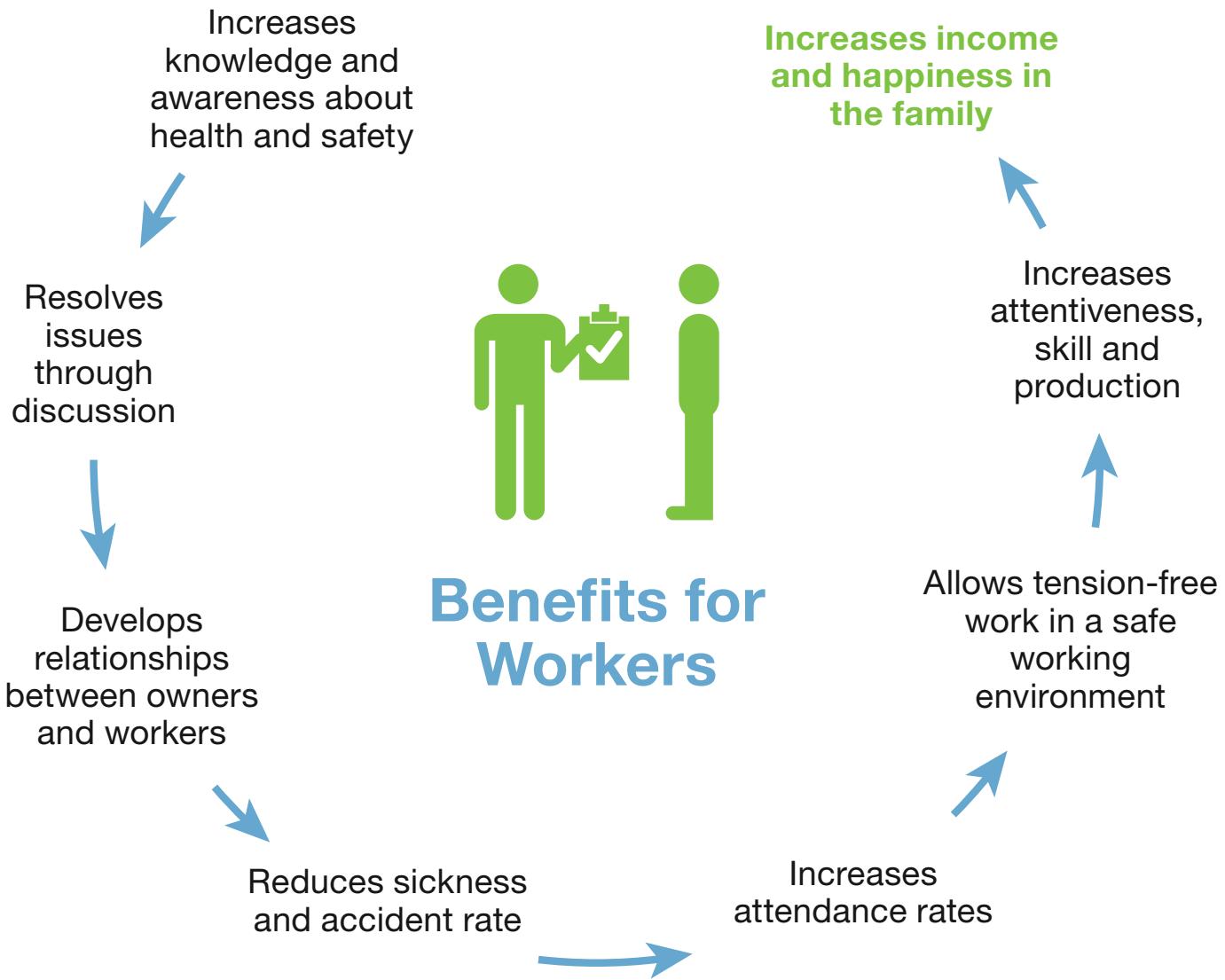
— *Laura Boudreau, researcher, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business*

1. The study design and all outcome variables were pre-determined and registered in an online registry, available at <https://www.socialscienceregistry.org/trials/1937>.



Worker Safety Committees

Democratically elected participatory committees consist of an equal number of workers and owner representatives, which helps to create healthy and safe working environments.





Case Study: Giving Workers a Seat at the Table through Worker Safety Committees

Apex Footwear and Hamza Clothing are two factories with thriving Worker Safety Committees, which provide workers the opportunity to engage with factory management to resolve workplace concerns. Both factories chose safety committee members by nominating and democratically electing representatives through their respective Participation Committees. As required by law, the committees have an equal number of management and worker representatives.

Committee members play an integral role in managing safety in these two factories. Members organize and run monthly evacuation drills to prepare for fires or other safety incidents. They carry notebooks in which they record safety issues raised by their colleagues, and take necessary action to address their concerns. Often, members act as a liaison between their fellow workers and factory management, informing senior management about issues raised and working toward solutions.

Members also work to educate their colleagues about the role of safety committees and encourage them to reach out to them with issues or concerns. In both factories, members place posters around the building, make announcements over the PA system and organize other orientation programs to facilitate communication and build trust.

As a result of these efforts, workers feel more secure in their factories. Alliance training representatives visited the two factories and witnessed significant changes in the workplace, including aisles free of obstructions, well-maintained equipment and a substantially higher level of general safety awareness among workers.

Expanding Training Programs Across Bangladesh

Central to the Alliance's original mandate was creating a culture of safety in Bangladesh that is sustainable over the long term. The success of our worker empowerment initiatives inspired us to think about how to spread their impact more broadly across the garment industry. The Alliance has been working with local partners to develop Local Training Providers, organizations that can implement our full range of training programs—including basic fire safety, security guard, mid-level management, factory owner and worker safety committee trainings—across the entire country, not just in factories that supply Alliance member brands. These providers will amplify the efforts of the Alliance by providing workers and managers industry-wide access to the same landmark training resources that have improved safety in Alliance-affiliated factories, and create a strong foundation of safety awareness that can be sustained well into the future.

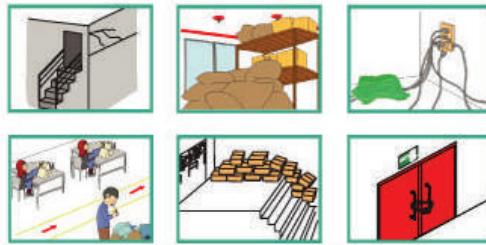


Amader Kotha, the Alliance Helpline

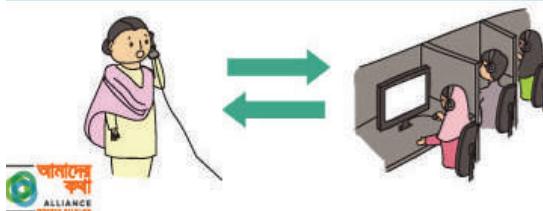
The Alliance's landmark worker helpline, *Amader Kotha*, or "Our Voice" in Bangla, continues to provide a critical channel for workers to report important concerns within their factories, anonymously and without fear of retribution. Established in mid-2014, the 24-hour helpline allows workers to bring attention to and seek resolution on substantive issues, ranging from factory fires and other urgent safety concerns to workplace abuse and wage compensation disputes.

Workers are introduced to the helpline as part of the Basic Fire Safety Training that is required of all Alliance-affiliated factories, and trainers present the helpline as one of the communication channels workers can use to report safety concerns. They make demonstration calls and provide workers portable cards printed with the toll-free helpline number so that workers can call the helpline on their own.

◆ অ্যালায়েন্স হেল্পলাইন 'আমাদের কথা' ◆



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Educational materials about the helpline provided to workers

Even outside the factory, we can rely on the helpline. My friend used the number to report a fire near his home. The fire department came quickly and he and his neighbor were safe. I am using this helpline number and I hope everyone will also get benefit from this helpline number."

— Md. Kamruzzaman, Senior Operator, R-Pac Ltd.

When a worker reports an incident, the Alliance immediately contacts the highest levels of factory management—as well as the fire brigade, if necessary. Management has 48 hours to address the situation before brands are notified and begin separate investigations. Serious safety concerns are shared with Alliance technical experts, who take swift action to investigate and resolve the issue. The Alliance then follows up with the worker to verify that the case has been resolved to his or her satisfaction.



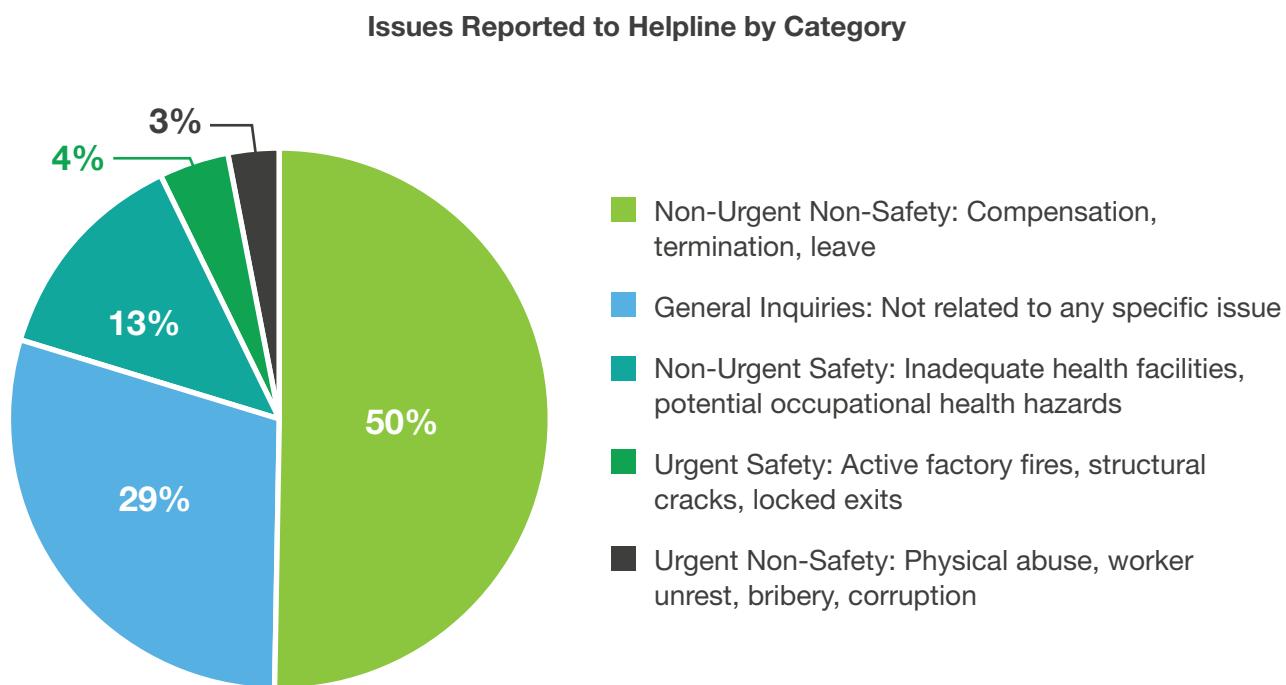
Helpline Case Study: Reporting Urgent Safety Concerns

Just before 8:00 am on August 14, four workers at a factory that no longer supplies Alliance brands, but still uses the helpline and training services, called the helpline to report that a boiler had exploded at the factory and that several workers were likely injured. Helpline staff immediately reported the information to the local fire brigade, who arrived on the scene just minutes later. They also alerted the Alliance engineering team, who called factory management directly and learned that the blast was actually from a portable gas cylinder located in between two factory buildings.

The workers at the factory, who had received the Alliance's basic safety training, were able to evacuate the building quickly and safely, with the help of properly trained security guards. Members of the Fire Service & Civil Defense provided primary treatment and first aid to the injured workers, and took two to the hospital to be treated for minor injuries. Doctors confirmed they were out of danger and released them several days later.

Data show that factory workers have come to trust and rely on *Amader Kotha*. Since its inception, more than 233,000 inbound calls from workers have been received, including an average of 5,200 calls per month during 2017. More than 1,000 factories across Bangladesh now have access to *Amader Kotha*, and 85 percent of all substantive issues have been resolved. An independent assessment by the Ethical Trading Initiative cited *Amader Kotha* as a successful case study in how NGO leadership is improving global supply chains.

Throughout 2018, an average of 600 substantive issues have been reported monthly across all factories. As shown in the chart below, half of all issues are non-urgent requests that are not safety-related.





Helpline Case Study: Stopping Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

In September of this year, a receptionist from an Alliance-affiliated factory in Mirpur called the helpline to report that the CFO of the factory had been sexually harassing her. Over the past several months, the man had inappropriately proposed to her several times and repeatedly tried to show her pornographic images. Confronted by her frequent denials, the man became angry and told the factory HR department to force her resignation. The receptionist learned from other employees that the CFO had harassed previous receptionists in the same way.

Upon hearing of the incident, helpline staff immediately contacted factory management, who assigned a neutral team to formally investigate the issue. With assistance from helpline director Quamrunnessa Babli, the team interviewed both the receptionist and the CFO. They found the receptionist's report credible and issued a formal warning letter to the CFO stating that any further incidents would result in his termination. When helpline staff followed up with the receptionist, she reported that the abuse had stopped and that she was given her job back.

As part of the Alliance's efforts to build local ownership of factory safety, the Alliance transitioned *Amader Kotha* to an independent initiative managed by a well-respected local NGO in July of this year. Now housed at Phulki, the initiative will have the potential to expand its services beyond Alliance-affiliated factories to millions more workers across Bangladesh. Alliance member brands will continue to fund *Amader Kotha* in its initial phase under new management.

“Our supervisors have become more serious about paying attention to our problems since they know we can call the Amader Kotha Helpline.

— Shahnaz Akhter, factory worker, Babylon Garments



*Sample helpline card carried by all workers in
Alliance-affiliated factories*



Phulki will work in collaboration with project partners Clear Voice, a project of the Cahn Group, LLC, and LaborLink, recently acquired by ELEVATE, a mobile platform that establishes a two-way communication channel between organizations and their workers.

The Alliance is proud to have offered the dynamic technology and analytics platform behind *Amader Kotha* that gives workers a reliable experience every time they call, and provides brands and factories the data they need to drive improvement. We are confident that *Amader Kotha* will continue to function as an effective tool that is trusted and well-utilized by workers.

“The helpline has routinely proven its tremendous value to workers. Potentially deadly fires have been extinguished following the rapid response of the fire brigade... structural cracks in the walls that concerned workers were quickly evaluated by engineers and ruled out as a cause for worry. Instances of withheld pay or abuse by managers were investigated and resolved.”

— Heather Cannon, Vice President, Worker Engagement, ELEVATE



Leaving a Legacy of Safety in Bangladesh

The Alliance was formed in 2013 as a five-year program to improve safety in Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector. In these past five years, the Alliance, our member brands and owners of Alliance-affiliated factories have achieved unprecedented progress toward this aim, while simultaneously helping to solidify Bangladesh's standing as a global leader in garment exports.

As we look forward, it is important that the safety gains we have made and the culture of safety we have established are sustained over the long term. Beginning in 2019, most Alliance member brands plan to work through a locally-based organization to collectively monitor safety in the Bangladesh factories from which they source. This new entity will continue to verify that worker safety remains a priority in these factories.

“The Alliance can be proud of its role in enabling Bangladesh to remain one of the largest ready-made garment exporters in the world, thus preserving hundreds of thousands of jobs and livelihoods.”

— Dan Mozena, Former US Ambassador to Bangladesh

Moving forward, Alliance member brands remain committed to maintaining the high level of safety that has already been achieved in the factories from which they source. Brands will continue to require that all factories comply with strict fire, structural and electrical safety standards; undergo regular, independent inspections; train workers, security guards and factory managers in fire safety; and support and promote usage of the helpline as a grievance mechanism. As we undertake this transition, we look forward to maintaining positive and supportive relationships with the US and Bangladeshi governments, the ILO, industry peers, civil society and our program partners.

Alliance Members' Goals Post-2018

- 1) Leave a legacy of results, best practices and worker safety innovations that are incorporated across safety efforts going forward
- 2) Align key stakeholders in Bangladesh whose support and participation is critical to sustaining safety progress moving forward
- 3) Create a sustainable future model that builds local capacity, allocates responsibilities and optimizes leverage to drive and expand the culture of safety
- 4) Continue to build on the success achieved through the 5-year Alliance initiative while expanding impact beyond Alliance-affiliated factories
- 5) Maintain independence, credibility, and transparency elements that reinforce the Alliance's results



Closing Letter from the Alliance Board of Directors

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

Five years ago, more than two dozen leading North American apparel companies, retailers and brands joined together to form the Alliance to dramatically improve worker safety in Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector. It has been a remarkable journey—and one of which we have been honored to be a part.

We are proud to have guided a groundbreaking organization that has made an impact in the lives of millions of workers in Bangladesh, and we are confident that the effects of the Alliance will be felt in Bangladesh for decades to come. As the Alliance transitions its work, member brands remain committed to Bangladesh, and to sourcing materials only from factories that maintain the highest standards of safety.

Safe garment factories protect millions of workers, and are critical to maintaining Bangladesh's standing as a world leader in garment production. Alliance member brands, the factories, the government and other critical partners will continue to monitor compliance and promote a culture of safety. Only through ongoing commitment and close collaboration can we sustain the progress made in factory safety for years to come.

The Alliance also serves as a model for what successful partnerships can achieve. It has shown that collaboration between industry, government and the NGO sector can address the systemic issues that beleaguered the ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh for decades. We are optimistic that this model can be exported to other industries within Bangladesh and to garment industries in other countries in the region and around the world.

Undoubtedly, Bangladesh will continue to face challenges. But through hard work, dedication and partnership we have helped change an industry so that millions of women and men can earn a living without risking their lives in the process.

With gratitude,

Sean Cady, Vice President, Global Supply Chain and Responsible Sourcing, VF Corporation

Tapan Chowdhury, Founder, Square Textiles Limited; formerly President, Dhaka Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Ed Johnston, Retail and International Sourcing Executive (retired)

Amanda Nusz, Vice President, Product Quality & Responsible Sourcing, Target Corporation

Jan Saumweber, Senior Vice President, Responsible Sourcing, Walmart Inc.

Simone Sultana, Chair, BRAC UK

Dana Veeder, Associate General Counsel, Legal, Gap

Alliance Member Companies and Supporting Associations

Member Companies

Ariela and Associates International LLC
Bon Worth
Canadian Tire Corporation, Limited
Carter's Inc.
The Children's Place Retail Stores Inc.
Costco Wholesale Corporation
Fruit of the Loom, Inc.
Gap Inc.
Giant Tiger
Hudson's Bay Company
IFG Corp.
Intradeco Apparel
J.C. Penney Company Inc.
Jordache Enterprises, Inc.
The Just Group
Kate Spade & Company
Kohl's Department Stores
L. L. Bean Inc.
M. Hidary & Company Inc.
Macy's
Nordstrom Inc.
One Jeanswear Group
Public Clothing Company
Sears Holdings Corporation
Target Corporation
The Warehouse
VF Corporation
Walmart Inc.
YM Inc.

Supporting Associations

American Apparel & Footwear Association
BRAC
Canadian Apparel Federation
Li & Fung
National Retail Federation
Retail Council of Canada
Retail Industry Leaders Association
United States Fashion Industry Association

Board of Directors

Sean Cady, Vice President, Global Supply Chain and Responsible Sourcing, VF Corporation
Tapan Chowdhury, Founder, Square Textiles Limited; formerly President, Dhaka Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Ed Johnston, Retail and International Sourcing Executive (retired)
Amanda Nusz, Vice President, Product Quality & Responsible Sourcing, Target Corporation
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