

Good Working Conditions in Tanneries (GOTAN)

Background

The leather industry is an important sector for Bangladesh's economy. In 2021, leather products generated about 3% of the country's total export revenue. The sector employs about 850,000 individuals directly or indirectly.

However, tanneries in particular often neglect compliance with social and environmental standards which puts workers' lives at risk. The Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE), which oversees the monitoring of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) measures, lacks capacities to conduct inspections that match global standards. In the event of compliance violations, sanctions lack effectiveness or are not adequately carried out. Internal management systems are needed to ensure constant compliance with international OHS standards and to build up professional work structures as well as to assign responsibilities in tanneries. Moreover, institutional framework conditions need to be confirming the national legal requirements.

Local organisations, such as leather exporters, local buying houses and chemical suppliers, can contribute to compliance with social and environmental standards. Usually, these organisations recruit mid-level managers who graduated from educational institutions and universities. Despite the great potential of anchoring OHS and safe chemical management through teaching and research, those topics have not been adequately addressed in academic curricula to date.

Project name	Good Working Conditions in Tanneries (GOTAN)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Commissioned value	4.0 million Euro
Project region	Dhaka, Gazipur, Chattogram, Jashore
Partner ministry	Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE),
Implementing agency	Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE)
SDG contribution	Gender Equality (SDG 5), Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12)
Duration	May 2022 – April 2025

Objective

The project seeks to strengthen institutional framework conditions for increased OSH compliance in tanneries in selected regions of Bangladesh. This will result in improved working and living conditions of workers employed by tanneries.





Approach

To achieve the objective, the project promotes the cooperation of state and private actors by developing organisational and individual capacities. Furthermore, it improves advisory services for tanneries through intermediary organisations.

The capacity development strategy of the project focuses on the organisational development of DIFE to fulfill its mandate as a regulatory authority for inspections in tanneries.

The development of trainings and course materials supports local service providers to meet the criteria of international OHS requirements and to adopt sustainable practices.

Areas of intervention and envisaged activities

1. Capacity Development of the DIFE

- Strengthening capacities of the DIFE to effectively run an inspection system
- Advising DIFE in improved implementation and monitoring of inspections
- Utilising the Labour Inspection Management Application (LIMA) online database to increase transparency in monitoring inspections

2. Consulting and Training Services on OHS for Better Working Conditions in Tanneries

- Supporting local service providers to develop training materials and trainings on demand basis for remedial actions

- Trainings include topics as in chemical management and support for implementing OHS measures, following a gender mainstreaming approach
- Equipping trainers with knowledge on OHS and fostering digital competencies to ensure the quality of trainings online and in person

3. Advancing University Education in the Field of OHS in Leather Production

- Advising universities and educational institutes to revise current curricula and adapt to international standards by including OHS-relevant modules
- Strengthening the knowledge of graduates of bachelor and master programmes in the area of OHS in leather production
- Encouraging exchange formats between private sector and universities to promote sustainable development in the leather sector

Expected results

Improved inspection capacities of the DIFE will prevent health hazards and occupational accidents in the tannery sector. Equipping local intermediaries and anchoring OHS with academic institutions will ensure the sustainability of the measures implemented by the project; contributing to the overall wellbeing of tannery workers as well as their communities.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Good Working Conditions in Tanneries (GOTAN)
GIZ Bangladesh
PO Box 6091, Gulshan 1
Phone +880 2 5506 8744-52, +880 9 666 701 000
giz-bangladesh@giz.de
www.giz.de/bangladesh

As at November 2022

Text Emily Lam

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

In cooperation with Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE)
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh