



FINAL REPORT

PROJECT ON IMPROVING DIALOGUE AT WORKING PLACE

April – September 2016

Hochiminh City Vietnam

Prepared by: Vietnam Business Council for Sustainable Development



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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Project on Improving Dialogue at Working Place is funded by ASEAN CSR Network and implemented by Vietnam Business Council for Sustainable Development from May to October 2016 in Hochiminh City. The project is depth training and consultation on capacity and skills building for dialogue teams of the participating factories, towards harmonious labour relation as well as meeting Code of Conducts requirements of international buyers.

2. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- **Training on capacity building for dialogue teams**
- **Training on dialogue and negotiation**
- **Dialogue at working place between factory management and dialogue team (Worker Representatives)**

2.1 Training on capacity building for dialogue teams

Course: Training on capacity building for dialogue teams

Date: 2 days, May 25-26 2016

Duration: full day, from 9:00 to 17:00

Location: Hochiminh City, Vietnam

Language: Vietnamese

Number of trainees: 24

Lead trainer: Mr. Nguyen Phi Ho, Hochiminh City Federation of Labour

Training objectives and learning outcomes:

Objectives:

1. Understood the project
2. Understood the meaning of “Worker Representative” and clarified its roles
3. Knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective worker representatives for the workers
4. Skills for conducting simple training for the workers at the factory
5. Ways to solve problems together with management in factory

Specific learning outcomes are that participants have enhanced knowledge on:

1. The benefits of dialogue at working place and Decent Working Conditions
2. Understanding codes of conduct, national and international laws about rights at work and working conditions

Training method

This two-day training workshop was conducted using a combination of group activities and group presentations, open discussion, lecturing, role-play as well as self-reflection sessions of compiling individual action plans towards actual application of the learning.

Furthermore, Good Practice Sharing via peer learning and networking has been facilitated through various plenary discussions, group activities, and informal exchange during tea breaks as well as networking on a voluntary basis.



Training agenda

- Session 1: Setting the context and getting to know each other
- Session 2: Understand and using the Law
- Session 3: Representing Workers
- Session 4: Incentives and rewards
- Session 5: Worker Representatives' role in making the factory profitable
- Session 6: Health and Safety in the factory
- Session 7: Dialogue in the workplace, step-by-step
- Session 8: Women Workers' Welfare
- Session 9: Talking with workers

All presentations and resources were provided to participants in printed and bound format on the training day.

Training summary

Although the training agenda was very strict and many contents had to be introduced and dealt with, all above mentioned training objectives have been fully achieved:

- All participants were presented and consented to objectives of the project; time frame; project partners and other stakeholders. Understanding the project deeply will make the factories working more open and closely with all project team.
- The trainees' awareness on the roles of positive dialogue at working place was raised through introduction and discussion on relevant rules and regulations, business cases and their actual practices in their workplace.
- The dialogue teams realized their role at the factories and committed to work closely with the project so that they can help factory run more smoothly on finding ways to solve problems together with management at their factory.
- Some qualitative feedback:
 - All topics are useful, especially “dialogue in the workplace” section.
 - Help to understand worker reps' rights and responsibilities
 - Help to understand more about the law, worker representatives' right and responsibilities, self-confidence when communicating and taking with factory management and ahead of the crowd.
 - Enhance the roles of worker representatives on dialogue between workers and worker representatives and between factory management and worker representatives.
 - Understand and share among participants
 - Understand the roles of worker reps in dialogue with management and workers.
 - Communication skill, understanding and using law, the roles of being a worker rep.
 - Able to help workers at the work place
 - Improving skills and knowledge to solve problems,
 - Raising my awareness and understanding dialogue with relevant stakeholders in factory, helping me to understand more about my responsibility as a worker representative.

After this training, I can understand the law, worker representatives' right and responsibilities. I am also proud of participating in dialogue at the work place

(A trainee's quote after completion of this training)

- Some highlights during the training:

(1) A very important content of this training is to clarify the roles of Worker Representative as the Vietnam Labour Law and other relevant regulations mentioned. Despite to some challenges such as:

- Workers' low education and awareness;
- Difficult to follow all instruction mentioned in the Decree
- Identify the relevant regulation on some problems and in-charged persons on solving problems.

The workers found it was very useful to practice and get to know more knowledge on Vietnam labour law as well as to use Better Work Guideline¹ for their resource reference.

(2) Reviewing the system for dealing with complains in the factories, shared by the trainees:

In M&J Garment – Print - Embroidery factory

	How much the methods are used?	Why workers use it?	Why workers do not use it
Telephone hotline	Never		No hotline
Suggestion box	Always	Confidential	
Approach trade union	Often	Easy to meet TU reps	
Approach supervisor	Always	Quick response	
Ask Welfare Officer	Never		
Go to HR administration	Often	Easy to meet, to talk and quick response	
Other channels you can think of			

In Jadeluck factory

	How much the methods are used?	Why workers use it?	Why workers do not use it
Telephone hotline	Never		No hotline
Suggestion box	Often	Confidential, available in production workshops	
Approach trade union	Always	Easy to meet TU reps	
Approach supervisor	Always	Easy to meet	

¹ The «Better Work Guideline on Vietnam Labour Law were included in the training material.

http://betterwork.org/vietnam/wp-content/uploads/Better-Work-Vietnam_Full-LLG_Vietnamese_Final_010915.pdf



Ask Welfare Officer	Never		
Go to HR administration	Sometimes	Quick reponse	
Other channels you can think of			

In Shilabags factory

	How much the methods are used?	Why workers use it?	Why workers do not use it
Telephone hotline	Never		No hotline
Suggestion box	Sometimes	Confidential	Not effective
Approach trade union	Often	Easy to meet TU reps	
Approach supervisor	Always	Forward complains to higher level	
Ask Welfare Officer	Never		
Go to HR administration	Rarely		Afraid of losing job
Other channels you can think of			

In Tri Dat factory

	How much the methods are used?	Why workers use it?	Why workers do not use it
Telephone hotline	Sometimes	Quick response	No telephone hotline in production workshops
Suggestion box	Always	Available at the production workshops	
Approach trade union	Often	Easy to meet TU reps	
Approach supervisor	Sometimes	Quick response	Difficult to talk
Ask Welfare Officer	Never		
Go to HR administration	Often	Easy to meet, to talk and quick response	
Other channels you can think of			

(3) Incentives and rewards that workers are being provided by their factory

M&J Garment – Print - Embroidery factory	In Jadeluck factory	In Shilabags factory	In Tri Dat factory
Small child allowance Periodic health check Parties, travel 13 th month salary and bonus Productivity bonus Canteen Festival and gifts before traditional Tet holidays	Seniority allowance Responsibility allowance Diligence allowance Periodic health check Travel Year-end party Festival and gifts before traditional Tet holidays Small child allowance 13 th month salary and bonus Canteen	Seniority allowance Responsibility allowance Diligence allowance Periodic health check Travel Year-end party Festival and gifts before traditional Tet holidays Small child allowance 13 th month salary and bonus Canteen	Living allowance Small child allowance Periodic health check Parties, travel 13 th month salary and bonus Productivity bonus Canteen

(4) Thinking about “**the need and the way for the factory to make a profit**”, shared by the trainees

The need for the factory to make a profit

- A profitable factory will provide more rewards and salary increased
- A profitable factory will contribute to improvement of workers’ live
- A profitable factory will create a stable job

The way for the factory to make a profit

- Completing work plan as schedule and productivity
- Avoiding waste
- Complying internal labour rules, reducing workers’ absent and quit
- Honouring good ideas and initiatives

Reasons for high turnover

- Not good working environment, not comfortable
- High work pressure
- Conflicts between workers and management
- Family situation
- Not attractive wages
- Much working overtime
- Discrimination between management and workers

(5) Kinds of welfare that women workers have the rights for it, introduced by female trainees

- Baby care: 5 times (5 working days)
- Miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth: 10 – 150 days, depending on the age of fetus
- Practice of contraception: 10 – 15 working days
- 7 months pregnant working 8 hours/day, no overtime
- Stay 6 months after childbirth
- Working 7 hours/day when babies younger than 1 year
- Allowance for workers having babies younger than 6 months
- 5 days for convalescence after childbirth

- Menstruation period 1 day with a 30 minute
- Arranging easy jobs for pregnant female workers



Introduction



Team work



Team work



Group picture

2.2 Training on dialogue and negotiation

Course: Training on dialogue and negotiation

Date: 2 days, June 22 -23 2016

Duration: full day, from 9:00 to 17:00

Location: Hochiminh City, Vietnam

Language: Vietnamese

Number of trainees: 24

Lead trainer: Mr. Nguyen Phi Ho, Hochiminh City Federation of Labour

Training objectives and learning outcomes:

Objectives:

1. Understand about the internal regulation and Collective Labour Agreement of the factory
2. Improve ability to dialogue and negotiate with management.
3. Get to know the methods for conducting workers' survey.
4. Practice the negotiation skills
5. Technical steps on how to negotiate effectively.
6. Step- by-step on how to conduct the social dialogue at the workplace.

Specific learning outcomes are that participants have enhanced knowledge on:

1. How to ensure that Management and Workers' Representatives mutually decide on improvements actions which meets the workforce' needs and priorities
2. Negotiation skills and help WRs to prepare for the coming Management-Worker Representatives dialogue meetings in the factory

Training agenda

Session 1: Setting the context and getting to know each other

Session 2: Collective negotiations and instruments

Session 3: Deciding priorities for negotiations

Session 4: How to negotiate

Training method

This two-day training workshop was conducted using a combination of group activities and group presentations, open discussion, lecturing, role-play as well as self-reflection sessions of compiling individual action plans towards actual application of the learning.

Training summary

Although the training agenda was very strict and many contents had to be introduced and dealt with, all above mentioned training objectives have been fully achieved:



- The trainees' awareness on the roles of positive social dialogue was raised through introduction and discussion on relevant rules and regulations, business cases and their actual practices in their workplace.

After complement of this training I know how to negotiate with factory management to solve workers' problem, contributing to better business operation

(A trainee's quote after completion of this training)

- The trainees gained more understanding on what kind of legal instruments used at the factory that legalized their rights as well as the commitment and agreement used at the workplace. The WRs also got to know the methods for collecting the opinion and needs of the workforce at factory, identifying the priorities topics that workers concern. Moreover, by learning and practicing negotiation skills they have some practical skills for better preparation of the first dialogue meeting between management and workers representatives.

- Some qualitative feedback:

- Learnt negotiation skill at the meeting between factory management and worker representatives
- Understand the roles of a worker representative
- Learnt dialogue skill
- Benefits of collective dialogue and negotiation
- Meeting and talking with factory management
- Practical actions to be beneficial to both workers and business
- Help to understand new thinking and working methods
- Understanding and sharing among participants
- Topics about salary and non-salary
- Consider if and how to collect workers' view
- Negotiate for optimal results and mutual benefits

After this training, I will be able to help workers at the work place

Need more training like this to maintain and to support worker representatives' roles and responsibilities in the best way at the workplace

- Some highlights during the training:

(1) Some easiest and most enjoyable tasks of the role as WR were identified by WRs:

- Being listened to true opinions of workers
- Get trust from workers
- Easy to talk, to discuss and to share with workers
- Listening to workers
- Represent to workers
- Being as a bridge between workers and factory management

(2) Some hardest/most difficult part in WR's role

- Talking and presenting workers' problems to management
- Lack of time for doing WR's role
- Identifying, analysing and solving problems
- The existing WRs not be disseminated in the factory
- How to convince factory management

(3) The participants identified 10 topics that workers would like to see improved:

- Seniority wage
- Bonus; benefits, allowance
- Working time
- Meal quality
- Working conditions: Cooling systems , lighting conditions and noise cancelling at the production workshops
- Safety and health at some places
- Clean restroom
- Grievance mechanism
- Absentism
- Management's attitude towards workers
- Transportation for pregnant female workers

(4) Working in groups on making formal proposals for the agenda based on the above topics, some contents of the proposals were indentified:

- More overtime to increase monthly income
- Improving meal quality
- Easier at personal leave
- More Traditional New Year bonus
- Setting reasonable productivity norm
- Making long term contract for demanded workers
- Not cutting labour contract with pregnant workers and female workers having small children
- Suitable jobs for pregnant workers



Team work



Trainees at the training workshop



Trainees at the training workshop



Team work



2.3 Dialogue at working place

Activity: Dialogue between factory management and dialogue team at factories

Date: July – August 2016

Location: Hochiminh City, Vietnam

Language: Vietnamese

Observer:

Nguyen Thanh Trung, Vietnam Business Council for Sustainable Development

Nguyen Phi Ho, Hochiminh City Federation of Labour

Activity objectives and outcomes:

Objectives:

1. Members of the dialogue teams themselves practised on collecting, identifying and prioritizing information and problem from the workforce to negotiate with factory management
2. Actual meeting and dialogue between factory management and the dialogue team.
3. Creating opened and cooperative dialogue between factory management and the dialogue team
4. Building solid and sustainable foundation of dialogue at workplace for all participating factories

Outcomes:

04 dialogues between factory management and dialogue teams were implemented

Activity summary

After completing two intensive training sessions for the dialogue teams May and June 2016, 4 factories implemented in-factory dialogue from July to August 2016. The worker representatives got support from factory management and Trade Union while doing their roles at the factories.

In general, the dialogue teams played their roles in a very good way. They followed the guidance that they learnt from the trainings. They were also supported by the project trainer and VBCSD via desk support on preparation to collect information, meeting to discuss with the workforce, prioritizing problems and issues to negotiate. During the dialogue meetings, the project team could see the confidence of the dialogue teams in terms of talking, raising and presenting issues, protecting their ideas and convincing the factory management. However, due to time from completion of the group trainings to the dialogues was short, the problems to be discuss were not so many and almost focused on benefits, working conditions, and working hour. 4 factories that implemented dialogues includes:

1. M&J Garment – Print – Embroidery Company: August 18th 2016
2. Jadeluck Company: August 19th 2016
3. Shilla Bags Vietnam Company: July 9th 2016
4. Tri Dat Company: July 9th 2016



DIALOGUE AT M&J GARMENT – PRINT – EMBROIDERY COMPANY:

Issues/problems to be discussed and negotiated	Status		Section in charge
	Solved immediately	Need to be investigated and responded later	
Change to hygienic food trays, plastic cups instead of stainless steel cup, Change lunch menu Redecorate canteen		x	Factory Management, Admin Section, Trade Union
Bad smell at the gate of the factory, replace broken pails and bowls in toilets	x		Admin Section
Reinstall electric fans in crocheting section, more lights in laundry detergents rooms.	x		Admin Section
More bleach smell in drinking water	x		HR Section

DIALOGUE AT JADELUCK COMPANY

Issues/problems to be discussed and negotiated	Status		Section in charge
	Solved immediately	Need to be investigated and responded later	
Receipts and payments of Union fee in the factory	x		Executive board of Trade Union
Enhance spirit of saving: stationery, accessories, water, electricity	x		Admin Section and employees.
Improve self-discipline of occupational safety	x		Management, Admin Section and employees

DIALOGUE AT SHILA BAGS VIETNAM COMPANY

Issues/problems to be discussed and negotiated	Status		Section in charge
	Solved immediately	Need to be investigated and responded later	
Improve the quality of meals, water in company	x		Management, Admin Section and Trade Union
Allowance for employees working more than 5 years who have small child under 6 years for employees	x		Management
Seniority allowance for employees working more than 7 years	x		Management
Consider bonus system of the company, should be bonus together with punishment	x		Management, Trade Union
Annual assessment for the workmanship	x		Management, Trade Union

DIALOGUE AT TRI DAT COMPANY:

Issues/problems to be discussed and negotiated	Status		Section in charge
	Solved immediately	Need to be investigated and responded later	
Need full labour protection	X		Admin Section
Reassess the level of coordination among the parts in each production line		X	Management
Retrain skill for workers		x	HR section



Dialogue at Shillag Bag Vietnam Company



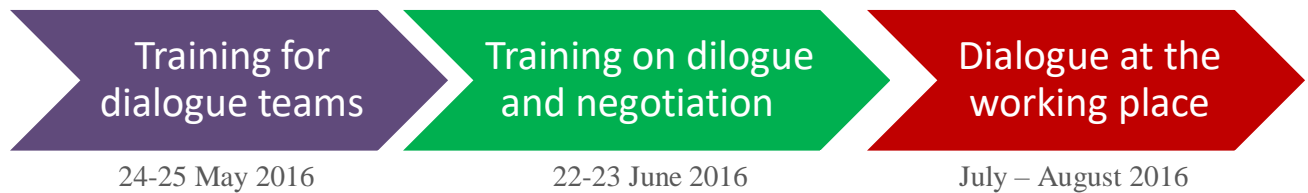
Dialogue at Tri Dat Company



Dialogue at M&J Garment – Print – Embroidary Company



Dialogue at Jadeluck Company



3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THIS PROJECT

3.1 Status of dialogue in 4 factories before participating this project

- **Advantages:**

The 4 factories are also operating the garment sector. The cooperation and mutual agreement among Factory Management, Trade Union and dialogue teams contribute to regular dialogue implementation according to the law at the working place

- **Difficulties and challenges:**

Before participating this project, the factories concentrated in business operation, not doing grassroots democracy regulation well.

- **Capacity of the dialogue teams:**

The dialogue teams had not ever participated in any capacity building training on dialogue, negotiation with employers

- **Periodical dialogue at the factories:**

As the dialogue team members at the factories have held many jobs concurrently, organising periodical dialogues are latter than usual.

- **Issues/problems to be discussed and negotiated and the results:**

Inexplicit targets, solutions, tactics for good results in discussion and negotiation with employers

3.2 Impact of this project to the 4 factories:

- **Advantages:**

The trainings within this project help the dialogue teams to identify and prioritize specific targets, solutions and tactics in discussion and negotiation

- **Difficulties and challenges:**

Time for collecting and identifying problems from the workforce was tight because of daily works. Workers sometimes were afraid of sharing their opinions.

- **Capacity of the dialogue teams:**

The training provided essential skills and practices, improved capacity of the dialogue teams. They feel more self-confident in implementation of the function at the factories.

- **Periodical dialogue at the factories:**

Members of the dialogue teams understand their roles and functions, leading to good collaboration with the factory management and Trade Union organising dialogue effectively and lawfully.

- **Issues/problems to be discussed and negotiated and the results:**

Almost problems and issues from the workforce were recognized and processed after the dialogue meetings

- **Sustainability of periodical dialogue after completion of this project:**

Periodical dialogue at the working place has helped employees and employers to understand each other, to share together and to have a common voice, towards harmonious, stable labour relations at work.

With the desk support of VBCSD, Hochiminh City Ferderation of Labour and the positive results from two training sessions in May and June 2016, the dialogue teams in 4 factories were active, confident in carrying out their duties in the working place effectively. Issues, problems and suggestions from the workforce were recognised, indentified and priotized before each dialogue meeting. Trade Union has also actively involved in preparation and implementation of dialogue. Some issues have been were solved imidiately at the meeting and some need time to inspect and to assess. The factory management and thier responsible sections will inform the results in writing in the earliest time.

All participating factories also highly appreciate and commite conducting periodical dialogue at the working place seriously.