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COVID-19 AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

in the garment/textiles global supply chain
in Ethiopia

A CASE STUDY

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Acronyms

BLIP	Bole Lemi Industrial Park
BOLSA	Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs
ETC	Ethiopian Investment Commission
EPHI	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Industrial Park
IPDC	Industrial Park Development Corporation
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive summary

This research was conducted as part of the International Labour Organization (ILO) programme “Advancing Decent Work and Inclusive Industrialization in Ethiopia” (SIRAYE). The research was led by Vision Zero Fund (“the Fund”), one of the main components of the SIRAYE programme that is focused on occupational safety and health (OSH). Vision Zero Fund is an initiative established by the Group of Seven countries and endorsed by the Group of 20. The Fund aims to prevent work-related accidents, injuries and diseases in global supply chains.¹

The research highlighted the OSH measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in select factories in Ethiopia’s garment/textiles global supply chain. Research findings revealed both the proactive approach taken in Ethiopia from the outset of the pandemic to contain the spread of COVID-19, and efforts to develop and implement measures to protect workers’ safety and health while at the same time ensuring business continuity.

Study findings indicate that the **pandemic affected productivity and business continuity**. Lockdowns resulted in the temporary closure of some garment factories that participated in this research. For example, one of them closed for up to three months. Production was hampered by challenges linked to the sourcing of raw materials as main supplier countries such as China also adopted lockdown measures. Challenges relating to global demand also affected the garment/textiles industry, with one factory switching to supplying only to the local market.

A **multi-stakeholder approach** was adopted for the development and implementation of COVID-19 response measures. Government entities, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), the Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA) and the Ministry of Health, as well as employers’ and workers’ organizations and NGOs, were involved in the process. Development partners (donors) and international organizations, including the ILO, also provided support.

Measures to support workplaces in preventing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19 included: developing and promoting a COVID-19 workplace response protocol; establishing a national health, safety and work environment team; and providing awareness-creation trainings.

Multi-stakeholder committees were also established in the industrial parks to guide the implementation of the response measures and to monitor compliance at the workplace level. The latter was supported by labour inspectors, although it was reported in the research that they were constrained by lack of resources and technical skills.

At the **workplace level**, the main OSH measures included: awareness-raising; provision of face masks for workers; provision of hand washing facilities and hand sanitizers, physical distancing measures (including changing seating arrangements, drawing lines to indicate adequate distancing, increasing the number of cafeteria service shifts and purchasing additional buses

¹ Vision Zero Fund is administered and implemented by the Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health (LABADMIN/OSH) Branch of the ILO. The Fund is a key component of the ILO’s Safety + Health for All programme. Currently, the Fund operates in eight countries and in two sectors: garment/textiles and agriculture. For more information, see: <http://www.ilo.org/vzf>.

for transport). Moreover, temperature screening at workplace entrances was implemented in collaboration with various stakeholders.

The **impact of the COVID-19 pandemic reported by workers** ranged from psychological to financial. In the early days of the pandemic, workers reported experiencing stress and anxiety about the situation and were fearful about falling sick, which resulted in a number of voluntarily resignations. **However, awareness-creation and the roll-out of OSH measures helped workers to feel safer about returning to work and in their workplaces.** Financially, workers' incomes were affected by a **decrease in production and demand in the garment/textiles sector**; basic salaries were reduced and benefits and allowances discontinued. Movement restrictions imposed by the Government also had financial implications for both employers and workers.

As time went on, the research identified a decline in compliance among workers and employers with the OSH measures put in place to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 in workplaces (such as handwashing/sanitizing, wearing a mask, physical distancing and temperature screening). This was partly because of resource constraints and changes in the perception of the severity of the pandemic over time.

There were no long-term emergency preparedness plans at national and workplace levels although the study found some awareness of the need to have measures in place for the future. These include a disaster risk management strategy that is being prepared by the Industrial Park Development Corporation (IPDC). There were also reports that a food bank was set up as well as a trust fund to assist the most vulnerable in the event of future emergencies.

The study highlights encouraging developments **that can be leveraged for OSH improvements in Ethiopia's garment/textiles factories.** These include government regulations, social dialogue and support from international stakeholders. The research also identified opportunities to strengthen OSH management systems at the workplace level.

The study further includes general **recommendations for strengthening the OSH response to the current pandemic. These recommendations were developed jointly with key stakeholders** during a validation workshop of the research findings that took place in Addis Ababa on 17 May 2021 (see Annex 3).



1. Introduction

COVID-19 has had significant impact on demand and supply in global supply chains, with implications for OSH. The impact on the ready-made garment industry in Ethiopia can be attributed to the crisis in key consumer markets and pandemic-induced demand shocks abroad (Meyer et al. 2020).

Challenges and opportunities for OSH improvement may arise or be amplified as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Anticipating, identifying and understanding these challenges and opportunities are essential for the development of effective strategies to ensure safer and healthier supply chains.

This research was conducted as part of the ILO programme entitled “Advancing Decent Work and Inclusive Industrialization in Ethiopia” (SIRAYE). This programme is a comprehensive and coordinated response to a need expressed by Ethiopian constituents and industry stakeholders to advance decent work and inclusive industrialization in key priority sectors (such as textiles and garment), identified in the Second Ethiopian Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II). The programme is geared towards implementing national, regional and factory level interventions in order to address the main challenges of advancing decent work in Ethiopia. SIRAYE brings together a number of ILO programmes, including the Vision Zero Fund.

This research in Ethiopia was conducted as part of a broader global research initiative by Vision Zero

Fund that examines OSH measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the agriculture and garment/textiles global supply chains.

In Ethiopia, the specific objectives of the research were to:

- a. identify the OSH measures and actions taken to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 at the workplace level in garment/textiles-producing factories in Ethiopia (measures to support workplaces and measures taken at workplace level);
- b. examine the drivers and constraints for the development and implementation of OSH measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in workplaces;
- c. examine whether the adoption of (or failure to adopt) OSH measures was perceived to have had any effects on the safety and health of workers, business continuity, productivity and employment in the supply chain;
- d. examine whether the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the sustainable sourcing practices of multinational enterprises; and
- e. ascertain any long-term measures adopted to prepare and respond to future pandemics.

1.1 Methodology

The study used a qualitative approach that allowed for an examination of the experiences of developing, implementing and monitoring OSH prevention measures in the garment/textiles global supply chain in Ethiopia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The research sought to understand the measures implemented and the motivation behind them, as well as participants' perceptions of the effects of those measures including whether they contributed to business continuity. The field research was conducted between 28 December 2020 and 9 March 2021.

Four factories participated in the research. Criteria for selection included size, type of ownership and location to ensure diversity. One factory was local and produced textiles for the garment global supply chain and three garment factories classified as foreign direct investment (FDI) that produced for the export market. Two factories were located in Addis Ababa and two in Hawassa.

A total of 84 key informant interviews were conducted as follows:

- Interviews with 13 representatives from institutions and organisations that perform OSH support functions, including representatives from the national and regional labour authorities, labour inspectors, occupational health services professionals working in the factory health facilities and representatives from employers' and workers' organizations.
- Interviews at the workplace level with 17 factory managers/supervisors and 54 workers, including safety and health officers, first aid workers and worker members of COVID-19 and workplace OSH committees.

Desk research was also conducted to gain a preliminary understanding of the COVID-19 situation in the country, its impact on the garment supply

chain, the mitigating and preventive measures that were developed as well as relevant policies, programmes and plans.

On completion of the study, a validation workshop was organized in Addis Ababa during which the findings were presented to supply chain stakeholders, including those who participated in the research. This workshop provided an opportunity for stakeholders to review the findings and engage in discussions on the way forward. A list of the main recommendations are contained in Annex 3. Participants in the workshop included representatives from national and regional labour authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, social security agencies, international NGOs and multinational enterprises (global buyers).

A few limitations of the research should be noted. The qualitative case study design limits the findings to the factories that were the focus of the study. The study, therefore, does not claim to represent all factories in all industrial parks in Ethiopia although it would be reasonable to extrapolate findings to other factories with similar operations producing for the garment/textiles global supply chain in Ethiopia.

The research was also limited by the COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, data collection strategies were limited to virtual interviews. Although observations *in loco* would have enhanced the study, this was not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns for the safety of the researchers and participants. In order to ensure data source triangulation, interviews were conducted with a broad range of supply chain stakeholders.

Finally, the scope of the study was inevitably limited to subjects who were still at work, and did not include those whose employment had been terminated.





2. Characteristics of the garment/textiles global supply chain in Ethiopia

To boost industrialization in Ethiopia, the Government has built nearly 14 industrial parks² since 2014 in order to attract FDI, with a focus on the manufacturing of export items.³ Annex 1 provides a list of publicly and privately owned industrial parks in Ethiopia.

The major companies located in the industrial parks produce textile, garment and leather products. More than 88,000 workers were employed in the industrial parks before the pandemic, most of them women (Meyer et al. 2020; IPDC 2020; Abebe et al. 2020; Mengistu et al. 2020). Of these,

nearly 62,000 worked in garment factories in 2019. Most of these workers were women engaged in cutting tasks (60 per cent of all workers) and sewing tasks (nearly 90 per cent of all workers) (ILO 2019a).

A report published in 2017 by the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) on the cotton, textile and apparel sector investment profile indicated that there were 122 textile and garment factories in the country of which 60 were involved in garment production, 21 in ginning, 3 in spinning, 18 in weaving and knitting, 13 in integrated and 7 traditional clothing-making (EIC 2017).

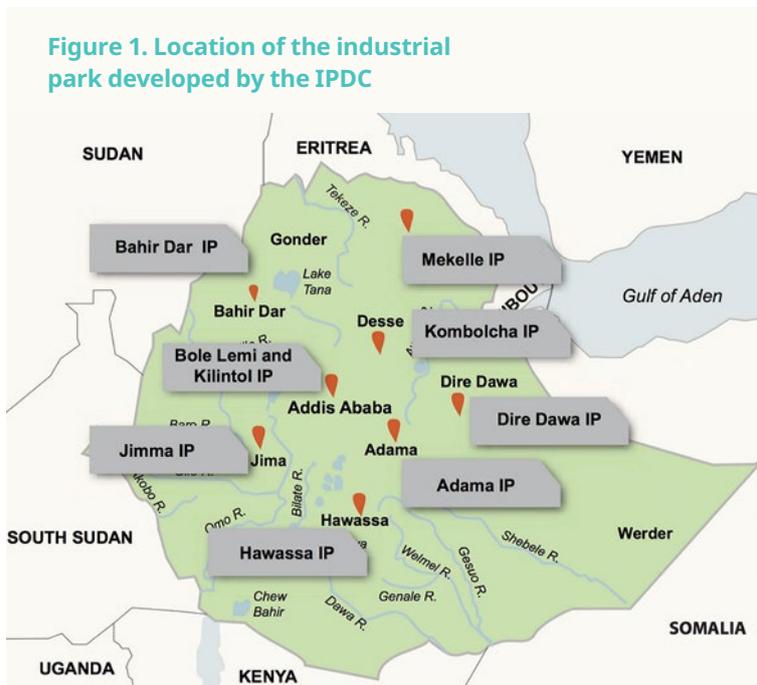


Figure 1. Location of the industrial park developed by the IPDC

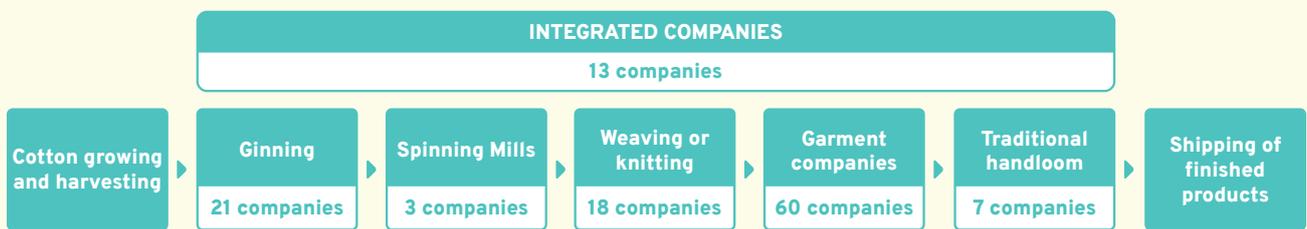
Source: IPDC 2020

- 2 An industrial park is generally defined as a portion of a city that is zoned for industrial use. In Ethiopia, these investment areas are open for the private sector (domestic and FDI) and located along key economic corridors, connected to ports by road and electric-powered railway lines with close proximity to high labour force pool.
- 3 The first park developed by the Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) was Bole Lemi Industrial Park-I (BLIP-I) which started operations in 2014. BLIP-I is located in Addis Ababa and contains 20 shades (production facilities) and a total of 11 companies. The largest industrial park in the country is Hawassa Industrial Park, located in Hawassa city. In operation since 2016, it currently has 52 shades and contains a total of 22 companies (IPDC 2020).

Ready-made garment factories in Ethiopia are mainly involved in producing T-shirts, trousers, swimwear and sportswear (Theuws and Overeem 2019; Haan and Theuws 2018). Although Ethiopia's export capacity has decreased slightly over the past three years, textile exports have increased significantly at an average annual rate of 31 per cent since

2010. Textiles now rank as Ethiopia's sixth largest export category (IPDC 2020; Tamru and Gebrewolde 2020). The main international garment brands active in Ethiopia are H&M and PVH (Haan and Theuws 2018). The top three importers of Ethiopian textiles and apparel are Germany (33 per cent), the United States (20 per cent) and Turkey (10 per cent) (ILO 2019a).

Figure 2. The textiles and garment value chain in Ethiopia



Source: Haan and Theuws 2018.

The raw materials such as cotton needed in the garment/textiles sector are mainly imported as the local market is unable to meet demand.





3. Occupational safety and health in Ethiopia's garment/textiles global supply chain

The garment/textiles supply chain in Ethiopia involve a range of actors and institutions that support OSH, including the national authorities responsible for OSH, institutions involved in OSH promotion, risk prevention and compensation, employers' and workers' organizations and other industry associations.

Research conducted by the ILO in 2020 identified gaps in the measures adopted by garment factories to prevent and control occupational risks. These gaps were attributed to a general lack of awareness about occupational risks and OSH requirements as well as limited resources and capacities to invest in OSH. Additional constraints to OSH improvement included the lack of enforcement of legislation,⁴ the lack of technical skills of labour inspectors, and a shortage of occupational health services professionals. The research found that support from employers' and workers' organizations can be an important driver in the enforcement of OSH

legislation but that limited capacity often prevents them from fulfilling that role.

Another ILO study suggested that greater emphasis should be placed on enhancing labour law enforcement, strengthening social dialogue and collective bargaining, and reforming national wage policies. Moreover, OSH inspections and advisory services do not adequately address the needs of the sector and only a few factories in Ethiopia have functional OSH management systems (ILO 2019a).

The ILO, in consultation with partners and stakeholders, identified 14 intervention areas to improve OSH in garment factories (ILO 2020a), including strengthening labour inspection, capacity-building for workers on OSH, strengthening public employment injury insurance, revising the OSH directive and upgrading first aid rooms and clinics in factories, among others.

⁴ In Ethiopia, the Occupational Safety and Health directive, which was adopted in 2008, without prejudice to the Labour Proclamation, lays down general duties of employers and the duties and rights of workers, and the need for certain organizational measures such as a safety and health policy and arrangements, and for personal protective equipment. It also specifies measures for controlling a wide range of risks, such as those from chemicals, noise, radiation, machinery, working at heights, boilers and lifting equipment. There are also specific provisions for the recording and notifying of occupational accidents and diseases. It is also worth noting that Ethiopia has ratified the ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)



4. COVID-19 and the garment/textiles global supply chain in Ethiopia

4.1 Measures to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 in Ethiopia

Between 13 March 2020, when the first COVID-19 case was detected in Ethiopia, and 7 April 2021, there were 221,544 confirmed cases in the country. It was feared that the pandemic could have a significant impact on Ethiopia, where access to clean water and sanitation services are limited (EPHI 2020b; UN 2020). In addition, health facilities do not have the capacity to manage high caseloads (EPHI 2020b).

The Ethiopian Government adopted a proactive approach from the outset, introducing protocols to prevent and mitigate the spread of the virus before the first case was even reported in the country. Additional protocols included guidelines for managing confirmed and suspected cases; risk communication; financial support to businesses and workers; and workplace OSH measures (Zikargae 2020; EPHI 2020a; EPHI 2020b; MOLSA 2020; Shigute et al. 2020).

Furthermore, in April 2020, the Government developed the Economic Impact Responses Assessment and Policy to provide financial support to households (Ministry of Finance and Economic Commission 2020).⁵ The urban productive safety net programme supported the urban poor and temporary workers whose income depended on daily wages. Other household measures included ensuring the availability of food stocks/food banks

and emergency supplies at national and regional levels and upscaling the existing rural and urban safety net programmes to include cash transfers and other temporary shelter and care services to cushion the adverse effects of the pandemic.

The Government also implemented various **measures to minimize the impact of the pandemic on the private sector** (Mengistu et al. 2020). More than half of all export-oriented firms and nearly one third of all firms in industrial parks received some form of government support. The most prevalent type of support was the deferral of rental payments, which was enacted by the IPDC. However, the government did not provide any direct financial assistance to support companies with continued salary payments to their workers (Mengistu et al. 2020).

A survey conducted in 2020 indicated that the majority of people in Ethiopia did not consider COVID-19 to be a threat to their health. It was also found that people had low levels of knowledge (Kassa et al. 2020), risk perception (EPHI 2020b) and adherence to preventive measures (Zikargae 2020; Kayrite et al. 2020; Kassie et al. 2020). Since the majority of the population live in rural areas of the country, people have limited access to media and other electronic platforms where COVID-19-related information is available (Baye 2020; EPHI 2020b).

The Ministry of Health, the Prime Minister's Office and Regional Health Bureaus, all of which are government institutions, were found to be

⁵ This document contained strategies to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. It focused on protecting the welfare of households as a crucial strategy towards this objective.

reliable sources of information about the pandemic (EPHI 2020b). To reach rural communities with risk-related information, the Government used health workers, health extension workers, community volunteers, kebele leaders, clan leaders, religious leaders, radio, mobile vans and available community networks (EPHI 2020b).

4.2 Measures to support workplaces in the prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 in the garment/textiles global supply chain in Ethiopia

The main measures to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 in workplaces (including textile and garment factories within and outside of industrial parks) were the development and adoption of COVID-19 workplace response protocols, the

formation of a national tripartite OSH response team, and the provision and organization of awareness-raising trainings (Zikargae 2020; EPHI 2020b; MOLSA 2020; EPHI 2020a; Shigute et al. 2020).

These measures were developed through social dialogue processes led by MOLSA, BOLSA, the Office of the Prime Minister, workers' and employers' organizations, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) and the Ministry of Health. International support was also provided by the ILO and GIZ. None of the participants reported receiving direct support from global buyers in developing these measures.

It was reported that implementation and monitoring of the response measures were undertaken by national and regional labour authorities. It was coordinated by the labour inspectorate and the national tripartite OSH response team (the role and composition of the response team is described in section 5.2).

International support for Ethiopia's efforts to prevent and mitigate COVID-19

- The ILO was supportive in the development of the COVID-19 workplace response protocol, sharing guidelines, tools and lessons learned, organizing awareness-raising activities, and providing PPE, as reported by representatives from the labour authorities and workers' and employers' organizations who participated in the study. The ILO supported the adoption of World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and organised online discussion fora to share information and best practices from other countries.
- GIZ supported employers' organizations with providing awareness-raising trainings on infection prevention and psychological readiness. Furthermore, in May and June 2020, the organization donated face masks, blankets, body soap and toothbrushes for use by those in industrial park quarantine centres.
- In the early stages of the pandemic (March 2020), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) used the network of established community conversation facilitators (health extension workers and community leaders working with local health facilities in rural Ethiopia) to disseminate information in rural regions on the risks related to COVID-19. This approach was primarily used in rural areas of the south (the region in which the Hawassa industrial park is located) (IOM 2020).





5. Occupational safety and health measures to prevent and mitigate exposure to COVID-19 in workplaces: Implementation in the garment/textiles sector

5.1 COVID-19 workplace response protocol development

The COVID-19 workplace response protocol⁶ and checklist for labour inspectors were developed and promoted by MOLSA. The online protocol contains various workplace preventive measures for implementation by employers, workers and safety officers, including advice on handwashing, maintaining clean materials, and physical distancing, among others (see Annex 2 for details).

Representatives from the national and regional labour authorities engaged in discussions with factories (both within and outside the industrial parks) about the protocol and distributed the checklist to be used by labour inspectors. Based on guidance from the National Labour Authority and the Ministry of Health, implementation of the protocol was monitored by the labour inspectorate at the regional level.

5.2 Establishment of a national response team and workplace committees

A representative from MOLSA explained that a health, safety and work environment team was established at the national level, led by OSH professionals and including representatives from workers' and employers' organizations. This team, organized to manage OSH-related issues in workplaces, contributed to drafting the protocol, taking into account the anticipated impact of the pandemic on the safety and health of workers. The respondent also explained that the ILO provided technical support in the development of the protocol.

The national response team was also involved in discussions with factory employers and labour inspectors about preventive measures and mitigation strategies, mainly related to the need to set up quarantine centres in industrial parks for suspected cases and to the screening and handling of such cases.

⁶ The government prepared this tripartite protocol jointly with the Ethiopian Employers' Confederation and the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions. See: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, "[COVID-19 Workplace Response Protocol](#)", Addis Ababa, 18 March 2020.

The team also supported factories with the establishment of COVID-19 **response committees in the factories**, as mandated in the protocol.⁷ The committees were responsible for supervising preventive measures, including physical distancing among workers and the provision of sanitizers, soap, masks and an adequate water supply, as well as providing guidance on OSH issues in the workplace. The factories that participated in this research all reported establishing COVID-19 committees and confirmed that the committees spearheaded the development of COVID-19 measures at workplace level. Committee members included factory managers, compliance officers, safety officers, medical service providers (nurses), workers' representatives from different work sections and support staff (mainly human resources management). As one worker noted:

There was a team established for COVID-19. The members are supervisors, human resources, quality department, labour union and higher managers. Each of them has a different role. Some of them control the delivery of face masks and others [are in charge of] sanitary-related activities like distribution of soap and sanitizers. The team met once a week and [discussed] feedback from workers and tried to address the feedback.

A worker and member of the COVID-19 committee in the factory explained:

After the establishment of the committee, we informed workers about the severity of the disease, prevention measures like face masks and physical distancing. Human resources, the nurse, the compliance department, and the COVID-19 committee participated in providing the information. The COVID-19 committee provides education to workers every Saturday and Wednesday and puts out daily reports, including the number of cases and deaths, on the notice board so that everyone is kept updated.

According to factory managers and supervisors, the COVID-19 committees in the factories worked in collaboration with the IPDC, employers' associations, workers' organizations, BOLSA, public health authorities (EPHI and the Ministry of Health), the EIC and the Minister of Industry to develop workplace measures.

At the request of the factories, the federal labour authority also provided **on-the-job training for members of the COVID-19 workplace response committees**. This training included information on infection prevention and safety measures to be adopted by workers and employers. The federal labour authority also closely monitored termination of workers and provided recommendations on how best to resolve these situations through discussions with employers and workers.

5.3 Capacity-building and information dissemination and training

It was reported that various trainings were conducted for workers, employers and occupational health service professionals from different factories and industrial parks. These included training for workers, investors and employers from Debre-Berhan and Hawassa industrial parks. Furthermore, senior labour inspectors provided training for workers in factories in Hawassa (both within and outside the industrial parks).

Training sessions for workers and employers in the industrial parks focused on raising awareness about COVID-19 prevention and control, monitoring the impact of training on preventing the transmission of COVID-19, raising awareness on how to manage confirmed cases, and improving "psychological readiness".⁸ The trainings were undertaken in collaboration with the EPHI, regional health bureaus, the city administration health department, the CDC, EIC and IPDC.

⁷ The protocol requires factories to establish a task force led by the head of the enterprise and including workers' organizations/union representatives to monitor COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures.

⁸ Psychological readiness includes how to keep upbeat and cope in the case of testing positive and/or going into quarantine. It was reported that there were cases of stigmatization and that some workers who tested positive did not return to work due to misinformation and wrong perceptions about the virus.

Furthermore, in Addis Ababa, training was also provided to workers in garment and textile factories (two workers from each factory) on infection prevention mechanisms and on appropriate measures to adopt when using public transport services. The training was supported by the Addis Ababa private health service association.

It was also reported that health information developed by employers' organizations was disseminated to workers. For example, in April 2020, banners, brochures and posters based on the COVID-19 workplace response protocol were distributed to factories inside the industrial parks. In addition, employers' organizations prepared audio materials that were broadcast through the parks' FM radio station.

Employers' organizations also distributed information on the national COVID-19 protocol to their members, including to garment and textile factories, primarily via email to minimize the spread of infection. One employers' organization reported that since April 2020, it has translated and shared ILO guidelines on managing COVID-19 in the workplace,⁹ a needs assessment tool for enterprises¹⁰ and the six-step COVID-19 business continuity plan.¹¹

The EPHI reported participating in capacity-building trainings for occupational health service professionals, focusing on measures to be implemented in industrial parks. This was confirmed by occupational health service professionals in the factories who reported receiving training from the EPHI on infection prevention measures and the management of confirmed COVID-19 cases.

It was also reported that employers' and workers' organizations advised factories on other OSH-related risks arising from the pandemic, including psychological risks. As a respondent from a workers' organization explained:

There is an OSH monitoring committee in the factories that handle such issues. The team is composed of the medical department, human resources, representatives of workers' and employers' organizations. We had discussions with them on possible issues like stress and other safety issues resulting from employment termination and workplace arrangements, mainly for pregnant workers, the disabled, those with underlying medical conditions and older workers.

The labour inspectors mentioned that, although they did receive instructions from their labour office about the declaration of a national state of emergency,¹² none of them received any training on how to prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19. They reported assisting committee members in garment factories with on-the-job, awareness-raising training on infection-prevention measures, and on the management of suspected cases.

5.4 Occupational safety and health prevention measures in workplaces

As reported by most participants in the study with direct involvement at the workplace level (factory managers, department supervisors, workers and occupational health service professionals in the factories participating in the research), the main prevention measures implemented in workplaces were:

- awareness-raising (through leaflets, posters and audio-visual materials);
- physical distancing;
- provision of personal protective equipment to workers (including face mask);

9 The [COVID-19: An Employers' Guide on Managing Your Workplace During COVID-19](#), was developed by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO-ACT/EMP) in consultation with the WHO. It includes precautionary measures to be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in workplaces and the responsibilities of employers in ensuring the safety and health of their workers.

10 The aim of this [tool](#) developed by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO-ACT/EMP) is to help employers and business membership organizations evaluate the needs of enterprises as a result of COVID-19 crisis.

11 This ILO [tool](#) is designed to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) during the COVID-19 crisis.

12 The National State of Emergency proclamation declared in April 2020 (which was lifted in September 2020) prohibited organizations covered by Labour Proclamation No 1156/2019 to terminate employment contracts except in accordance with the protocol established by MOLSA.

- provision of hand sanitizer;
- provision of hand washing facilities and soap;
- Discouraging the sharing of items among workers to minimize the spread of infection;
- Temperature screening of workers before entering the factories.

All factory managers also reported providing training to workers on prevention measures and on the promotion of physical distance and hand washing in factories. To maintain adequate physical distancing between workers, some managers reported changes in seating arrangements to maintain adequate distance between workers, the purchase of additional transport vehicles [buses], demarcated lines for physical distancing purposes, and increasing the number of cafeteria service shifts. Moreover, some interviewees reported the use of physical barriers to minimize contact between workers in the cafeteria. However, workers reported that physical distancing measures were not adequately complied with in the cafeteria and on buses.

Factory managers reported that their primary focus was on applying preventive measures as advised by health officials from the Ministry of Health and the EPHI.

In terms of psychological risks, occupational health service professionals and some workers reported that workers experienced anxiety and stress, with those who tested positive for COVID-19 expressing concerns about their jobs. They also noted cases of discrimination, particularly in residential areas. To address such issues, factories focused on awareness-raising and reassurance activities.

As one participant noted:

“Nurses provided advice on anxiety, stress, violence and harassment through speakers in the factory but the main focus of the messages was mainly on prevention measures.”

Another worker from different factory and a member of COVID-19 committee said:

“...as there are large number of workers in the factory, there was stress related to risk of acquiring infection at the beginning of the pandemic. Thus, awareness creation activities were taken to address such issues”.

5.5 Arrangements for specific categories of workers

Most factory managers, occupational health service professionals and supervisors said preventive measures applied equally to workers in all factory work sections and departments. One labour inspector explained that at one point, temporary workers did not receive PPE but that this was resolved through a discussion with employers. Overall, there is no evidence that workers were treated differently based on their employment status. Prevention measures applied equally to both permanent and temporary workers.

There is evidence that some accommodation was made for workers in vulnerable conditions, in particular workers in high-risk groups (that is, at a higher risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19) such as older workers. Some participants mentioned that priority was given to pregnant women and older workers for receiving paid or unpaid leave from the factory. One factory manager reported that they provided paid leave to workers with children or to those with caregiving roles at home. Labour authority representatives, including labour inspectors, indicated that in general, special measures applied to older workers and those with underlying health conditions. They were, for example allowed to remain at home and use annual leave while continuing to receive their basic salaries.

Nevertheless, this approach seems to have not been applied consistently across all workplaces. As one worker explained:

No special arrangement was made for any group. For instance, a while back there was a COVID-19 positive pregnant worker in the company, who was given only 15 days' sick leave like any other positive case. In addition, there are disabled persons in the company who need special arrangements, but nothing has been done so far.

5.6 Arrangements for suspected or confirmed cases

Persons who had been in close contact with someone who had tested positive for the virus or had tested positive themselves were either transferred to the quarantine centre, taken to treatment centres, or placed in homecare depending on the severity of the case.

Respondents from employers' organizations reported that support was provided for workplaces to facilitate proper management of suspected or confirmed cases in the factories. In interviews, most workers mentioned that they were aware of measures taken to manage suspected or confirmed cases in their factory. As one worker explained:

Yes, suspected and confirmed cases were detected among workers. According to the severity, some workers stayed in the waiting room and others travelled home and stayed till a second examination was conducted. When someone is suspected [of being positive for COVID-19], the identified worker is taken to the nearest private hospital with support from the company.

5.7 Compliance with and enforcement of COVID-19 OSH measures

Measures to ensure compliance were established within the industrial parks as well as in individual factories. A respondent from an employers' organization explained that a steering committee was established in the industrial park to provide direction and to monitor the implementation of COVID-19 mitigation measures in factories. Membership of the committee comprised the president and vice-president of the industrial park, and representatives from the park's EIC branch, investors' association, commercial bank, customs service, security agency and the district administration. Based on the committee's report, the industrial park submits a report to the IPDC every two weeks. The respondent also reported:

Under this committee there is a sub-team working on monitoring employers' activities and also workers' occupational health and safety. The team mainly focuses on COVID-19. In addition, the representatives from this team, the EIC and investor's association monitor the factories every week by using a checklist and giving a rank to employers, which is reported to the IPDC and the board of factories, so that feedback can be given for each employer accordingly. Following that, if the company doesn't take corrective measures, punishment, ranging from a warning to closure of the company, could be taken.

Compliance with workplace measures was also monitored by labour inspectors. Labour inspectors from the Regional Labour Authority were responsible for ensuring compliance with the COVID-19 workplace response protocol in the factories, working closely with safety officers and factory managers. All labour inspectors interviewed reported receiving and using a specifically designed checklist during their workplace inspections to assess implementation of and compliance with preventive measures set out in the protocol. These measures included physical distancing, access to handwashing facilities with soap and water, provision of sanitizers and face masks, temperature checks at the workplace entrance, and information and training for workers.

The labour inspectors interviewed confirmed that for the most part, preventive measures were followed in the factories that they inspected. However, they all noted inconsistencies in compliance. Some factories, for example, did not provide PPE to their workers, which they attributed to limited awareness about the measures and the severity of the pandemic as well as a lack of resources. It was later reported that these issues were resolved with support from the ILO, who distributed face masks and sanitizers and organized awareness-raising events for the factories.

Nevertheless, it became apparent during interviews with managers, supervisors, occupational health services professionals and workers that not all factories had received inspection visits from labour inspectors.



6. COVID-19: Effects on workers and businesses in the garment/textiles global supply chain

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the garment/textiles global supply chain were varied. It included national lockdowns and restrictions on movement as well as falling demand and supply chain disruptions, which affected the garment industry in particular.

6.1 Effects on workers

The research findings indicated that workers were greatly affected by the pandemic, in particular financially and psychologically.

A World Bank study released in September 2020 indicated that workers in most companies had to take temporary paid or unpaid leave (Mengistu et al. 2020). Those most affected were daily workers, temporary workers, female workers and low-skilled workers.

In light of numerous factory closures, contract terminations, restrictions on movement, fears of being exposed to the virus and financial problems, many workers left the industrial park areas and returned to their rural communities (Meyer et al. 2020; Mengistu et al. 2020; EIC 2020a; ILO 2020e). This resulted in changes in the labour market, with increased migration from urban to rural parts of the country. Of the workers employed in Hawassa Industrial Park in January 2020, only 59 per cent were still working there during the period of April to July 2020 (Meyer et al. 2020).

The pandemic had a significant impact on workers' incomes. Basic salaries, benefits and allowances were reduced within the first few months after the first reported case of COVID-19 in Ethiopia. Some workers reported a reduction in salary of up to 40 per cent. Others noted that monthly incentives or commissions, a valuable supplement to salaries, were discontinued, making it even more difficult for them to cope financially. However, commissions were reportedly reinstated following a return to work a few months later.

Some workers and occupational health service professionals reported that workers were also affected by the above-mentioned increase in transportation costs, which further fuelled higher living expenses.

In terms of the psychological impact of the pandemic, some of the workers interviewed reported experiencing anxiety and fear of being infected when COVID-19 cases were initially detected in the factories in which they worked. As a result, some workers voluntarily resigned.¹³ Other reports indicated that workers were fearful of being tested because a positive diagnosis and quarantine could result in lost income or dismissal. Nevertheless, respondents interviewed indicated that the task force set up in factories to support workers through awareness-raising trainings helped to allay fears and mitigated some of the psychological impacts.

¹³ Similar findings were reported in an ILO study: [Advancing Decent Work and Inclusive Industrialization in Ethiopia](#); World Bank Group studies by A. Mengistu et al., [Firms in Ethiopia's Industrial Parks: COVID-19 Impacts, Challenges, and Government Response](#); and Christian Johannes Meyer et al., [The Market-Reach of Pandemics: Evidence from Female Workers in Ethiopia's Ready-Made Garment Industry](#).

6.2 Effects on businesses

The pandemic severely impacted production in Ethiopia's the garment/textiles global supply chain. Overall production declined by 40 per cent and selling capacity by 42 per cent due to the reduction in global demand (Mengistu et al. 2020). More than three quarters of individual companies saw up to 57 per cent decline in their sales and a 56 per cent fall in their output volumes resulting from order cancellations as the number of COVID-19 cases increased globally. This presented a major challenge to business continuity and the protection of employment.

A survey conducted by the EIC (EIC 2020a) to assess the impact of COVID-19 during the early stages of the pandemic confirm that businesses experienced lower demand, supply disruptions, financial difficulties, operational challenges, a decrease in productivity and disruptions in logistics services.

An ILO assessment conducted in April 2020¹⁴ found that the pandemic had greater impact on locally owned firms than in those established through FDI (ILO 2020e). Locally owned firms reported a lack of access to raw materials as the main challenge contributing to the decline in production. Additional challenges included a shortage of transport services for workers due to restrictions on the number of passengers per vehicle¹⁵ and added expenditure related to procurement and provision of PPE to workers.

Export-oriented firms also reported up to 67 per cent reduction in their sales and up to 57 per cent decline in their production volume. Some garment firms were able to shift their production to PPE although many were forced to stop production entirely (ILO 2020d; ILO 2020e).

Evidence from the four factories that participated in the study revealed that the effects on businesses were both economic and psychological. The economic effects resulted from factory closures, order cancellations and difficulties in sourcing materials for production. This mirrors the findings emanating from the desk research. Two of the factories that participated in the research closed temporarily -- one for three months.

Production fell in all four factories due to the demand and supply crisis in the global supply chain. One of the factories switched from exporting to only supply to the local market as a result of the global market demand shock and the closure of international borders. Factory managers and employers' organizations confirmed the decline in global demand for garment and textile products and identified numerous challenges related to importing raw materials and supplies needed for production.¹⁶

Other economic effects included costs associated with paying workers amid production losses and order cancellations. One factory manager, for example, reported that nearly half of the workers in the factory were allowed to stay home with pay. In addition, one respondent from an employers' organization indicated that some factories were unable to afford the increased cost of transporting workers to and from work.

Many employers indicated that the situation also impacted on their psychological wellbeing. They experienced increased levels of anxiety and fear resulting from the uncertainty related to business continuity, particularly during the initial stages of the pandemic.

¹⁴ The assessment covered 20 garment firms in the country (12 established with FDI and 8 local).

¹⁵ As part of the COVID-19 prevention mechanism in Ethiopia, the Government issued an emergency decree that foresaw, among others, a 50 per cent reduction in the number of travellers on public transport as a strategy to halt the pandemic. In order to compensate the transport sector's financial loss, transport suppliers doubled ticket prices for passengers.

¹⁶ See details of findings from: World Bank Group, [Firms in Ethiopia's Industrial Parks: COVID-19 Impacts, Challenges, and Government Response](#); ILO, "[Preliminary Analysis of a Garment Industry Survey in Ethiopia on COVID-19 Impact](#)", 16 April 2020; ILO, "[COVID-19: Challenges and Impact on the Garment and Textile Industry](#)", 14 April 2020; and Ethiopian Investment Commission, "[COVID-19 Ethiopia Response](#)", May 2020.





7. Effects of COVID-19 on sustainable sourcing policies of multinational enterprises

None of the factories that participated in the study reported any changes in sourcing criteria/requirements from their global buyers as a result of the pandemic. Interviews with all factory managers revealed that they continued to be subjected to the same requirements from global buyers.

Respondents from one factory reported that they received a visit from the buyer's compliance auditors, and that they received positive feedback on the factory's compliance with health and safety standards. Participants from another factory reported that buyers provided regular updates about the number of COVID-19 cases and prevention measures in workplaces.





8. Drivers and constraints in developing and implementing occupational safety and health measures

Government requirements, and the importance of business continuity and protecting workers' safety and health were reported as the key drivers for the development and implementation of COVID-19 preventive measures in workplaces. In interviews with representatives from national and regional labour authorities, the directives from the ministry of labour and the ministry of health were cited as the main driver for the measures developed and implemented at workplace level to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among workers. Guidance from the ILO was also highlighted as an incentive for the regional labour authorities to develop measures and support workplaces to ensure the safety and health of workers amid the pandemic. Employers' organizations also indicated that government requirements were instrumental in driving the development and implementation of prevention and mitigation measures.

In addition to government requirements, factory managers, supervisors and workers also highlighted the important role that the guidance and support that they received from their corporate headquarters and from the workplace OSH committees played to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and ensure business continuity. Employers recognised the important link between adherence

to COVID-19 protocols and continued production. As one factory manager clearly stated:

“... (W)hat else could motivate us other than ensuring our workers' health and safety. Business...cannot be maintained if we have unhealthy workers.”

A number of constraints were reported, including a lack of financial resources to provide training, inadequate implementation of measures, and a shortage of quality PPE, particularly early on in the pandemic. However, issues related to PPE were eventually resolved once supplies became more readily available and some development partners supported the provision of equipment to workplaces.

Financial challenges were cited as the main constraint for most labour authorities and employers' and workers' organizations. This included a lack of resources for monitoring the implementation of prevention and mitigation measures and for providing training in workplaces (including a dearth of skilled trainers in the country to develop and deliver trainings).

Labour inspectors faced challenges in carrying out their support functions due to a lack of financial resources, PPE, technical skills and transport to reach all the factories.



9. Perceptions on the effects of occupational safety and health measures on workers and businesses

Most respondents engaged in factory support functions indicated that OSH measures were effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19 infections in workplaces. Similarly, almost all managers, supervisors, occupational health services professionals and workers agreed that the prevention measures kept the number of COVID-19 cases in the factories lower than they would have been in the absence of such measures. One factory manager reported that no positive cases was recorded in his factory during the three months prior to the interview (December 2020).

Although positive cases were reported in all the factories that participated in the study, factory managers confirmed that the number of cases decreased once prevention measures were implemented. These protective measures made workers feel safer.¹⁷

However, some concerns were raised about compliance. Over time, it was reported that workers became complacent and failed to adhere to measures related to handwashing/sanitizing,

wearing of masks, physical distancing and temperature screening.

In terms of the effects of the OSH measures on businesses, most respondents from the four factories reported that the cost of preventive and mitigating measures (such as provision of PPE for workers, additional vehicles for transportation, special arrangements for cafeteria services, and training) required additional resources that had a particular impact on employers facing financial difficulties.

Some factories experienced problems with production as a result of worker absenteeism in part sparked by fears of infection. However, factory managers indicated that preventive measures enabled production to continue production and therefore ensured business continuity.¹⁸ Similarly, as explained in section 7, workers reported that factory task forces set up to support workers played an important part in allaying fears of the pandemic and also helped to mitigate some of the psychological effects.

¹⁷ Similar findings on the impacts of OSH measures on workers can be seen in the ILO study: [COVID-19 and the Garment and Textile Sector In Ethiopia: Workers' Perspectives on COVID-19 Response](#).

¹⁸ Similar finding can be seen in an ILO article, "[Coping with COVID-19 – Lesson from the Ethiopian Garment and Textile Industry](#)", 10 June 2020.



10. Long-term emergency preparedness and response plans

The study did not find any definitive OSH-related long-term preparedness plans at the national and factory levels. Where such plans were in place, they were not comprehensive. However, it was found that there was general awareness about the need to develop such plans.

At the workplace level, none of the factories had long-term emergency preparedness plans. Similarly, none of the workers' organizations reported having or developing any long-term preparedness plans.

However, one representative from an employers' organization explained that a disaster risk management strategy is being prepared by the IPDC. Once finalized, it will be shared with stakeholders, including investors in the parks. Components of the strategy include identification of hazards and procedures and guidelines on how to respond to future epidemics and pandemics. The representative added:

COVID-19 gave us the experience of how to handle situations like this; how to mobilize the workers, create awareness and communicate and work closely with the investors. We have done a great job as there was a good

commitment among the employers and the teams formed by the workers.

Nevertheless, representatives of employers' organizations emphasized the need for proper implementation of OSH measures in workplaces to combat future pandemics like COVID-19.

At the national level, respondents highlighted a few promising initiatives. For example, a representative from a national labour authority indicated that the knowledge and experience of controlling HIV in workplaces will be used to inform their overall approach to the management of future pandemics. A memorandum of understanding is being drafted to ensure closer collaboration between MOLSA and the Ministry of Health.¹⁹

Plans are also in place to respond to the needs of the poor. According to a national labour authority representative, a trust fund supported by different stakeholders has been established to support the most vulnerable groups, while a food bank has been established that reserves non-perishable food for use during emergencies such as the current pandemic.

¹⁹ In Ethiopia, there is a National Disaster Health Preparedness and Response Guideline by the Federal Ministry of Health (65) and Public Health Emergency Management Guideline by the Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute and Public Health Emergency Management Centre (66) for responding to public health emergencies.



Sabtuah p.k.	Doc No. 0000000
First aid procedure	Revision date
	Page 1 of 1
PROSEDUR PERTAMA TOLAK DAN PERTolongan PERTAMA	
1. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
2. Pastikan keadaan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
3. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
4. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
5. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
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8. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
9. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
10. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	
11. Pastikan keselamatan diri dan orang lain!	

Prepared by: Siti Nurhaliza Checked by: Farid F Approved by: Farid F
Signature: [Signature] Signature: [Signature] Signature: [Signature]
Date: 05/11/2020 Date: 05/11/2020 Date: 05/11/2020



11. Shortcomings and opportunities for improvement in occupational safety and health

While coordinated efforts were made to support workplaces in the garment/textiles supply chain in Ethiopia to prevent exposure to COVID-19, the research identified some shortcomings in the implementation of measures, which in turn highlight opportunities for improving the management of OSH at workplace level.

Research participants reported that while protocols related to the proper use of face masks, handwashing and sanitizing, physical distancing and temperature screening were initially complied with, compliance decreased over time. Some of the reasons included a lack of resources to ensure compliance, gaps in awareness, and changes in perception of the severity of the pandemic over time.

Previous research indicated that only a few factories in Ethiopia have functional OSH management systems (ILO 2019a), and the current research highlight the general absence of long-term emergency plans. It is arguable that had these systems and plans been in place, the decrease in compliance with COVID-19 preventive

measures over time would have been eliminated or at least significantly reduced.

Additional opportunities for improvement include conducting more rigorous workplace risk assessments that include consideration for other occupational risks arising from the pandemic and for workers who are part of high-risk groups. This would facilitate the development appropriate prevention measures.

The study also highlights drivers that can be leveraged for OSH improvements in Ethiopia's garment/textiles factories. These include government regulations, bipartite OSH committees in factories, and the establishment of a national tripartite OSH response team, all of which greatly facilitated the development and implementation of COVID-19 preventive measures.

Finally, the study also highlighted the need for additional resources (both financial and technical) to enable labour inspectors to support workplaces and monitor compliance with OSH measures.



12. Conclusion

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the garment/textiles supply chain in Ethiopia. A decline in global market demand and disruption in the supply of raw and intermediate materials impacted business continuity and worker welfare. Various support and preventive measures were developed and implemented in the sector to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in workplaces and ensure the safety and health of workers.

The main measures implemented at workplace level included awareness-raising and training; provision of face masks for workers; provision of hand washing facilities and hand sanitizers, physical distancing measures and temperature

screenings. Although these measures were reported to be effective, there was a noticeable decline in compliance over time.

The study identified a number of positive developments that should inform measures to address the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and also prepare for future emergencies. These include the need to strengthen OSH management systems at both workplace and national levels and to develop long-term emergency preparedness plans. In Ethiopia, it is encouraging to note that preparations are under way for the development of a national plan to respond to future pandemics.



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Annex



Annex I

List of publicly and privately owned industrial parks in Ethiopia

List of publicly owned industrial parks						
Name of the industrial park	Location	Sector	Number of companies	Total factory shades	Number of workers	Export value in 2019 to February 2020
Bole Lemi-I IP	Addis Ababa	Textile/apparel/leather and leather products	11 (all are FDI)	20	~18,000	\$33.1 million
Hawassa IP	Hawassa	Textiles and garment	22 (3 local)	52	~32,000	\$55.3 million
Mekelle IP	Mekelle	Apparel and textiles	9 (2 local and 1 both)	15	~3,000	\$3.4 million
Adama IP	Adama	Garment, textile and machinery	6 (1 local)	15	~5,000	\$1.9 million
Kombolcha IP	Kombolcha	Apparel and textiles	6 (all FDI)	9	~2,000	\$6.5 million
Bahir Dar IP	Bahir Dar	Textiles and apparel	1 (FDI)	9	~10,000	Not started exporting
Debre Berhan IP	Debre Berhan	Garment and apparel	2 (all FDI)	8	~10,000	Not started exporting
Kilinto IP ^a	Addis Ababa	Pharmaceutical hub	13 (7 local, 1 both)	Serviced land		
Bole Lemi II IP ^a	Addis Ababa	Apparel and textiles	3 (all FDI)	2 shades and serviced land		
Dire Dawa IP	Dire Dawa	Garment, apparel and textiles	4 (1 local)	15		
Jimma IP	Jimma	Apparel and textiles	1 (FDI)	9		
Addis Industry Village	Addis Ababa	Garment and apparel	13 (only 1 FDI)	Different buildings		
ICT Park	Addis Ababa	ICT	2	Serviced land and different buildings		
Semera IP ^b	Semera	Multipurpose		8		

All parks are operational except **a**: the park is at the status of "ready for sublease", **b**: the park is at the status of "under construction".

List of privately owned industrial parks					
Name of the IP	Location	Sector	Total factory shades	Number of workers	Export value in 2019 to February 2020
Huajian IP	Addis Ababa	Textile/apparel/ leather and leather products	8		\$4.6 million
George Show IP	Addis Ababa	Leather and leather products	33		~\$1.7 million
Eastern IP	Dukem Addis Ababa	Mixed			~\$6 million
Vogue IP	Tirgay Regional State	Textiles and apparel	2 (each 100,000 sqm)	~2,000	~\$1.4 million
DPL IP	Tirgay Regional State	Textiles and apparel	5		~\$1.6 million
CCCC Arerti IP	Amhara Regional State	Construction materials and home appliances	5		Not started exporting
CCECC Dire Dawa IP ^a	North-Eastern Part of Ethiopia	Mixed			Not started exporting

All parks are operational except **a**: Under construction

Annex II

List of COVID-19 workplace prevention measures

I. Precautions to be taken by the safety officers/Safety Committee

1. Safety officers shall conduct regular observation of entire workstation and facility to follow up on conditions that may expose workers to COVID-19.
2. Establish a task force and work closely in organizing COVID-19 prevention and mitigation.
3. In the event that a worker shows COVID-19 symptoms or is suspected of infection, safety officers should work closely with healthcare workers to separate such worker and report the case based on company procedure and ensure provision of the necessary support for the worker.
4. If a worker is diagnosed with COVID-19, identify workers who have been in contact with the infected worker and clean the workplace with help from the EPHI.
5. Safety officers should closely follow up workers who are at high risk of exposure.
6. Safety officers should monitor and ensure workers of all shifts have access to necessary supplies for cleaning, hygiene and personal protection, including masks, gloves, shoes and apron as needed with necessary guidance for proper use and disposal mechanisms.
7. Safety officers shall provide updated information about COVID-19.

II. Precautions to be taken by workers

1. Workers should properly clean their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
2. Workers should avoid handshaking and body contact.
3. Workers should cover their mouth with disposable tissue or flexed elbow when coughing or sneezing.
4. Workers should avoid sharing PPE with others.
5. Workers who have a cough or fever should notify their employer via phone and get medical follow-up from home.
6. Workers should keep their personal protective devices and clothes clean and use appropriately.
7. In the event that a worker is confirmed to have a positive case, all other workers should follow all safety precautions given by the employer without panic.
8. Cleaning personnel should properly clean common utilities and materials, taking due care for their own safety
9. Cleaning personnel shall carefully dispose of used tissues and sanitary materials while avoiding direct bodily contact.

III. Administrative and legal measures to be taken step by step

1. Whereas crisis handling and responsiveness capacity varies between enterprises and sectors, apart from the solutions emanating from each enterprise, adopting solutions/recommendations proposed by third parties is encouraged.
2. Suspend negotiations of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) for the coming 12 months.
3. Freeze salary increment decisions for the coming 12 months.
4. Payments of fringe benefits and allowances, such as hardship allowance, transport allowance, housing allowance, bonuses and commissions are suspended until the situation is fully controlled.
5. Existing salary scales can be revised based on dialogue between employers and trade unions to support the survival of enterprises.
6. Unused annual leaves are to be used by workers; for those who have already fully utilized it, it should be arranged that they take at least half of their annual leave from the upcoming budget year.
7. Temporary loans are to be provided for workers who occupy non-essential functions in the enterprises; assurance is to be given of their return when the situation gets better.
8. Employers' and workers' organizations operating at different levels should encourage enterprises to fulfil their social responsibilities to the level of their capacity.

Annex III

Recommendations

The validation workshop with key stakeholders included national and regional labour authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, workers' social security agencies, international NGOs and multinational enterprises (global buyers). Some of the key recommendations made by the workshop participants included:

- Revision of the COVID-19 workplace response protocol taking into consideration sector specificity;
- Training and equipping labour inspectors adequately;
- Extending coverage of national OSH extension services to all enterprises;
- Regular training for workplace OSH providers;
- Continued support from the ILO, Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) and Ethiopian Economics Association (EEA) to labour inspectors and workplaces;
- Continued awareness-creation among workers regarding the pandemic and the need to adhere to the prevention measures;
- Increased public transportation for workers by government ministries;
- Updating the national and regional COVID-19 response plans and enhancing enforcement and monitoring mechanisms;
- Increased cooperation between workers' and employers' organizations to support factories;
- Joint work by employers and brands to ensure compliance at workplace level;
- Prioritization of vaccination for the industrial workforce;
- Ensuring adequate resources in workplaces such as PPE, sanitizers and handwashing stations;
- Reorganizing workplaces as per standards (reorganization of work stations to ensure physical distancing);
- Including COVID-19 in brands' verification audits;
- Increased reporting of COVID-19 cases by employers to the Government;
- Continued research and dissemination of research findings.

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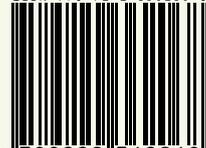


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