



**General Trade Union of
Workers in Textile, Garment
and Clothing Industries / Jordan**

Strategic Plan 2021-2026



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Letter from the President

The General Trade Union of workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries draws our strength from workers' support for our organization, as well as faith in our mission to defend and advance workers' rights within the framework of a balanced relationship between the parties involved in the production process: workers and employers. The Union has always sought to achieve this balance, ensuring the rights of workers without threatening the viability of garment manufacturers, so as to ensure the sustainability of workers' jobs.

Thus, the union – representing the many workers in the sector – has worked to sign various collective agreements since the founding of union, as well as negotiating sectoral agreements since 2013. These agreements aim to improve the workers benefits and ensure their job security, in addition to achieving a balanced relationship with employers. A unified contract for migrant, refugee and Jordanian workers has also been adopted. All in all, these agreements are considered a constructive milestone achieved by the trade union, and we hope that such achievements will continue with the support of our social partners.

Concurrently, the union take pride in all its members, migrant and Jordanian, with 76 per cent of workers being migrants. To this end, it has worked to introduce amendments to the labour and social security laws to ensure that migrant workers are represented by the union and are treated equally to Jordanian workers under the law. The union has been keen to reach out to migrant workers at their workplaces and hold training workshops for them to familiarize them with the union. We hope to continue to hold such workshops and issue awareness-raising publications, as they are a key tool utilized to inform migrant workers of their rights and duties.

Moreover, the union takes pride in the high level of representation of women workers in the sector, who comprise over 70 percent of the union's membership. This drives the union's efforts in calling for legal amendments to ensure a suitable working environment for women workers, free from all manifestations of violence or harassment. It is from this premise that the union, and as part of its efforts to enhance the participation of women in the sector, was keen to include a clause in the labor law and sectoral collective bargaining agreement criminalizing harassment in all its forms. We always hope to find the support from our social partners to hold trainings, develop educational courses, and develop awareness-raising publications to prevent all forms of harassment. In addition, the union always looks to secure childcare services and allowances for working women within the framework of promoting women's participation in work.

Our union, while always a proud believer in workers' rights, also rejects constraining companies in our sector and has always stood with garment employers in demanding reductions to production and utility costs, and has supported employers in accessing different export markets and boosting their production.

The General Trade Union of workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries believes that workers are an essential pillar of production and development. For this reason, our Executive Committee has set our sights on reaching workers in their scattered workplaces across the country and developed a plan to achieve this goal. We hope to find support from our partners in enabling us to hold workshops and provide training programmes for workers, to introduce them to the role of the trade union and the sectoral collective agreements that have been signed and to convey the union's message to as many workers as possible.

Fathallah Al-Omrani

President - General Trade Union of Workers in Textile,
Garment and Clothing Industries in Jordan

Introduction

Jordan's garment industry is among the leading export industries in the country. In 2020, exports of garments and related products were valued at over 1.6 billion USD, accounting for around 22 percent of Jordan's total exports.¹ There are currently over 80 export-oriented garment factories operating in the sector, employing over 66,000 workers, of whom approximately 75 percent are migrants and 73 percent are women.²

Since its establishment in 1954, the General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment and Clothing Industries / Jordan (JTGCU) has worked to defend and advance the rights of workers in this sector. Over the decades, JTGCU has evolved into one of the largest workers' organizations in Jordan with a capacity to engage with garment workers nationwide. Today, the trade union has a membership of almost 20,000 workers including both Jordanian and migrant workers. Among its notable achievements, it has established branches in all three major garment industrial zones in Jordan, as well as having established 61 factory-level union committees. Through our team of migrant worker organizers, JTGCU has also developed the capacity to effectively engage with migrant workers from various nationalities, overcoming language barriers which had long hindered the ability of garment workers in Jordan to organize effectively. JTGCU has also played a pioneering role in developing industrial relations in Jordan. Today, the garment industry is the only economic sector in the country with a comprehensive sectoral collective bargaining agreement (CBA) whose provisions set out a systematic mechanism for implementation.

As a new Executive Committee takes the reigns of JTGCU's leadership for the period 2021-2026, this organizational strategy maps the way forward in building on the trade union's achievements and expanding its work into new areas. Importantly, as JTGCU has grown, its role in the Jordanian garment industry is evolving. The trade union is entering a new phase of operations, with an expanded staff and increased responsibilities related to the implementation of the sectoral CBA. As the union enters this phase, it is imperative for JTGCU to take a strategic approach to realizing

¹ Better Work Jordan (2021) *Better Work Jordan Annual Report*, [available online](#); Jordanian Ministry of Labour (2019) *Annual Report for Companies Operating in the Garment and Textile Sector in Development Zones*, [available online](#).

² Better Work Jordan (2021) *Better Work Jordan Annual Report*, [available online](#); Better Work Jordan worker survey, pooled data for 2019-2020 waves.

its vision of a Jordanian garment industry in which every worker has equitable access to fair wages and a safe, healthy work environment.

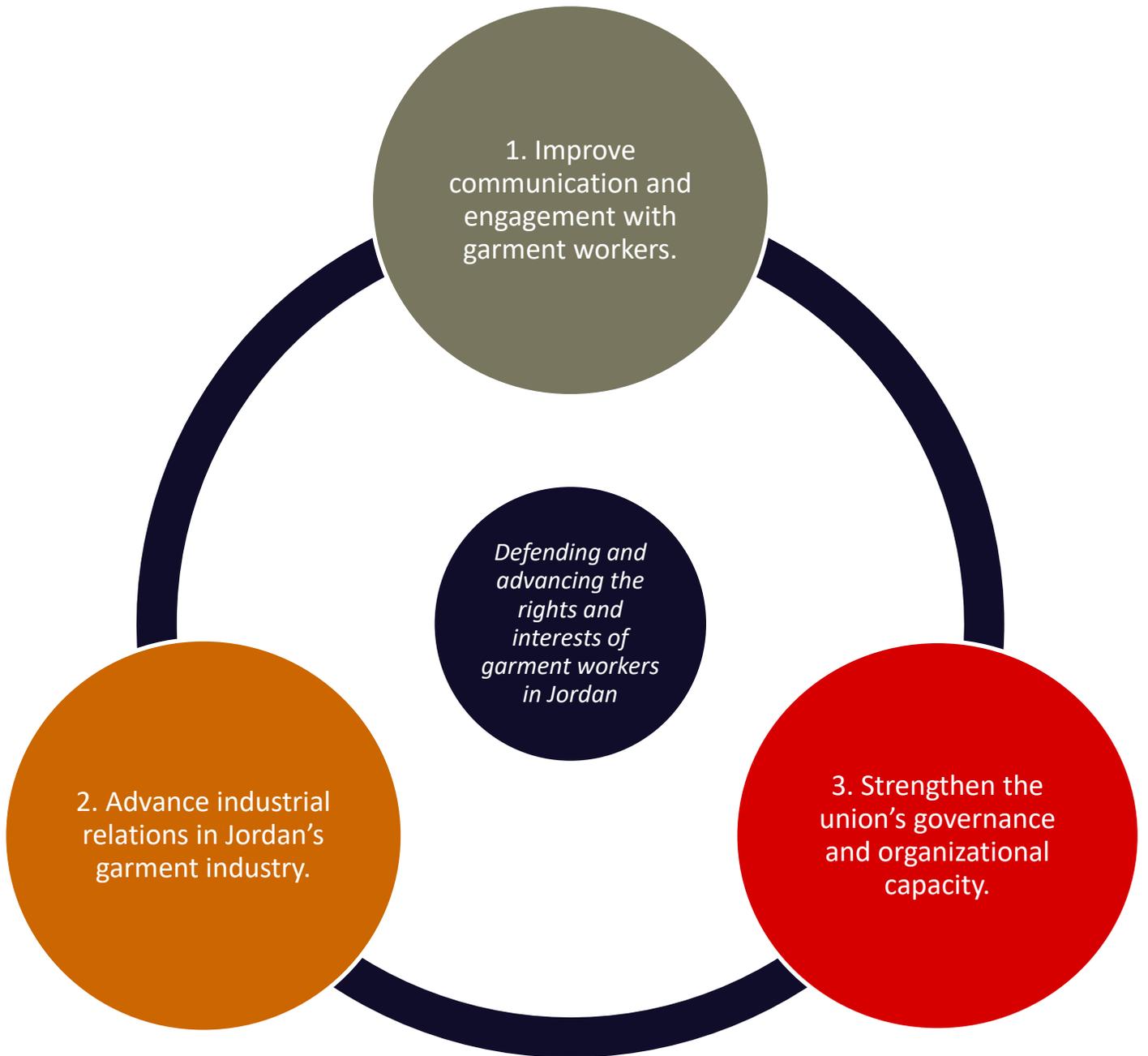
Organizational vision

A Jordanian garment industry in which every worker has equitable access to fair wages and a safe, healthy work environment.

Organizational mission

To defend and advance the rights and interests of garment workers in Jordan.

Strategic objectives



Promoting gender equality: A cross-cutting strategic theme

Women comprise over 70 percent of the workforce in Jordan’s export-oriented garment industry.³ But although this sector has created many employment opportunities for women, gender discrimination continues to be a major issue of concern. For one, women garment workers tend to be concentrated in lower paid positions in factories, with men disproportionately represented in supervisory positions.⁴ Moreover, around 18 percent of garment workers in Jordan state that sexual harassment is a concern in their workplace.⁵ Given the large proportion of women in the garment industry’s workforce and the challenges that they face, eliminating gender discrimination in the Jordanian garment industry has long been an important priority for JTGCU, and will continue to be so over the coming five years. Organizing to achieve equality for women garment workers in Jordan is a key cross-cutting theme of this strategy.

JTGCU’s 2021-2026 strategy seeks to promote gender equality in the Jordanian garment industry through various outputs and activities. These are discussed below and marked by the symbol **♻** throughout this document.

- **Strategic objective 1: Improve communication and engagement with garment workers.**
 - Access to sex disaggregated membership data is an important first step for identifying whether women are proportionately represented among JTGCU’s membership, however, the trade union does not currently collect this data. Output 1.1.1. of this strategy involves collection of this data.
 - Component 1.2. of this strategy involves identifying and providing demand-driven worker services. In identifying which services are to be provided, special consideration will be given to gender-specific needs that women garment workers may have.

³ Better Work Jordan worker survey, pooled data for 2019-2020 waves.

⁴ Better Work Jordan worker survey, pooled data for 2019-2020 waves.

⁵ Better Work Jordan worker survey, pooled data for 2019-2020 waves.

- **Strategic objective 3: Strengthen the union's governance and organizational capacity.**
 - Component 3.1. of this strategy involves strengthening trade union democracy in JTGCU in accordance with the principles of the international democratic trade union movement. This component will give special consideration to ensuring diverse worker participation and representation in trade union elections, with a component dedicated to women workers.
 - Component 3.2. of this strategy aims to enhance the role of JTGCU's General Assembly. This will involve ensuring that women workers are proportionally represented in the different union structures, and activities.
 - As set out in components 3.3. and 3.4., this strategy aims to strengthen the role of the women's subcommittee in JTGCU. This will involve drafting the first-ever JTGCU statement on gender equality, to be adopted by the Executive Committee and disseminated to the trade union's membership.

Strategic objective 1: Improve communication and engagement with garment workers

Effective communication and engagement with workers and other stakeholders are key to JTGCU's ability to perform several of its functions, including effective representation of workers' interests and the ability to monitor labor conditions in the sector. Higher levels of engagement with garment workers and stronger channels of communication with them will also improve the union's ability to attract and retain members.

Several opportunities to improve the union's ability to communicate with garment industry workers have been identified:

1. Leveraging digital communications and social media to increase the reach and cost-effectiveness of the trade union's communication activities.
2. Strengthening the union's communication infrastructure.
3. Focusing communications efforts on garment workers who have lower awareness of the union's activities, namely those with lower levels of literacy as well as Jordanian workers.
4. Identifying and providing services needed by garment workers.

Component 1.1. Develop a comprehensive communications strategy for the trade union.

This strategy will involve:

- Strengthening the digital communications capacity of the trade union.
- Building and maintaining an effective, sex disaggregated database of garment workers containing information on union membership and contact information.
- Increasing the reach and effectiveness of the union's training programmes.

Component 1.2. Develop the union's capacity to provide worker services.

This component will encourage worker participation and engagement in the union by identifying and providing demand-driven worker services.

Key outputs for strategic objective 1

OP-1.1.1.	Development and implementation of a communications strategy for the trade union.
OP-1.2.1.	Demand-driven identification of 2-3 worker services to be provided by JTGCU.
OP-1.2.2.	Establishment of two new JTGCU services for trade union members.

Key performance indicators for strategic objective 1

KPI-1.1.1.	Garment workers' level of awareness of JTGCU and its activities, particularly among Jordanians and low literacy workers.
KPI-1.1.2.	Knowledge of CBA and grievance procedures among JTGCU factory-level committee members.
KPI-1.1.3.	Reach of JTGCU social media platforms.
KPI-1.1.4.	Engagement with JTGCU social media platforms.
KPI-1.2.1	Number of active beneficiaries of JTGCU worker services.
KPI-1.2.2	Annual increase in active beneficiaries of JTGCU worker services.

Strategic objective 2: Advance industrial relations in Jordan's garment industry

An effective industrial relations system is critically important both to defending and advancing the rights of garment workers in Jordan, as well as managing labour disputes in the sector. Improving industrial relations in Jordan's garment industry is thus a key strategic priority for JTGCU.

Over the past decade, JTGCU has played a pioneering role in advancing the industrial relations system in Jordan's garment industry. Yet, there remains considerable scope to strengthen worker voice in this system and improve its overall efficiency. Several opportunities to further develop the sector's industrial relations system have been identified:

1. Greater engagement with workers during the collective bargaining process.
2. Developing the trade union's systems for documenting and addressing worker grievances.
3. Strengthening JTGCU's data collection related to workplace issues in the sector.

Component 2.1. Enhance worker participation in collective bargaining processes.

This component will involve developing and implementing a formal consultation process to enhance the participation of all union members at the enterprise level in the different phases of the CBA negotiation.

Component 2.2. Strengthen and implement worker grievance procedures.

This component will involve developing and implementing a detailed union grievance mechanism compatible with the provisions of the sectoral CBA, as well as forming and activating the CBA Management Committee and activating the Garment Sector Industrial Relations Joint Council.

Component 2.3. Improve the union’s capacity to identify workplace issues in the sector.

This component will involve improving JTGCU’s documentation of garment worker grievances and improving data collection on industrial action in the sector.

Key outputs for strategic objective 2

OP-2.1.1.	Development and implementation of a formal worker consultation process to be followed before every round of CBA negotiation.
OP-2.2.1.	Development and implementation of a detailed grievance mechanism compatible with the provisions of the sectoral CBA.
OP-2.2.2.	Establishment and activation of the CBA Management Committee.
OP-2.2.3.	Activation of the Garment Sector Industrial Relations Joint Council
OP-2.3.1.	Development of an enhanced process for documenting garment workers’ grievances.
OP-2.3.2.	Development and population of a database documenting industrial action in the garment industry, providing disaggregated data at the level of individual strikes on location, number of participating workers and duration for each strike.

Key performance indicators for strategic objective 2

KPI-2.0.1	Annual number of strikes in the Jordanian garment industry.
KPI-2.0.2	Annual number of garment workers participating in strikes in the Jordanian garment industry.
KPI-2.0.3	Days of work stoppage in the Jordanian garment industry.

KPI-2.0.4.	Weighted aggregate strike action in the Jordanian garment industry.
KPI-2.0.5.	Percentage of worker grievances received by JTGCU resolved in accordance with Jordanian labour law.
KPI-2.1.1.	Garment workers' level of awareness of the CBA and its contents, particularly among Jordanian workers as well as workers in subcontractor and satellite factories.

Strategic objective 3: Strengthen the union's governance and organizational capacity

JTGPU's role in the Jordanian garment industry is evolving. As it enters a new phase of operations, with an expanded staff and increased responsibilities related to the implementation of the sectoral CBA, it is imperative that the trade union's institutional framework also evolves to keep pace with its changing role. By strengthening the governance and organizational capacity of the trade union, JTGPU will establish a more resilient institutional foundation upon which it can build future achievements.

Moreover, JTGPU is best able to represent workers' interests when the organization is both financially independent and sustainable. In recent years, decreasing revenue from membership dues has posed a key challenge for the trade union. It is therefore a key strategic priority for JTGPU to secure the organization's financial future.

Component 3.1. Develop a comprehensive strategy for strengthening trade union democracy.

This component will encourage worker participation in union elections at all levels, including participation as election candidates and in voting. It will give special consideration to ensuring diverse worker participation and representation, with components dedicated to women workers, migrant workers, and those from underrepresented occupational categories.

Component 3.2. Enhance the role of the union's General Assembly.

This component aims to increase the engagement of trade union members with the General Assembly's Annual Meeting and ensure that union members have access to the necessary information to carry out their role in monitoring and supervising union activities.

Component 3.3. Regulate union committees.

This component will involve drafting official bylaws for the formation and function of the trade union's committees, including matters such as voting, candidacy requirements, composition, term limits, decision-making procedures, grievance handling procedures, and meeting schedules.

Component 3.4. Form thematic subcommittees to support the work of the union's President.

These committees will comprise a Communications and Outreach Subcommittee and an Industrial Relations Subcommittee, alongside the continuing work of the Women's Committee.

Component 3.5. Activate zone-level migrant worker committees.

This component will involve strengthening the voice of migrant workers in JTGCU by re-activating a previous initiative to establish zone-level migrant worker committees, and which had been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Component 3.6. Develop and implement a comprehensive dues strategy for the union.

This strategy will involve activities aimed at increasing the union's membership as well as a plan to allocate revenue from membership dues in an efficient manner.

Component 3.7. Develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework.

This component will involve developing and implementing a monitoring and evaluation framework to allow the union's leadership and membership to evaluate the impact of the union's activities.

Key outputs for strategic objective 3

⊕ OP-3.1.1.	Development and implementation of a strategy to strengthen trade union democracy.
⊕ OP-3.2.1.	Annually held General Assembly meeting with attendance by representatives of union membership.
⊕ OP-3.3.1.	Drafting and adoption by the General Assembly of official bylaws for the formation and function of factory-level trade union committees, zone-level migrant worker trade union committees and Executive Committee subcommittees.
OP-3.4.1.	Establishment of a Communications and Outreach Subcommittee and an Industrial Relations Subcommittee.
OP-3.4.2.	Monthly meetings held and quarterly progress reports issued for all subcommittees.
⊕ OP-3.4.3.	JTGCU statement on gender equality developed by the Women's Subcommittee, adopted by the trade union's Executive Committee and disseminated to union members.
OP-3.5.1.	Zone-level migrant worker committees elected for all three industrial zones.
OP-3.5.2.	Monthly meetings held for all zone-level worker committees.
OP-3.6.1.	Development and implementation of a dues strategy for the trade union.
OP-3.7.1.	Development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the JTGCU Strategic Plan 2021-2026, containing SMART key performance indicators with a results-based orientation.
OP-3.7.2.	Review of strategic plan key performance indicators (to be conducted in 2023).

Key performance indicators for strategic objective 3

KPI-3.1.1.	Competitiveness of factory and national level union elections.
KPI-3.1.2.	Voter turnout at factory and national level union elections.
KPI-3.2.1.	Proportion of garment workers represented at the General Assembly.
KPI-3.2.2.	Representativeness of General Assembly attendees in terms of gender, nationality, and occupational category.
KPI-3.5.1	Migrant garment workers’ level of awareness of the trade union and its activities.
KPI-3.6.1.	JTGCU annual revenue from membership dues.
KPI-3.6.2.	Number of paid-up JTGCU members.
KPI-3.6.3.	Annual percentage increase in paid-up JTGCU members.

