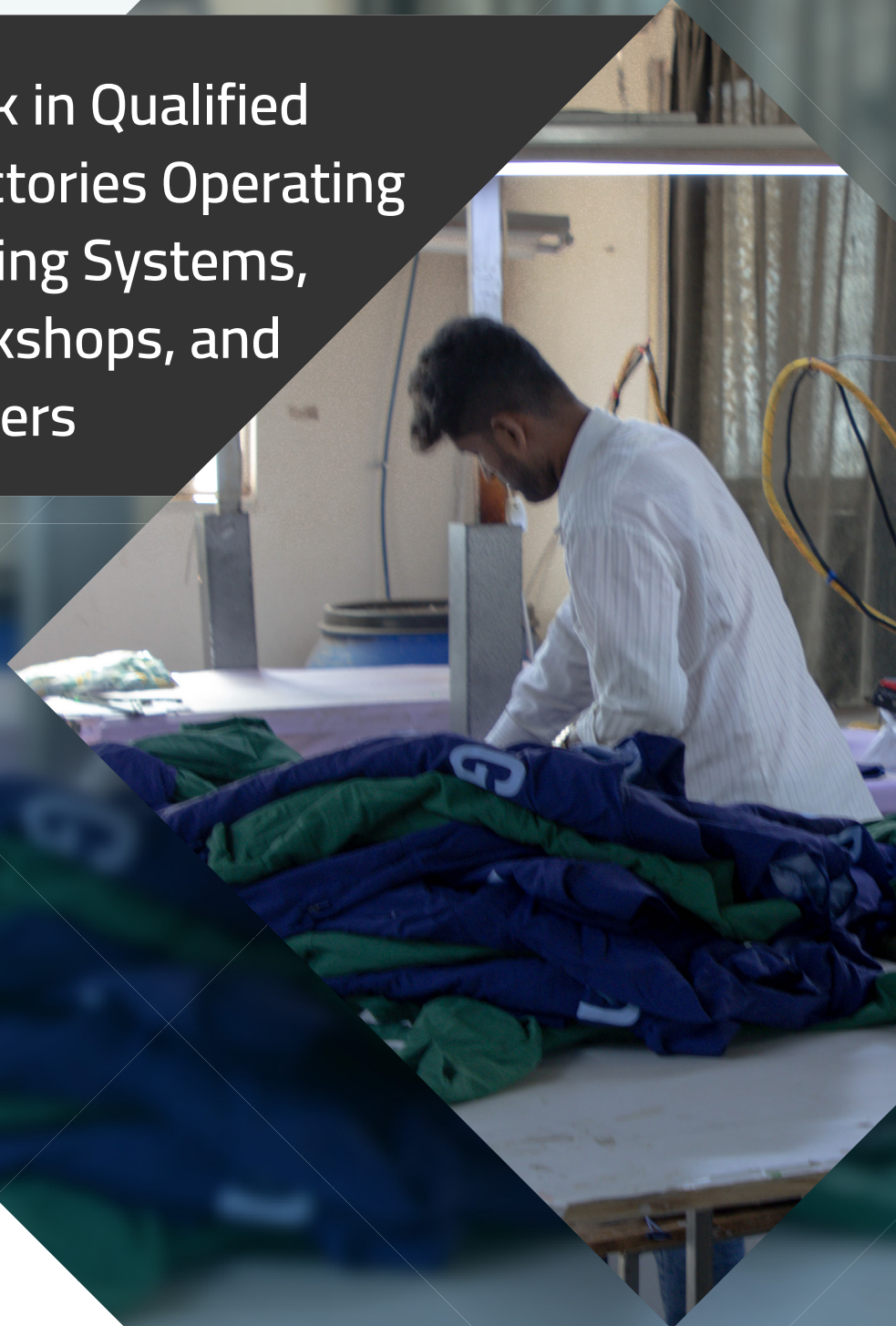




# The Nature of Work in Qualified Industrial Zone Factories Operating under Subcontracting Systems, Small Sewing Workshops, and the Rights of Workers



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## Introduction

The clothing and textile sector in Jordan is one of the vital sectors experiencing continuous growth. The apparel industry is considered one of the largest activities in the industrial sector. This sector has seen steady expansion since 1996, in conjunction with the signing of a series of Free Trade Agreements with the United States, granting Jordanian industry preferential access to U.S. markets. This was accompanied by the signing of the Partnership Agreement with the European Union in 1997, which stipulates the exemption of Jordanian-origin industrial products exported to EU markets from all customs duties, fees, and taxes of similar effect. In return, Jordan exempted its imports of European industrial products from customs duties.

To align with the commitments of the partnership agreements, Jordan made a series of amendments to the Labor Law, Social Security Law, and Investment Laws, prompting foreign investors to start opening factories in the Qualified Industrial Zones to benefit from customs and tax exemptions. Additionally, recognizing the significance of the clothing and textile sector, the Jordanian government prioritized it alongside other economic sectors as part of its Economic Modernization Vision. According to this vision, the sector has the potential to increase its exports three to four times over the next decade and contribute to job creation. To achieve this goal, the Economic Modernization Vision outlined several strategic priorities for the sector, including focusing on developing fabric manufacturing, simplifying sectoral laws and regulations, and enhancing integration between small and large enterprises to promote growth across all institutions and small businesses.

The importance of the clothing and textile sector stems from its status as a labor-intensive sector, creating a significant number of job opportunities, in addition to its important contribution to the economy. All of these factors together have contributed to the development of the clothing and textile sector over the years.

This development in the clothing and textile sector resulted in a need for large factories operating in this sector to have supporting counterparts to assist them in their operations. This is especially important since large factories, which are linked to the global production chain, must be quick in their operations and efficient in fulfilling orders. This has driven them to sign subcontracting agreements (secondary contracts) with smaller factories to carry out certain production processes, such as cutting, finishing, and ironing. Consequently, the subcontracting system has become a common phenomenon in this sector. However, the unclear nature of subcontracting agreements, the absence of a contract that clearly defines the rights and obligations of each party, and the lack of mechanisms to protect the rights of workers in these factories are major issues. Given the importance of the subcontracting system in the clothing and textile sector in protecting workers' rights, this paper provides an overview of the Jordanian clothing and textile sector, specifically the

factories in development zones (formerly known as Qualified Industrial Zones or QIZ), in terms of work nature and systems, particularly subcontracting agreements, and the working conditions of employees in this sector. Additionally, it sheds light on the conditions and work environment in micro, small, and medium-sized workshops and offers recommendations aimed at improving the conditions of workers in this sector. The paper was prepared based on a qualitative methodology through a review of the legislative frameworks governing the subcontracting system. It also included a review of documents and reports issued by governmental and non-governmental entities, as well as an examination of policies and studies related to the clothing and textile sector. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders, including organizations, employers, and workers in this sector.

## The Emergence of Qualified Industrial Zones

The establishment of the Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ) dates back to 1998, following an agreement signed between Jordan and the United States. This agreement allowed Jordan to export any quantity of clothing manufactured in these qualified industrial cities without these goods being subject to customs duties or any taxes by the U.S.<sup>1</sup>. The first QIZ was established in the Irbid Governorate<sup>2</sup>. A notable turning point in the history of the QIZs came in 2000 when Jordan signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, which included a clause requiring Israel to be a party to the agreement. This agreement stipulated a 10% annual reduction in customs duties until they reached zero in 2010. By that year, most production was being exported under the Free Trade Agreement, rather than through the QIZ agreement, as the FTA allowed any factory in Jordan to export to the U.S. Previously, exports to the U.S. were restricted to factories located within the industrial cities covered by the QIZ agreement.

Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ) are defined as any economic activity in the textile sector conducted within any qualified/ productive industrial area and eligible for investment promotion under the Investment Promotion Law<sup>3</sup>. They are the result of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed by the Jordanian government with the U.S. government in 2000, which was ratified under Law No. (24) of 2001, in accordance with Article (33/2) of the Jordanian Constitution.

Article (6/1) of the agreement emphasized the obligations of both parties as members of the International Labour Organization, and the necessity of respecting and protecting internationally recognized workers' rights in the national laws of both countries. Additionally, Article (6/6) specified the internationally recognized workers' rights that are binding on both parties as follows:

- A. The right to form unions and associations.
- B. The right to organize and engage in collective bargaining.
- C. Prohibition of any form of forced or compulsory labor.
- D. The minimum age for child labor.
- E. Acceptable working conditions regarding minimum wages, working hours, and occupational health and safety.

<sup>1</sup> The Qualified Industrial Zones agreement was approved in 1996 by the U.S. Congress. Through this agreement, exports from the countries involved in the agreement were allowed to enter the United States without any quantity restrictions and without customs duties. This was aimed at encouraging opportunities for peace and development in the region, according to a report by the International Labour Organization.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Hassan Industrial City is the first government-designated Qualified Industrial Zone, officially established in March 1998. It is located near the city of Irbid, about 80 km north of the capital, Amman. Its total area is 1,500,000 square meters.

<sup>3</sup> Instructions for Conditions and Procedures for the Employment and Recruitment of Non-Jordanian Workers in Qualified Industrial Zones for 2007 (Article 2)

After the establishment of the qualified industrial zones, the majority of the workforce was attracted from non-Jordanian nationalities, most of whom are from South Asia, due to relatively low wages. At the same time, one-third of the workforce in the sector consists of Jordanians, most of whom are women, who are often employed in “affiliate (production branch)” factories located in rural areas. These production branch factories are counterparts to those located in the qualified industrial zones (QIZs).

Migrant labor has become an important part of the Jordanian economy, working in many Jordanian factories, particularly in the clothing and textiles sector. The contribution of migrant factory workers to the Jordanian economy is as follows:

- **Increased Productivity:** Migrant factory workers contribute to increased productivity in Jordanian factories through their experiences and skills gained in their home countries.
- **Cost Reduction:** Migrant factory workers help reduce costs for Jordanian companies by accepting lower wages compared to Jordanian workers.
- **Export Enhancement:** Migrant factory workers contribute to boosting Jordan’s exports of manufactured goods by working in factories that export their products to global markets

## The Clothing and Textiles Sector in Numbers

Approximately 77,730 workers are employed in the sector in 2023, working in 70 clothing and textiles factories in the developmental areas. Among them, 27% are Jordanians, and 73% are migrant workers (most of whom are women) from South Asia and East Asia. <sup>4</sup>

Out of the 70 clothing and textiles factories in the developmental areas<sup>5</sup>, 20 factories operate under the subcontracting system, employing about 5,000 workers.<sup>6</sup>

Regarding workshops, there is no official number for them, but most estimates indicate that there are around 2,000 workshops distributed throughout Jordan, employing approximately 8,000 workers.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Labor, National Labor Market Indicators Report 2029-2023, Number of Jordanian and Non-Jordanian Workers in the Clothing and Textile Sector in Development Zones (formerly QIZ): [https://www.mol.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root\\_storage/ar/eb\\_list\\_page/%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA\\_%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9\\_2019-2023.pdf](https://www.mol.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/ar/eb_list_page/%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA_%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9_2019-2023.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Labor, National Labor Market Indicators Report 2029-2023, Number of Jordanian and Non-Jordanian Workers in the Clothing and Textile Sector in Development Zones (formerly QIZ): [https://www.mol.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root\\_storage/ar/eb\\_list\\_page/%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA\\_%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9\\_2019-2023.pdf](https://www.mol.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/ar/eb_list_page/%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA_%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9_2019-2023.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Better Work Project, Annual Report, 2023: <https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/Arabic-BWJ-Annual-Report-2023-1.pdf>

Within the exported clothing industry, factories are distributed across industrial clusters that vary in their organization and affiliations. Some are located within traditional industrial cities, such as King Abdullah II Bin Hussein Industrial City in Sahab, while others are in Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) like Al-Hassan Industrial City east of Irbid and Al-Hussein Bin Abdullah II City in Karak. There are also factories outside these cities that are spread across most of the governorates of the kingdom. These factories vary in their locations, organizational nature, and degree of connection and integration with global production and marketing chains.

Large factories that are linked to global production and marketing chains produce and export directly to buyers. Likewise, there are large factories that oversee small subcontracted factories, which produce goods on demand for the exporting factories. However, the large factories have resorted to further specialization to protect their operations, retaining design and pre- and post-assembly stages, while subcontracting other companies to handle the sewing and assembly stages.

## Subcontracting System in Development Zones Factories

First, it is important to define the concept of subcontracting, which means: a contract whereby a person called the original contractor entrusts another person called the subcontractor with all or part of the subject matter of the contract that the original contractor has entered into with the employer, unless prohibited.<sup>7</sup> The Jordanian Civil Code, in Chapter Three, Contracts of Work, defines the contract of subcontracting in Article (780) as: contracting is a deal in which one of its two sides is committed to making or performing a job for an exchange committed by the other side. Article (798) states that: "The contractor may delegate the entire work or part of it to another contractor if not prohibited by a term in the contract, or if the nature of the work does not require him to perform it himself, and the responsibility of the first contractor remains before the employer." It is clear from the text of the Jordanian legislator that the original contractor has the right to enter into a subcontracting agreement whereby he assigns to the second contractor part or all of the work entrusted to him, unless there is something prohibiting this.

The Jordanian Civil Code defines the contract of subcontracting in Article (780) as; a deal in which one of its two sides is committed to making or performing a job for an exchange committed by the other side. Article (798) states that: "The contractor may delegate the entire work or part of it to another contractor if not prohibited by a term in the contract, or if the nature of the work does not require him to perform it himself, and the responsibility of the first contractor remains before the employer."

There are companies in the development zones (formerly Qualified Industrial Zones, QIZ) that operate in the clothing and textiles sector and subcontract. Large factories that are linked to the global production chain, which requires speed in work and efficiency in meeting orders, sign subcontracting agreements with small factories to perform certain production processes for them.

Subcontracting agreements in the garment & textile sector are considered an effective means to achieve greater flexibility in production processes and significantly reduce costs. By using these contracts, companies can benefit from the services of external factories or labor to enhance their production capacity without the need for permanent hiring. Consequently, companies can effectively manage seasonal demands or increase their production without incurring additional costs.

It is noteworthy that large companies often rely on small companies for some stages of the production process, especially in the stages of sewing, finishing, packaging, or ironing. This is due to the lack of need for specialized skills in these stages, as workers can be trained to perform these tasks in a short time.

This type of contract allows companies and factories to reduce operational burdens and costs by distributing work across several entities. However, these contracts must be conducted in accordance with the applicable sector laws. Often, however, the nature of these contracts is ambiguous, especially regarding workers' rights. Typically, a factory simply sends an email to the smaller factory it wishes to subcontract, outlining the details, nature, delivery date, and payment for the work required, without additional specifics.<sup>8</sup>

Workers are generally divided into two categories: official employees who work in the factory under formal employment contracts, and others hired informally or without contracts that clearly define their rights and duties. This situation leaves them vulnerable to exploitation, as they lack the ability to demand their rights or improve their working conditions. Some of these workers may already work in large factories but join smaller factories after hours to earn extra income.<sup>9</sup>

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8 Interview with Tariq Abu Qaoud, Director of Better Work in Jordan, September 17, 2024.

9 Interview with Iman Nasrallah - Trade Union Committee, The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing - Sahab, October 3, 2024.

**In practice**, small factories that rely on subcontracting face several challenges. They lack a clear operational plan and are largely dependent on larger factories. When a large factory receives orders beyond its production capacity, it passes them to smaller factories through subcontracting agreements. This complete dependence on larger factories means that investors in small factories lack the financial capacity of larger entities, often resulting in limited or unstable finances. Consequently, they tend not to invest in factory infrastructure or worker accommodations. At times, if the primary supplier delays payments, it can affect workers' wages in small factories, leading to delays in their delivery. Additionally, small factories often lack adequate staffing and occupational health and safety teams, potentially resulting in violations of workers' labor and administrative rights.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, some factories that sign subcontracting agreements may employ informal workers. Sometimes, workers from large factories may go to subcontracted factories after their regular working hours to work additional shifts. Small factories also face significant challenges due to their limited financial capacity and the weakness of middle management. Furthermore, they may not comply with certain human rights standards, labor laws, and international labor standards, leading to issues related to workers' accommodation, working environment, and other labor rights.<sup>11</sup>

Likewise, it appears that investors in small factories may lack the technical skills necessary to manage operations effectively. As a result, they may overlook workers' rights and working conditions, negatively impacting investments and profits.

When discussing small subcontracted factories, it is important to note that they are highly susceptible to crises due to their limited administrative and financial capacity. For instance, all textile factories were affected by the halt in exports during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, investors with limited financial resources were impacted more severely, making it difficult for them to adapt to changes and challenges. This negatively affected workers, as employment in factories located in qualified industrial zones was terminated.<sup>12</sup>

In this context, to improve the current situation, a legal framework must be established to oblige factories and contractors to adhere to the standards and conditions set by relevant authorities such as the Ministry of Labor, Jordanian Customs, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Additionally, all relevant parties should consider workers' rights and working conditions in all industrial sectors to improve conditions and ensure all parties comply with the specified standards and requirements.<sup>13</sup>

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10 Interview with Tariq Abu Qaoud, Director of Better Work in Jordan, September 17, 2024.

11 Interview with Tariq Abu Qaoud, Director of Better Work in Jordan, September 17, 2024. Plus, Interview with Iman Nasrallah - Trade Union Committee, The General Trade Union of Workers in Textile, Garment & Clothing - Sahab, October 3, 2024.

12 Interview with Tariq Abu Qaoud, Director of Better Work in Jordan, September 17, 2024. Plus, Tamkeen team monitored the challenges faced by the Jordanian labor market during the Corona pandemic 2020.

13 Interview with Tariq Abu Qaoud, Director of Better Work in Jordan, September 17, 2024.

Accordingly, the employment contract is considered one of the most crucial elements defining the relationship between the primary employer and the subcontractor in the textile sector, as it primarily establishes the rights and obligations of each party. However, this relationship has not yet been clearly defined. However, even if this point is clarified, it would only be the initial step in defining the relationship between the workers and the primary employer.

It should be emphasized again that workers are often unaware of their rights, which leads to their uncertainty about whether they have the ability to file a claim against the original employer or the subcontractor. In this context, the labor law can serve as a protective measure for them, allowing them to file a claim against both the original employer and the contractor under **Article (15/e) of the labor law, which states:**

- e) 1. The contractor's workers who work to execute contracting work may file a claim directly against the project's owner to claim their entitlements from the contractor within the limits of the entitlements of the contractor from the project's owner at the time of filing the claim.
2. The workers of the subcontractor may file a claim directly against the principal contractor and the owner of the project within the limits of entitlements that are due by the project's owner to the principal contractor and the entitlements that are due by the principal contractor to the subcontractor at the time of filing the claim.
3. The workers mentioned in the previous two paragraphs may obtain their rights from the amounts due by the principal contractor or the subcontractor. They shall receive their entitlements, each according to what is due to him.

**On the other hand, the lack of stability in orders for factories often leads to repeated violations of workers' rights. If factories delay or completely withhold wages, workers become victims of these circumstances. Although fines and financial penalties are imposed on employers, these penalties may not be sufficient to protect workers' rights.**

It should be noted that some factories have subsidiary production branches, most of which operate under subcontracting arrangements. In such cases, the main factory turns to these branches rather than signing subcontracting agreements with other small factories.<sup>14</sup>

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14 Interview with Abed Al-Jawad Al-Natsheh, Director of Better Work in Jordan, September 17, 2024.

In general, small textile factories face numerous challenges and difficulties. There is often a lack of clear systems and policies that define workers' rights and duties. Additionally, there is a weak understanding among middle management of the importance of upholding workers' rights and the need to improve the work environment. It is also evident that meeting the required work and production quotas often takes precedence over workers' rights. However, the financial situation of small factories cannot be ignored, as it may be the reason for their lack of investment in infrastructure or the improvement of working conditions and wages. High production costs can lead to the closure of some factories, negatively impacting workers' rights and causing a decline in their conditions.

In the end, employers must be committed to improving the work environment and ensuring workers' rights, despite any financial challenges they may face. Small factories should also strive to find opportunities for collaboration with larger factories through investment agreements that ensure workers' rights and improve working conditions.

## **Challenges Facing Owners of Small and Medium-Sized Factories Operating Under the Subcontracting System**

When discussing factories operating under the subcontracting system, it becomes clear that they face numerous challenges that significantly affect their operations and sustainability. This impact may be exacerbated by unstable political conditions and delays in the arrival of goods. For instance, the processes of receiving remittances between large factories exporting their products abroad can be affected, leading to delayed payments to small factories, which in turn reflects on the workers, causing wage disbursements to be postponed. Additionally, there may be times when there is no work available due to a shortage of fabrics and limited orders, or delays in their arrival due to unstable political situations, which greatly affects the workflow. Workers may remain without work, and sometimes operations may come to a complete halt due to a lack of orders, as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. The work is also impacted by delays in the arrival of fabric containers from China for various reasons, affecting the supply chain and halting it until the containers arrive.<sup>15</sup>

Factories also struggle to secure workers' wages due to limited work and weak demand. For example, large factories used to sign contracts for work involving 10,000 pieces or more, and they would subcontract with one or more small factories to assist with the work. However, demand has now decreased to 5,000 pieces or sometimes less. We also notice that small and medium-sized factories operating under the subcontracting system may sign additional subcontracts with even smaller factories to ensure timely delivery of work.<sup>16</sup>

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15 Interview with the managers of the factories (Noor Al-Islam, Alam Al-Hayaka, Al-Janoubia, Al-Abqari) in the industrial clusters - Sahab, October 21, 2024.

16 Interview with the managers of the factories (Noor Al-Islam, Alam Al-Hayaka, Al-Janoubia, Al-Abqari) in the industrial clusters - Sahab, October 21, 2024.

The unstable political situation and wars have affected the arrival of goods. For instance, in September, workers were left without work for 15 days because the fabrics didn't arrive due to the tense and war-torn situation in the region. This has weakened the work at the factory, which impacted the workers' wages. The situation has become dire, and we are no longer able to secure the workers' salaries.

Factory Manager - Industrial City, Sahab

Small and medium-sized factories also suffer from high operational costs related to work permits and residency for their workers, as well as the high rates of social security contributions. Sometimes, workers leave their jobs, which incurs financial losses for factory owners regarding recruitment, especially amid worsening economic conditions.

As a result of these challenges and the limited work due to a decline in clothing and textile production contracts, investors find themselves compelled to close factories and relocate to other countries where operational costs are lower, such as Vietnam, for example. Consequently, some factory owners demand the need to simplify procedures and reduce operational costs to encourage investors to stay in Jordan and attract new investments. They also request work permits and residency valid for the duration of the contract and a reduction in social security contribution rates due to their high cost.<sup>17</sup>

These challenges pose a significant barrier to the development and sustainability of small and medium-sized factories operating in the clothing and textile sector.

The entire clothing and textiles sector is in a recession, and there are significant losses. Additionally, operational costs are extremely high, including running the factory, wages, worker permits and residency, and social security subscriptions. Because of this, some factories have shut down, and others are considering relocating to countries with lower costs. We've reached a point where, due to the lack of work, we have to let workers go and simply say, 'Thank you for your efforts.'

Factory Manager - Industrial City, Sahab

## The Nature of Work in Micro, Small, and Medium Workshops

Work in micro, small, and medium-sized workshops often falls under the informal economy sector, as the work is typically piece-based rather than based on a fixed monthly salary. This means that workers in these workshops are paid according to the number of garments produced each day, which also indicates that they are not subscribed to social security and do not enjoy their rights to official holidays and annual leave.

Workers interviewed for the preparation of this paper indicate that micro, small, and medium-sized workshops face significant challenges in providing a safe and healthy working environment for their employees. These workshops often lack the necessary measures to ensure the safety of workers and protect them from potential hazards in the workplace due to the presence of machines, scissors, irons, and various sewing equipment. As a result of the absence of occupational safety and health standards, workers are exposed to injuries and workplace accidents. Additionally, most of the workers in these workshops do not have employment contracts or any labor rights; they typically work based on the employer's requests, depending on whether there are orders, and they are paid according to the pieces they work on, with wages ranging from five to seven Jordanian dinars per day. Their working hours are undefined, as they work on a piecework basis, which can lead them to work unregulated hours that may reach up to 16 hours, particularly during busy seasons and large orders. Furthermore, workers in the workshops do not receive overtime pay due to the nature of the work, and they are not registered in social security, despite the law requiring any establishment employing one or more workers to register them under the social security umbrella. Thus, the failure to register workers in social security constitutes a violation of the law.

In our work, there is no fixed wage; we get paid based on the number of pieces we sew, sometimes one or one and a half dinars per piece. If we take a day off, it's at our own expense, and if we sustain a serious injury, we cover the treatment costs ourselves. For minor injuries, there's a first aid kit.

A female worker in a sewing workshop

I work on a piece-rate basis, and I get paid according to the item—whether it's a prayer garment, pants, or a jacket—each piece has its own price. We only have Fridays off, and we work every other day. If we take a day off, it's at our own expense because the work is piece-based, meaning if I take a day off, I don't get paid. So even if I'm sick, I take medicine and work so I don't miss a day's pay.

A Male worker in a sewing workshop

Moreover, workers in micro, small, and medium-sized workshops are not entitled to annual, official, or sick leave, and in case of absenteeism, they do not receive pay for that day due to their non-attendance at work. They are also not registered with labor unions, which makes them vulnerable to exploitation and places them in difficult and unsuitable working conditions, away from the scrutiny of relevant authorities.<sup>18</sup>

Workers in sewing workshops pointed out that sewing work is seasonal, with employment occurring only during specific periods, such as before the Eid seasons, Ramadan, and the onset of winter and summer seasons. However, currently, their working days have decreased, and they sometimes work only 10 days a month or even every two months. Additionally, workers in these workshops may operate under subcontracting arrangements, meaning they could be employed by a single workshop while relying on several contractors to produce garments, some of which are exported abroad while others are made for local factories<sup>19</sup>. These contracts can affect their rights and working conditions, as they may receive lower wages or lack the labor rights stipulated in legislation.

Our work is seasonal. During holidays, there is a lot of activity, and we can hardly keep up with the workload. On the other days, it's very slow, and there may not be any orders, so we might only work 10 or 15 days in a month, and sometimes even just in two months.

A Female worker in a sewing workshop

Workers in micro, small, and medium-sized workshops are in a challenging position far removed from regulatory bodies, and most sewing workshops are located in the basements of buildings that lack the most basic conditions for healthy and humane work.

<sup>18</sup> Interviews with workers in Amman and Ad-Dulayl during the months of September and October 2024.

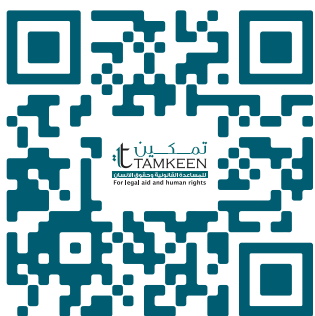
<sup>19</sup> Interviews with workers in Amman and Ad-Dulayl during the months of September and October 2024.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The data and information presented in this paper indicate that small and medium-sized factories in developmental areas (previously Qualified Industrial Zones, QIZ), operating under subcontracting agreements (secondary contracts), along with micro, small, and medium-sized workshops, face numerous challenges that significantly impact their operations and sustainability. This negatively affects workers in the clothing and textiles sector, potentially violating their labor rights and depriving them of access to these rights, alongside the lack of decent working conditions in this sector.

To improve the working environment for workers in the textile and garment sector, we recommend the following:

1. Conduct studies on the subcontracting system to understand its pros and cons, as well as to identify grievance mechanisms and channels available for workers to express their complaints and issues.
2. The main employer and the subcontractor should enter into a contract that clearly defines the rights and obligations of each party. Additionally, buyers should play a role in ensuring the respect of workers' rights in the factories with which they engage.
3. There should be effective grievance and complaint mechanisms within factories, whether through an internal complaint box or specialized applications. Workers, both migrants and Jordanians, should be informed of the ways they can file internal or external complaints if their rights are not upheld.
4. Increase awareness among workers in the textile and garment sector about their rights and responsibilities in general.



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For legal aid and human rights

E-mail: [Media@tamkeen-jo.org](mailto:Media@tamkeen-jo.org)  
[www.tamkeen-jo.org](http://www.tamkeen-jo.org)

Al-Madina Al-Munwra St,  
Building #197 | 3rd Floor

Tel: + 962 5539501  
Mobile: + 962 797847997