

# Social Report



2016





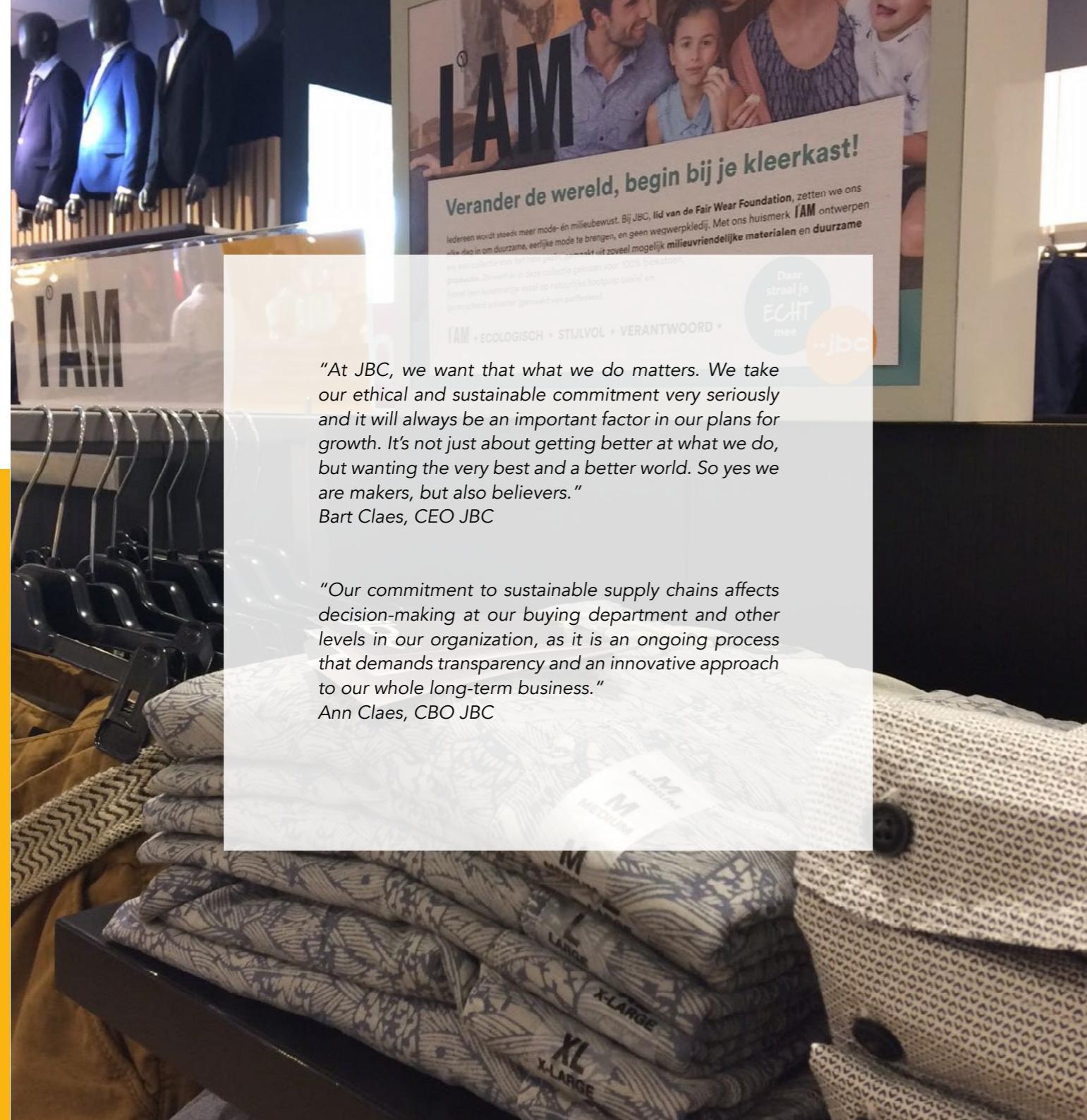
This Social Report was written by JBC and approved by Fair Wear Foundation. JBC is an affiliate of Fair Wear Foundation since April 2015.

**Images used in this report:**

All images in this report are made by Saartje Boutsen, CSR manager JBC. They show real workers from factories JBC works with in China and Bangladesh.

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*"At JBC, we want that what we do matters. We take our ethical and sustainable commitment very seriously and it will always be an important factor in our plans for growth. It's not just about getting better at what we do, but wanting the very best and a better world. So yes we are makers, but also believers."*

*Bart Claes, CEO JBC*

*"Our commitment to sustainable supply chains affects decision-making at our buying department and other levels in our organization, as it is an ongoing process that demands transparency and an innovative approach to our whole long-term business."*

*Ann Claes, CBO JBC*

## summary

As a Belgian family owned business, JBC is a value-driven company that wants to produce fashion with respect for people and environment. Although 2016 was a year in which a storm raged through the fashion sector – competition with online fashion retailers and price fighter brands made it more difficult for chains in the middle segment – JBC continued to expand its Corporate Social Responsibility engagements and to invest in fair fashion. Because investing in sustainable entrepreneurship, is investing in the future.

That means that JBC attaches great importance to improving the overall working conditions in the clothing industry, and we want to take an active role. Because improvement of working conditions is a complex issue, JBC is convinced that joint initiatives, cross-country and with all stakeholders involved, can give more energy and can accomplish things on a larger scale. JBC has therefore taken the decision to join the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) since April 2015.

In 2016, during our second year of membership, we stayed focused on transparency and communication. From this year on, we register for every order the factory which in it is produced. Regarding new suppliers, we invested in a more indeph due diligence process

before going into business. In every new factory that started to produce for JBC, we made sure the FWF Code of Labour Practices and the complaints procedure are visible for all workers. We increased significantly the number of social audits by Fair Wear Foundation or by Wethica, and we invested in a close follow up of the audit results and Corrective Action Plans. We invested also in a close follow up of remediation of factories under the Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety. We installed an automatic 'order blocking system', to integrate capacity planning in the order system and to maximize the number of orders per supplier, and by doing so contributing to reducing overtime. We started to use actively the FWF Health & Safety Check during factory visits. CSR topics were on the agenda in meetings with suppliers. We developed a transparency tool for our I AM collections, which will be launched in April 2017 and which will inform our customers about the origin of the product. Employees and JBC's customers were more informed about our FWF membership and engagements.

If we see that improvements are made and that our suppliers invest more in social compliance and good health & safety measures for their workers, we know that our efforts are important and usefull. As FWF stands for a step-by-step approach, we want to get better results every year.

# our sourcing process

## Sourcing strategy & pricing

With 139 shops in Belgium, 8 shops in Luxemburg and 6 shops in Germany, JBC is a fashion retailer where you can find clothes for the whole family: menswear, ladieswear and a children's collection.

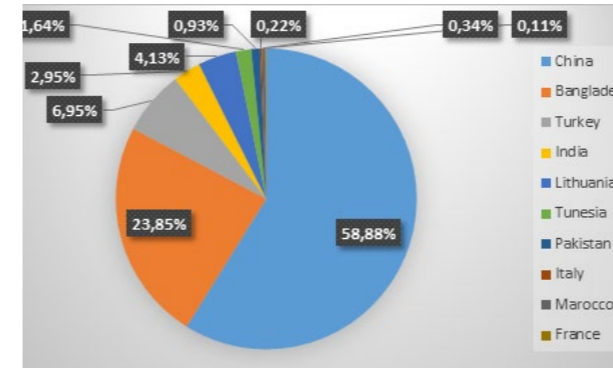


JBC has its own brands but also designer collections like ZulupaPUWA (designed by Walter Van Beirendonck), I AM Boys&Girls, I AM Ladies&Mens and collaborations with some guest designers. At JBC you can find also exclusive collections from license products: Samson, Plop, K3, Maya, Wickie, Bumba, Rox (all products from Studio 100) and Ketnet.

For these collections, we worked in 2016 together with suppliers in **China, Bangladesh, India, Italy, Lithuania, Morocco, France, Pakistan, Tunesia and Turkey.** JBC has a very regular direct contact with all her suppliers and has developed cooperative long-standing business relations with most of its suppliers.

Persons involved in sourcing decisions are the Chief Buying Officer, the Sourcing & Production Manager, the CSR Manager, the General Manager of JBC China Office and buyers from the different buying departments (men, ladies, boys, girls).

**Criteria for selecting a supplier** are quality and workmanship, compliance with our fair wear policy, the capability of the supplier to produce the product, availability of required technologies/machines, price and the ability to fulfill timeline and deadlines. A good price-quality ratio is our objective, and has to go hand in hand with a fair wear engagement of the



Countries of production 2016

supplier. The Sourcing & Production Manager and the CSR Manager both have to agree on a new supplier.

In 2016, we had to respond to the price pressure in the market, as competition with online retailers and price fighter brands made it more difficult for chains in the middle segment, as JBC. So in 2016, we moved more orders from China to Bangladesh. Our Bengali suppliers could offer a more interesting price-quality ratio, no import duties need to be paid, and they offer a very good textile product knowledge. We also started to work with some new suppliers in Bangladesh.

## Production cycle in sourcing

JBC divides the budget for one year into two seasons: a winter season and a summer season. Buyers make a seasonal budget, divided over the different product groups, which is based on sales figures and trend forecasts.

Although buyers make seasonal budgets, the buying department creates new collections on a monthly ba-

sis. By working on a monthly basis, the workload is better distributed and the production capacity is easier to control.

In 2016, we installed an extension of the current IT system used by the buying and finance department, to include **capacity planning**. This **automatic 'order blocking system'** maximizes the number of orders and the volume in pieces per suppliers. This offers the advantage that production is planned in a more efficient and forecasted manner. To fix the maximum volumes



per supplier, we went into dialogue with the suppliers and agreements were made.

The planning is now more adapted to the supplier's capacity, which avoids overload, delays and overtime for factory workers. As production is better planned now, we can also diminish airfreight, and increase boot transport, so this 'order blocking system' has also a positive cost and environmental effect.

The general lead time is 22 weeks (98 days production + 49 days transport + 7 days for the distribution in the shops). The general lead time for the short term, orders placed in Turkey, Lithuania and Tunisia, are ranging from 6 to 10 weeks.

## Supplier relations

**JBC has a very regular direct contact with all her suppliers.** JBC has developed cooperative long-standing business relations with most of its suppliers. More than 80 percent of the total order volume in 2016 was produced at supplier factories with who JBC is collaborating since more than 5 years.

**All supplier factories are regularly visited** by our Sourcing & Production Manager (he visits every country at least two or three times a year), by buyers, and by the CSR manager. Also Ann Claes (Owner, Director and head of the Buying department) has direct contact with all suppliers and she visits on a regular base the factories.

In China (Yangzhou) we have an office with 14 Quality Control (QC) members who follow up on the production process in the factories in China. They visit the

factories on a weekly basis and also verify if the production is done in the agreed factory.

Important suppliers are visiting JBC Headquarters in Houthalen on a regular basis to meet the buyers and discuss pending orders. Also pending CSR issues are discussed by the CSR Manager.

**New suppliers** always need to sign the FWF Code of Labour Practice and to fill in the FWF questionnaire on production location information. They have to display the Code of Labour practices at the work floor in the local language, at a visible, private place for employees, where they can read it privately (so not where a camera or the management team is wat-



ching them). We ask also for a performed audit report, which needs to have a positive evaluation. For Bangladeshi partners, we inform them on our role as signatory of the 'Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh'. We can only enter a partnership if also the supplier is a partner of the Accord and is open for inspections. New suppliers will not be registered in our buying system and orders cannot be placed, before we have received all these info.

We also intensified our **"due diligence" process** for new suppliers and new factories. Some examples:

- We always ask a new supplier/a new factory to send us an audit report. If no audit report is available, they have to agree to plan an audit by Wethica. If they are not compliant with crucial issues - like respect for legal minimum wages, reasonable overtime, no child labour,... - we will not start with this factory. Also if the factory has an audit report available, but with a negative score, we will not start business with this supplier.
- We have more attention for specific "high risk" areas, f.e. the risk on 'Sumangali scheme' labour in the region of Tamil Nadu in India (a form of child labour, in which a girl is hired on contract for three to five years, during which she earns a wage, and after which she is paid a lump sum to pay for a dowry). For new suppliers operating in Tamil Nadu, we ask now to declare with a guarantee letter that there is no production taking place under Sumangali Scheme, and which is confirmed by an audit report.
- We follow up closely the changed context in Turkey. As millions of Syrian refugees live and work in Turkey now, there is an increased risk for illegal Syrian workers and child labour in the Turkish garment sector. JBC is in close contact



with its Turkish suppliers to avoid these risks. In 2016, we selected 4 new suppliers in Bangladesh, one new Turkish supplier, and several new agents for specific items (f.e. a reusable biocoton swim diaper, slippers, accessories,...).

For the first time, **JBC also started to collaborate with some external producers** for our ladies collections - the Scandinavian brands PEP, Soft Rebels and Soaked in Luxery. In the process of "due diligence" before doing business with new suppliers, our CSR manager was in close contact with all three brands on their CSR policies, which are in line with JBC's fair

wear standards.

We started also with a new Chinese supplier, but we stopped the business relation after some test orders, when it was clear that this supplier was not transparent and honest on the production locations. We did also a test order with a new Indian supplier, but we also ended this relationship after the test order, when it became clear that this supplier was not willing to keep the Code of Labour Practices posted in the factory and to support the freedom of association for workers.

Beginning 2016, JBC also terminated the relationship with different shoe suppliers, as we were not selling shoes anymore. End of 2016, we decided to build up a longterm relationship with one main shoe supplier.

End 2015, we developed an extension of the current IT system used by the buying and finance department, to include also the factory name for every order placed by the buying department. So since January 2016, every clothing is linked to a factory. We can have a detailed overview now of all factories where our suppliers and agents produce our clothes.

### Integration monitoring activities and sourcing decisions

**Each new supplier** needs to sign the FWF Code of Labour Practice and to fill in the questionnaire on production location data. A quality check will be per-

formed by our CSR Manager, who will also ask for performed audit reports. If a new supplier refuses to sign or to post the Code of Labour Practices, or if he is not transparent on the production locations, we will not work with this supplier.

For other suppliers, **if major issues are found** during an audit or major issues are reported within the complaint procedure, our company will immediately start an open discussion with the supplier to see how it can be solved, and which immediate actions are possible. A plan of action will be set up together with the supplier and followed very closely by JBC.

Our company will stop placing orders in case of unwillingness to improve, unwillingness to negotiate and set up a corrective action plan, or in case of refusal to take actions. We will only start up a collaboration again with the supplier in case improvements have been made. In 2016, we decided to stop placing orders at one Indian supplier, who was not willing to keep the Code of Labour Practices posted in the factory and to support the freedom of association for workers. We also stopped working with one Chinese supplier, when it was clear that this supplier was not transparent and honest on the production locations.

In 2016, we started also with the **I AM, 360° sustainability project**. Future I AM collections will strive to maximize sustainable choices during the design and production process and throughout the supply chain. So I AM will focus on social responsibility and transparency, and on using environment friendly materi-



als. So we selected a limited number of suppliers for I AM. An impeccable reputation on social compliance (proofed by good audit results) became a priority criteria in the sourcing decisions for I AM.

We also agreed in 2016 to develop a new and automatic 'vendor-rating-system'. Suppliers will get a

score, based on quality, respecting delivery times, ... and also on the level of respect for labour standards and improvements in implementation of the Corrective Action Plan. In this way, suppliers that are doing well in implementing the Code of Labour Practices, will be rewarded by a better score, which will mean also more orders. We planned to develop and to roll out this new system in 2017.

# Coherent system for monitoring and remediation

JBC is engaged to a coherent monitoring program, which includes factory audits, the execution of corrective action plans, informing manufacturers and their employees about the Code of Labour Practices, questionnaires, a complaints procedure that involves workers in the monitoring of working conditions in the factory, and factory visits.

## FWF Code of Labour Practices

All our current manufacturers have received a **letter and a questionnaire** to inform them about the FWF Code of Labour Practices, which implies international labour standards including human rights, labor rights, child labor, forced labor, working time, wages and compensation, working safety including health and safety. By filling out and signing the questionnaire, they endorsed the labour standards of the Code of Labour Practices.

All current manufacturers have to **display the Code of Labour Practices** at the work floor in the local language, at a visible, private place for employees, where they can read it privately (so not where a camera or the management team is watching them). During au-

ditions and during visits by JBC staff, this is verified and followed up. CSR is always a standard topic during all factory visits by the sourcing manager. In 2016, JBC China office, the Sourcing Manager and the CSR Manager also started to use the **FWF Health & Safety Checklist** during factory visits. This was experienced as a useful tool for an easy Health & Safety check, and if there are points for improvement, these were quickly detected, named, and resolved.



For **new suppliers** there is a strict procedure: they need to sign the FWF Code of Labour Practices, to fill in the questionnaire with production location information, and to post the Code of Labour Practices in the factory. A quality check will be performed by our CSR manager, which needs to have a positive result. We always ask for performed audit reports (if not available, we will schedule immediately an audit which will be done after a positive test order).

## Audits

Audits are based on the FWF Code of Labour Practices. **JBC can ensure the thresholds of 60% of the production being audited** during the second year of membership.

All audits in our supplier factories in 2016 were done by **FWF or by Wethica** (an independent audit company

we work with since a long time). Three factories were also audited by SGS, as these factories produce also Disney licensees, which have to be audited according to the International Labour Standard System of Disney.

For smaller suppliers, who are not yet audited by FWF or Wethica, we always ask for other available audit reports. In this case, most factories send us a BSCI or Sedex audit report. In 2016, we used the **Audit Quality Assessment Tool** of Fair Wear Foundation to screen the quality and value of these audit reports.

Audit reports executed by FWF or Wethica are always sent to the CSR manager directly. After receiving an audit report, **JBC discusses the results with the supplier**. For the Chinese suppliers, the general manager of the JBC China Office will visit the supplier to discuss the audit results directly. For suppliers in other countries the follow up is done directly by the CSR manager and sourcing & production manager.



## Corrective Action Plans

In case improvements are needed, we ask the supplier to develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), including deadlines, which are the result of an **open discussion** between the supplier and JBC. Wethica and FWF include always a draft CAP to make sure that all important issues are included. We always follow up on the CAP to check if the improvements have been made. For the Chinese suppliers, the JBC China team verified these actions by a personal visit to the factory. For suppliers in other countries, in case a personal visit is not scheduled in the short term, documents and pictures will have to be send to the JBC CSR manager to prove improvements have been made (which will be checked during the next visit by one of the JBC collaborators).

JBC takes up the responsibility to follow up the audits and to improve bottlenecks that came up from audits. The CSR Manager has the main responsibility for the monitoring activities and the execution of the Corrective Action Plans. But also our Sourcing & Production Manager and Ann Claes (Owner, Director and Head of the Buying Department) and our General Manager of the China office are closely involved in the monitoring activities and the Corrective Action Plans, especially when major issues are found in the audit. The CAP is used as a monitoring tool between our company and the manufacturer. As there is a deadline included in the CAP we can follow up the steps taken by the supplier. The CAP is also a tool to discuss our way of cooperation, our shared responsibilities. During these discussions we try to find **solutions to improve working conditions** at the factory.

In case there are major issues, a re-audit will be planned to follow up on the CAP. The supplier will bear the costs of a re-audit within a year in case they didn't provide full cooperation during the audit or in case major violations which require a full audit follow up were assessed.

With our agents we have a good cooperation regarding the execution of monitoring activities. If audits have been organized at the factories, they share the reports or they cooperate together with us for audits performed on request of JBC. Audit results and Corrective A 21 audits ction Plans are discussed in meetings between the agent and our CSR Manager.

In the next paragraphs, we will describe some audit and monitoring activities for our most important production countries.

### China

In 2016, we organized **21 audits** in China, most of them were done by Wethica. Workplaces were selected based on the date of the previous audit (every factory needs to be audited at least once in three years), or suppliers chose to use a new factory that was not yet audited. For three Chinese factories, a re-audit was done in 2016 as there were some major issues found in the previous audit in 2015.

Audit reports are always shared with the manager of JBC China office and with the supplier. Results are discussed with the factory management and

**JBC China office follows up closely** and on a regular basis the improvements made in the Corrective Action Plan. In 2016, we intensified the follow up of the Corrective Action Plans, with as a consequence some important results. Some examples:

**Example 1** Wethica audited for JBC in March 2016 a Chinese factory specialized in woven garments. We discussed the results of the audit and the follow up of the CAP with the factory, and during a check visit by JBC China staff in September, a number of improvements were shown, f.e.:

- Auditors noted that the factory did not record accurate time in and out on the attendance records for all workers, which is crucial to see if workers receive a correct salary. The factory has started now to require workers to clock in and clock off, including overtime hours. Working time is shorter than the local prevailing practices, but the correct payment of overtime premiums stays a point for attention in this factory.
- Auditors noted that fire drill did not cover all employees, and in November 2016 all workers participated in a fire drill.
- Safety labels were not available for chemical containers, now the labels are there.
- Training has been performed to workers. They have more knowledge of their rights and health & safety issues.
- Etc.



**Example 2** As the last audit by Wethica dated from 2013, we organized a new audit in 2016 at one of JBC's main knit suppliers. The audit results requested a close follow up, f.e. :

- Auditors noted that the manual attendance records did not accurately record workers' working time. Since August 2016, they use a digital machine to record the attendance.
- The factory failed to pay its employees at least once per month. Now they pay salary on the 25th of every month, and workers have to sign it. Paying records and signatures were sent to JBC's CSR manager for checking, to make sure that payment of at least legal minimum wage

is guaranteed and paid in time.

- The audit report mentioned that safety guards were not installed for the machines. No finger guard was available for lockstitch machines, no needle guard was available for button attaching machines and no roller cover was available for linking machines. All safety guards for all machines are installed now.
- All fire alarm bell switched needed a special protection switch, which they have now.
- Etc.

**Example 3** At one of JBC's denim suppliers, we organized a re-audit in 2016, as this factory got a nega-

tive audit report by Wethica in 2015, due to a lack of transparency of the factory management. The factory provided the auditors with obviously faked documents. JBC discussed the importance of transparency with the factory, and during the audit in 2016, the transparency of the factory was an important change. Other resolved problems were:

- An improvement of the working time: the working time is now better than the average in the garment industry, and the factory management will continue to give more training to the workers, to improve the workers performance and to shorten working time.
- The factory meets social insurance requirements now.
- The factory installed more emergency lights. The situation on Health & Safety is a strength of the factory.
- Also an important positive change is related to the workers/communication channel. The worker representatives have actual meetings with management.
- Etc.

In 2016, we also started to use the **FWF Health & Safety Checklist** during factory visits in China. It showed to be an effective tool for a quick scan on the Health & Safety situation in a factory, with quick wins as a result, f.e. unblocked emergency exits or better stored chemicals. After we organized Worker Education Programs (WEP) in two Chinese factories in 2015, we will organize again some WEPs in at least 4 Chinese factories in 2017.

## Bangladesh

Seven factories in Bangladesh were audited in 2016 for JBC by Fair Wear Foundation. Forced labour or child labour were not found. **Most important**

**attention points** in several Corrective Action Plans are:

- Overtime, and seventh day of rest was not always guaranteed
- Payment of legal minimum wages is respected, but living wage estimates are not always reached
- The mechanism of worker representation is not always functioning

We discussed root causes for overtime with some suppliers. We figured out that we placed too much orders in a short period at some suppliers in Bangladesh, so they had difficulties to finish them in time, an important cause of overtime. But as an answer, we introduced our **'order blocking system'** in 2016, to maximize the order volumes of our suppliers, and to do a better capacity planning per supplier. This planning was discussed with the suppliers, and they agree that this helps to plan better the production, which is in favor of increasing quality and decreasing overtime work.

As we started in 2016 to work with some new suppliers in Bangladesh, who were not yet audited by Wethica or FWF, we discussed progress in social compliance with them based on the available BSCI audit.

As JBC is a member of the **Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety**, all factories have been also inspected on fire, electricity and building safety. In 2016, the inspectors of the Accord did a lot of follow up inspections. JBC discussed the implementation of the Corrective Action Plans to ensure remediation of issues found during these inspections. In 2016, our suppliers in Bangladesh invested significantly, especially in fire and electricity safety measurements (new and more fire doors, more modern fire alarm



systems, electricity panels, electricity plans,...) Several factories also participated in the 'all workers trainings' organized by the Accord, to train workers on Health & Safety issues and on the complaints procedure of the Accord.

When visiting the factories, we can see the positive improvements made due to the Accord. We will continue working with the Accord.

## Turkey

JBC organized **two audits** at Turkish suppliers in 2016, one was done by Wethica and one by FWF. The audit done by Wethica highlighted different topics on working hours, wages, and Health & Safety issues in this factory. So a close follow up of the Corrective Action Plan is needed. All issues were discussed with the agent and the

factory management during the last factory visit of our Production and Sourcing manager. A lot of problems are already solved in the meanwhile, some are still pending. We are aware that the **context in the Turkish garment sector changed significantly in 2016**. As a consequence of the war in Syria, millions of Syrian refugees live and work in Turkey now. This increases the risk for illegal Syrian workers and child labour in the Turkish garment sector. JBC is in close contact with its Turkish agent and suppliers to avoid these risks. We accept no child labour nor illegal workers. We closely follow up on the situation in Turkey.

All our key suppliers participated in a Fair Wear Foundation **supplier seminar** in Istanbul, to inform the suppliers on how to implement the Code of Labour Practices, how the complaints procedure works, and how to anticipate on the changed context in the Turkish garment sector.



## India

In 2016, FWF did a **social audit at our main supplier in India**. We discussed the results of the audit and the follow up of the CAP during several meetings at our headquarters. Different issues are resolved in the meantime:

- According to the audit, some workers were paid below the legal minimum wage. The supplier contested this statement, as the law regarding legal minimum wages was just renewed. For JBC, it is an important issue, as payment below legal minimum wage is not acceptable. The supplier sent us the payslips of the workers to proof correct payment.
- As it was a founding of the audit that not all workers were aware of the Code of Labour Practices and the need for a worker committee, the supplier organized just after the audit a training session for all workers.

- Overtime work is paid correctly, which is proven by payslips.
- Antifatigue mats are there now
- First aid box is not locked anymore
- A broken needle register is there now
- Etc.

## Pakistan

Due to the travel advise for Pakistan, and due to the fact that nor Wethica, nor FWF organize audits in Pakistan, we trust on the audit reports that we receive from our suppliers (positive BSCI and Sedex reports). Audit results, Corrective Action Plans, workers satisfaction in the factories, wages, health & safety conditions, etc. were in 2016 discussed during several meetings, when our suppliers visited our headquarters in Houthalen.

# Complaints procedure

We use the FWF helpline and complaints procedure offered to FWF members. All current factories have send us pictures to prove that the FWF Code of Labour Practices (that includes the complaints number) was displayed at the work floor in the local language and available to all employees. This is checked during audits and by JBC staff of the China office, the Sourcing & Production Manager and the CSR Manager when visiting the factories. This is also a requirement for new suppliers, an order is not possible before we receive a picture of the Code posted in the factory.

Our CSR Manager is responsible for dealing with complaints from workers or their representatives against their employer within the supply chain of JBC. We want to do everything within our power to resolve a complaint in a timely manner, in close cooperation with FWF. We will always guarantee anonymity of the worker or representative during the complaints procedure. We will also further invest in making the complaint procedure better known to workers.

In 2016 neither JBC nor FWF's country contact persons received complaints from factory workers or management involved in our supply chain.



The FWF Code posted in the local language at garment factory in China

# Training & Capacity Building

## Activities to inform staff members

Updates about CSR related issues, including FWF membership requirements, are internally communicated during our **staff and sales meetings** (which are organized on a monthly basis) and in our meetings with the shop manager (organized every three months).

Every two months, our CSR manager gives an update on FWF related issues to the **Board of Directors**, so that relevant topics are discussed at top management level and decisions are taken if necessary.

During a season kick off meeting in March 2016, staff of the **Buying department** got an update on the content of the Code of Labour Practices and on audit and monitoring procedures. The use of the FWF Health & Safety Check list for Buyers and Designers was introduced.

**New employees** are informed on the company's CSR activities and fair wear engagement by a presentation by our CSR manager during a 'welcome day', organized on a regular basis.

The CSR manager also keeps close contact with the General Manager of the China office (share all information about suppliers, audits, CAPs, etc.) and also with the director of Wethica.

The annual FWF conference for members in October 2016 was attended by our CSR manager.

## Activities to inform agents/intermediaries, manufacturers and workers

All agents/intermediaries and factory management has been informed about FWF membership through a **letter and questionnaire**, explaining our FWF membership and the Code of Labour Practices. **The Code and the contact details of the complaints handler are posted in every factory** in the local language. This will be monitored in our audits and during factory visits.

As our team of JBC China office had also a training on social compliance organized by FWF, they can also share their knowledge with the manufacturers and it will help them with the elaboration and execution of a CAP. Since 2016, **JBC China staff** is also using the FWF Health & Safety check as a checklist and a communication tool to communicate on health and safety issues with suppliers.

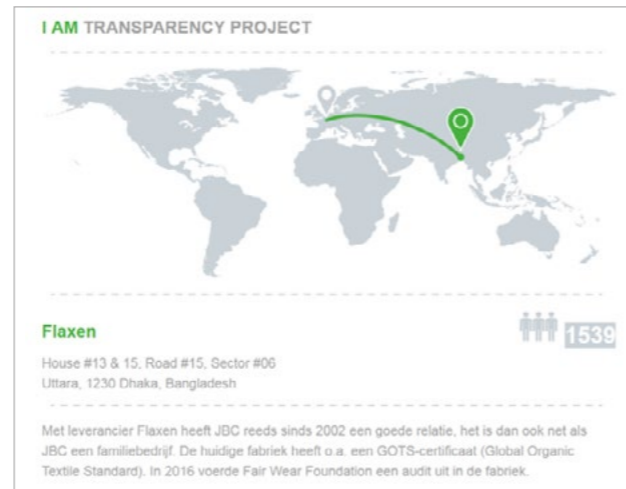
Our Sourcing & Production Manager, CSR Manager or/and Ann Claes discuss major issues, which would have come up during an audit or what they notice during a factory visit, with the supplier. As we have built long term relationships with our suppliers, they are not afraid to ask for help if necessary. The **factory visits and meetings** which are organized to discuss audits or CAP results are not just one-way communications but are a dialogue between our staff members and the supplier to improve the actual situation in the factories.

In Bangladesh, in 2016 we motivated our suppliers to participate in the **FWF Workers Education Program**. Most of them attended the introduction meeting for factory managers in Dhaka on July 25th. We also encouraged them to participate in the follow up sessions, but they did not yet. We hope they will join a WEP in 2017. Nevertheless, four factories organized an 'all employee training session' on Health & Safety, organized by the Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety.

# Transparency & communication

In 2016, we developed a **transparency tool for our I AM collections**, which will be launched in April 2017 and which will inform our customers about the origin of the product. On our webshop, next to the garment you can click 'Trace this item'. Then you will get more factory information: name and address of the factory, how many workers it has, when the last audit took place,... We plan to elaborate this transparency tool year after year, to give our customers more info on the origin of the item.

Our customers have been informed about the FWF membership and what it is about through **topics in our brochures**. In our **shops** we display the FWF logo in



the fitting rooms and at the entry doors. More info on our sustainability policy and our Fair Wear engagement (Brand Performance Check report included) is available on our **website** [www.jbc.be](http://www.jbc.be).

Since 2016, all JBC staff has the logo of FWF in its **email signature**. In this way, all our suppliers, partners, stakeholders, etc. are informed on our FWF membership.

In the past year, our CSR Manager was also invited several times as a guest speaker at business events, civil society events, academic **lecturers**, a meeting with the Minister of Sustainable Development, etc. All interesting opportunities to inform different groups in society and opinion leaders on our FWF membership.



## Social and environmental engagements



School development project in India

JBC is a family owned business and a people-oriented company. We do our best every day to be a socially responsible company where customers want to buy and employers want to work. Our approach is to achieve the right balance between different aspects of business: people, environment and financial performance. We believe it is crucial to work together with our suppliers to improve the overall working environment, and we also attach importance to social and environmental engagements.

- JBC supports two school development projects, one in India and one in Bangladesh. Together with suppliers we restored the schools and we offer support.
- JBC organized a campaign with [www.vintykids.com](http://www.vintykids.com) in autumn 2016, to collect second hand children's wear and to give it a second life.
- JBC is a partner of the Make-a-Wish Foundation, that gives terminally ill children in Belgium a day to never forget.
- JBC works together with BEWEL, a social economy organization that provides work for disabled

persons. Employees from BEWEL are working on a daily basis in JBC's warehouse.

- All year long we offer collections in bio cotton. Once a year we have also a GOTS certified collection (Global Organic Textile Standard, that guarantees at least 95% organic cotton and correct social labour conditions).
- JBC launched in April 2016 its second Cradle-to-Cradle (C2C) certified collection REVIVE.
- JBC uses an energy monitoring system in our shops, to optimize our use of electricity and water. Also JBC's new headquarters in Houthalen is built in 2013 in an energy-efficient way.
- JBC became a signatory of the Fur Free Retailer Program of the International Fur Free Alliance in December 2016. Since more than 10 years, real fur is forbidden in JBC garments. Also angora wool and down from live-plucked animals are not allowed in our clothing.



## Contact

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