



### TAZREEN FIRE – ONE YEAR ON 20 November 2013

#### The Factory

- Tazreen was part of the Tuba Group, a major exporter of garments from Bangladesh.
- The factory opened in 2009, and primarily produced t-shirts, polo shirts and jackets.
- Between **1,600** and **1,700** people were employed at Tazreen.
- There were no registered factory unions at Tazreen.
- National trade unions – including National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) and Bangladesh Garment & Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWF) had registered members at Tazreen.

#### The Fire

- The fire broke out on **November 24th 2012**.
- Broke out on the ground floor, initial reports suggested an electrical fault – the cause of over 80% of factory fires in Bangladesh.
- At the time of the fire an estimated **1,137** workers were in the building.
- There were insufficient fire escapes for the workers.
- Many of the survivors report being told by supervisors to stay at their workbenches and carry on working even as smoke was rising.

#### The Casualties

- **Deceased**
  - Official reports claim that **112 workers** were killed in the fire.
  - NGOs working with the families of the victims suggest that the real number is closer to **123**.
  - Almost half killed burned beyond recognition many others died jumping from windows to escape the flames.
  - Most of the victims of the fire were women.
- **Identification of the dead**
  - To date **99 bodies** have been identified.
  - Names of a further **24 missing people** have been submitted to the courts for investigation.
  - The bodies that were not identified were buried under government supervision after DNA samples were taken.
- **Injured**
  - At least 125 workers were injured in the fire.
  - Incident reports however suggest as many as 300 workers were injured.
  - Injuries include serious burns, broken bones and other injuries sustained from jumping from the building.
  - Many of the survivors also suffer severe mental health disorders brought on by the horror of the experience.
- **Children who lost a parent**
  - Reports differ but it is estimated between 70 and 82 children lost parents due to the fire.

#### The Brands

- **14 brands** have been linked to the Tazreen factory.
- **6 brands** have confirmed they had a relationship with Tazreen in 2012
  - C&A, Li & Fung, Karl Rieker, KiK, El Corte Ingles, Teddy Smith.
- **5 brands** have not denied being linked, but have been unclear as to the relationship they had with the factory.
  - Walmart, Enyce, Dickies, Delta Apparel, Sears.
- **3 brands** have denied any production was carried out there, despite evidence to the contrary.
  - Disney, Edinburgh Woollen Mill, Piazza Italia.

#### What Clean Clothes is calling for

- The Clean Clothes Campaign is calling on all brands who have been connected to the Tazreen Fire to commit to paying full and fair compensation to all the victims families and the survivors. A year on

from this tragic fire and still the families and survivors are waiting.

- The **United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights** clearly states that companies have a responsibility to carry out due diligence with regard to the protection of human rights and states have a duty to protect the citizens human rights and both have a responsibility to provide *remedy* if the worse happens.
- In this case *remedy* must include financial compensation.

### Compensation for families of victims and survivors of Tazreen fire.

- Based on the compensation formula developed after previous fires and building collapses by Bangladeshi and global trade unions based on standards set by the ILO, the estimated figure for long term compensation for the injured and families of the deceased is **at least €4.3 million**.
- Clean Clothes Campaign is calling on the **brands associated with Tazreen to pay 45%** of the compensation costs. Other stakeholders - the Bangladeshi government, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and the employer – are expected to pay the remaining 55%
- This estimate **includes**:
  - Compensation for pain and suffering
  - Long term loss of income
- Additional costs **foreseen but not included** in the total quoted:
  - Medical costs for the injured including psychological support.
- **Not included** in compensation:
  - Payment of wages and legal severance payments to those rendered unemployed.

### Status of compensation discussions

- Two meetings have been convened by IndustriALL Global Union to discuss the payment of compensation to the victims and survivors of Tazreen fire.
  - **The first on April 15, 2013 in Geneva.**
    - companies sourcing from Tazreen were invited by IndustriALL Global Union
    - C&A, Kik and El Corte Ingles attended the meeting.
    - The process stalled as Rana Plaza collapsed just 9 days later .
  - **The second meeting was convened in September 2013 in Geneva**
    - all brands sourcing from Tazreen invited
    - facilitated by the ILO as a neutral chair.
    - only C&A (Belgium) and Karl Rieker (Germany) joined.
- The key **outcomes** have been
  - C&A tabling their compensation initiative.
  - Karl Rieker indicating readiness to contribute.
  - Task force set up to clarify outstanding issues relating to compensation and fund for brands to contribute to. This process has been postponed pending outcome of Rana Plaza compensation process, known as the Arrangement.
- **Rana Plaza Arrangement:**
  - Rana Plaza Compensation Coordination Committee facilitated by the ILO as independent chair formed of four Rana Plaza buyers, representatives of the government and the BGMEA, Bangladeshi trade union representatives, IndustriALL Global Union and the Clean Clothes Campaign.
  - This Committee is developing a method of calculation and distribution of compensation for loss of earnings and medical care known as the Arrangement, utilizing guidance set out by International Labour Organization Convention 121 on Employment Injury Benefits
  - The Arrangement is in line with the proposals for compensation for loss of earnings and medical costs made by IndustriALL and Clean Clothes Campaign.
  - More information here:  
<http://www.cleanclothes.org/news/press-releases/2013/11/16/all-brands-responsible-should-compensate-the-rana-plaza-victims-now>

### Compensation payments made to date

- Details of the **brand contributions** can be found in a separate Brand Response document.
- Up to 24 families have received no payments as their relatives have not yet been identified.
- **Government of Bangladesh** is understood to have paid 300,000 tk (€2,856) to at least 94 families of the identified deceased.
- **Bangladesh Garment Manufacturer & Exporters Association (BGMEA) is understood to have paid** 100,000tk (€949.48) to 99 families of the identified deceased, and 100,000tk (€949.48) to 89 injured workers but reports indicate that not all injured workers have received this compensation. It is understood that these payment included some wages owed paid by the employer and therefore cannot be considered to be entirely part of payments for full and fair compensation.
- **Bankers' Association** is understood to have paid paid 100,000tk (€949.48) to 99 families of the deceased.
- There is a lack of transparency on exactly which families have received support, from whom and for what purpose.

#### Further resources

- **Fatal Fashion:** a detailed factual report analysing the Tazreen and Ali Enterprises factory fires in Bangladesh and Pakistan by the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) and the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO), March 2013  
[www.cleanclothes.org/resources/publications/fatal-fashion.pdf](http://www.cleanclothes.org/resources/publications/fatal-fashion.pdf)
- **Still Waiting:** An update on Tazreen and Rana Plaza looking at the background to the disasters, brand involvement and compensation process, October 2013  
<http://www.cleanclothes.org/news/2013/10/23/six-months-on-from-rana-plaza-survivors-still-fighting-for-compensation>
- **Hazardous Workplaces:** An overview of fire and building safety and compensation schemes in Bangladesh, 2012  
<http://www.cleanclothes.org/resources/publications/2012-11-hazardousworkplaces.pdf/view>