Stakeholder Engagement, Training Assessment and Expanded Access

The Amader Kotha Helpline team participated in stakeholder outreach meetings in Dhaka. Learnings from the pilot period were shared and feedback was solicited (see Beyond the Pilot: What Next for the Amader Kotha Helpline?, sidebar).

An assessment of attitudes of 1,500 workers toward the Helpline found that 88% felt it was “very useful”. The survey took place in 19 of the 50 pilot factories via anonymous, mobile-based surveys completed by workers. The selected factories were trained by Phulki (see A Closer Look, page 3).

The number of workers with access to the Helpline continued to expand in December as Alliance safety teams combined safety training sessions with Helpline training as well.

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

HELPLINE ACCESS JULY-DECEMBER

In December, the Helpline team participated in a series of stakeholder engagement meetings in Dhaka. Organized by Alliance staff, the purpose of the meetings was to report on Helpline learnings during the pilot period and solicit feedback. These meetings included local representatives of Alliance member companies and a sampling of factory managers and members of civil society. Representatives from each of the Helpline project team partners—Clear Voice, Good World Solutions and Phulki—were present. In December, the attitudes of 1,500 workers were also surveyed through Interactive Voice Response (IVR) mobile phone surveys (see A Closer Look, page 3).

During the meetings, the Helpline team reported our successes—call volume exceeded expectations, the technology platform achieved 99% up-time, factory managers have been responsive, and serious safety issues have been reported for prompt Alliance action. An impressive 88% percent of workers in factories where Phulki has introduced the Helpline told us that

continued on last page
**KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:**

- 17 urgent issues were reported to Amader Kotha this month, 13 related to worker safety. Worker safety concerns included structural issues such as cracks in factory walls and floor tiles, as well as locked emergency exits. These and other urgent issues were immediately reported to the Alliance as per Helpline protocols.

- The Helpline is now available to 527,000+ workers across 280 Alliance factories. Workers from 28 non-Alliance factories also used the Helpline in December.

- 2,387 calls were placed to Amader Kotha in December for a total of 8,387 calls received to date.

- 128 substantive issues were shared with the Helpline from workers at Alliance factories this month. The most commonly-reported issues were related to worker termination, including termination following maternity leave and/or worker illness. Reports of active fires in workers’ communities were also common.

- The majority of calls made to Amader Kotha were test calls placed by workers and factory managers as they learn about and then want to better understand how the Helpline operates.

- Following trends from previous months, workers prefer to call the Helpline from outside their factories. Women made up 30% of callers in December, similar to previous months.

- Most callers feel comfortable sharing demographic information with Amader Kotha. Only 4% of workers calling to report a substantive issue in December declined to share their name with Amader Kotha. 19% asked that their name not be shared with their factory.

**NOTE:** Detailed call data is provided to the Alliance for distribution to Alliance member companies after factories have had the opportunity to verify and respond to information provided by workers.

Please see the adjacent visualizations for further information on Helpline usage.

---

**This Month’s Findings**

**Calls Received per Month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Calls Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>1,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>2,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>2,387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Issues Reported per Month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th># of Issues Reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top Three Issues Reported by Category - December**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Issues Reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urgent: Safety</td>
<td>Walls or windows shaking, Locked exit/blockade gress route, Cracks in beams, columns or walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent: Safety</td>
<td>Fire - Active (outside factory), Inadequate facilities / hygiene, Occupational safety hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent: Non-safety</td>
<td>Physical abuse, Sexual harassment/abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent: Non-safety</td>
<td>Termination, Verbal abuse, Compensation - Benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Issues by Category - December**

- Urgent: Safety
- Non-urgent: Safety
- Non-urgent: Non-safety
- General Inquiries
- No Category

**Calls by Time of Day - December**

**Issues Reported - 128**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th># of Issues Reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urgent: Safety</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent: Safety</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent: Non-safety</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Caller Profile - December**

- **Gender**
  - Woman 30%
  - Man 70%

- **Age**
  - 19-29: 58%
  - 30-39: 23%
  - 40-49: 15%
  - Opt Out: 6%

- **Factory Tenure (in Years)**
  - <1 yr: 18%
  - 1-2 yrs: 32%
  - 2-3 yrs: 25%
  - 3-7 yrs: 15%
  - >7 yrs: 12%
  - Opt Out: 8%

- **Worker Location at Time of Call**
  - Inside Factory - General: 16%
  - Inside Factory - Office: 10%
  - Inside Factory - Toilets: 8%
  - Inside Factory - Canteen: 7%
  - Outside Factory - General: 6%
  - Outside Factory - At home: 4%
  - Opt Out: 10%

**Progress to Date**

- **Provided Access to Helpline**
  - # workers: 527,335
  - factories: 280

- **Calls**
  - # calls received: 8,387
  - # outbound calls: 4,700

The Helpline received calls from 28 factories not listed as Alliance factories in December. These calls are included in the call volume and call time graphs above, but not included in the issue or caller profile visualizations.
This month we take a closer look at Amader Kotha implementation during the Helpline’s pilot period. The analysis looks at three elements of implementation—training delivery, training effectiveness and workers’ opinion of Amader Kotha. Input was captured via anonymous, mobile-based surveys completed by workers at 19 of the 50 pilot factories. Nearly 1,500 valid surveys were collected in December 2014. All of these factories were trained in how to use the Helpline by Phulki.

**APPROACH.**

Mobile-based surveys, using interactive voice response (IVR) technology, were made available to workers located at factories involved in Amader Kotha’s pilot period. Workers were selected at random by Amader Kotha or factory staff and given an instruction card including information on the survey and a local phone number to call to participate. Selected workers then placed a missed call to that number from their or a friend’s mobile phone, received a call back from Amader Kotha and answered multiple-choice, voice-recorded questions using their telephone keypad. Participation was free, voluntary, and anonymous for workers.

**TRAINING DELIVERY.**

IVR survey results show that Helpline training successfully reached most workers during the pilot period. At least 90% of workers at each factory said they recently participated in an Amader Kotha training session. At some factories, all workers said they had been trained on the Helpline. Overall, 97% of survey respondents said they received the Amader Kotha pocket card including the Helpline’s phone number.

**TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS.**

Survey results also illustrated training effectiveness at most of the targeted factories. In aggregate, 91% of workers correctly answered the question “When can you call the Helpline?” (correct answer: “anytime”). At three of the 19 factories, 75% or less of workers got that question correct. Those workers are receiving recorded messages from Amader Kotha informing them that the Helpline is available 24/7.

**WORKER SATISFACTION.**

Survey participants were asked “In general, what do you think about the Helpline service Amader Kotha provides to workers at your factory?” Less than 5% of respondents felt the service was “not useful” and 88% reported it as “very useful”. The data shows that workers located at factories launched later in the pilot period are slightly more excited about Amader Kotha than workers in the earlier stages of the program. One potential explanation is that messaging about how the Helpline is useful to workers improved during the pilot period.

The data captured via IVR surveys, combined with results from face-to-face worker interviews also conducted by the Helpline team, is being used to enhance Helpline training for future implementation. In particular, best practices (and trainers) are being identified. Future IVR surveys on this and other topics related to Amader Kotha are planned in 2015.

---

1 Only data meeting Good World Solutions’ comprehensive Data Quality Standards was considered valid.
they thought the Helpline was "very useful."

We reported our challenges as well—a small number of factories have been unwilling to participate, non-safety issues have been reported without clear guidance on how to determine if the issues have been closed, callers to the Helpline have not reflected the gender breakdown in the factory (i.e., women comprise the majority of the workforce while more men are calling the Helpline than women), and the Helpline representatives can benefit from more training.

The response was heartening—most factory managers, member companies and representatives of civil society feel that the Helpline was useful and had been introduced in a way that was sensitive to the factories and workers.

A small minority felt that by allowing calls on non-safety issues, the Alliance was exceeding its mandate. Others participants, including the Helpline project team, felt that the best way to ensure that safety issues are reported is to continue to let workers communicate on a full range of issues.

We listened for ways to encourage more women to call the Helpline. We were told that it is not uncommon for women to rely on their male friends or relatives to place calls on their behalf. We learned that short videos and other communications targeting women in the factory might encourage female Helpline usage.

We heard factories express gratitude for the opportunity to solve problems without pressure from their buyers. And we heard some Alliance member companies request that they be informed right away when urgent issues are reported. Suggestions for improvements in data collection and presentation were made and will be considered going forward.

So, what’s next? The Helpline project team will be creating a list of organizations with particular skills that can assist workers with problems that are unrelated to safety and that can be available to needy workers. We will be identifying experts who can be a part of a professional development program to teach Helpline representatives to better understand the nature of caller’s concerns. Importantly, we will be participating in a robust Helpline protocol review process. We expect the result will be a clear set of procedures for operating the Amader Kotha Helpline going forward that reflects the needs of key stakeholders and builds on our successes to date.

-Doug Cahn, Clear Voice