Regional model competency standards: Garment work

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Garment production is an important source of income for Asian economies. Figures for Bangladesh, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Vietnam show the garment industries contributes respectively 79 per cent, 52 per cent, 43 per cent, 17 per cent, 12 per cent of total exports. Significantly the garment industry also offers low-skilled jobs for many women in the lower-income countries of the region. Increasingly, industry buyers are seeking to purchase a full service, from design to stock delivery, to shorten lead times and lower costs for customers. Countries where workers are mainly low skilled are unable to meet these demands. As the garment industry continues to achieve higher productivity, it is likely that many of the traditional, low-skill jobs held mostly by women will be lost. There will be a need for either new opportunities for employment or up-skilling of workers to meet changing requirements. To help accelerate the improvement of training systems and the mutual recognition of skills, the ILO has developed – in consultation with employers, governments, and workers – the Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS). These have been developed in identified priority areas, and are in a simplified format. The RMCS are intended to be a regional reference for developing competency standards for thosecountries that are in the process of creating standards, or reviewing existing national standards. The RMCS can provide the basis for developing national competency standards so that certain countries can avoid having to develop standards from scratch.

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