



Fashion case studies

Shima

Age: 17

Job: Punching buttonholes in jeans and jackets.

Background: Shima left school at the age of 13, not because she wanted to but because of 'poverty in my family'. Even though she was just a child, Shima needed to support her family and earn some money so came to the city from a rural area to find work. She started working in a clothes factory in Dhaka city and has been there for three years.

Wage paid: She earns around 1700 Taka per month (around £4.00 per week). She says her pay is 'not enough' to live on. She finds life difficult. 'This wage is not enough to have good food on, or to be able to afford to go out in town after work to relax.'

Working hours: Working hours are from 8am to eight or nine at night, six days a week.

Working conditions: The factory is hot with no working fans. There is no fire equipment on the stairs and there is a lot of rubbish on window ledges because there are no bins.

Living conditions: Most workers like Shima simply sleep when they go home as they have no time left in the day for anything else. The slum area where Shima lives is a very dangerous place to be at night – theft and rape are common. Shockingly, 31 garment workers were raped in one month due to women walking home late at night from factories to their homes in the slums. Many of the workers simply can't afford public transport because their pay is so low.