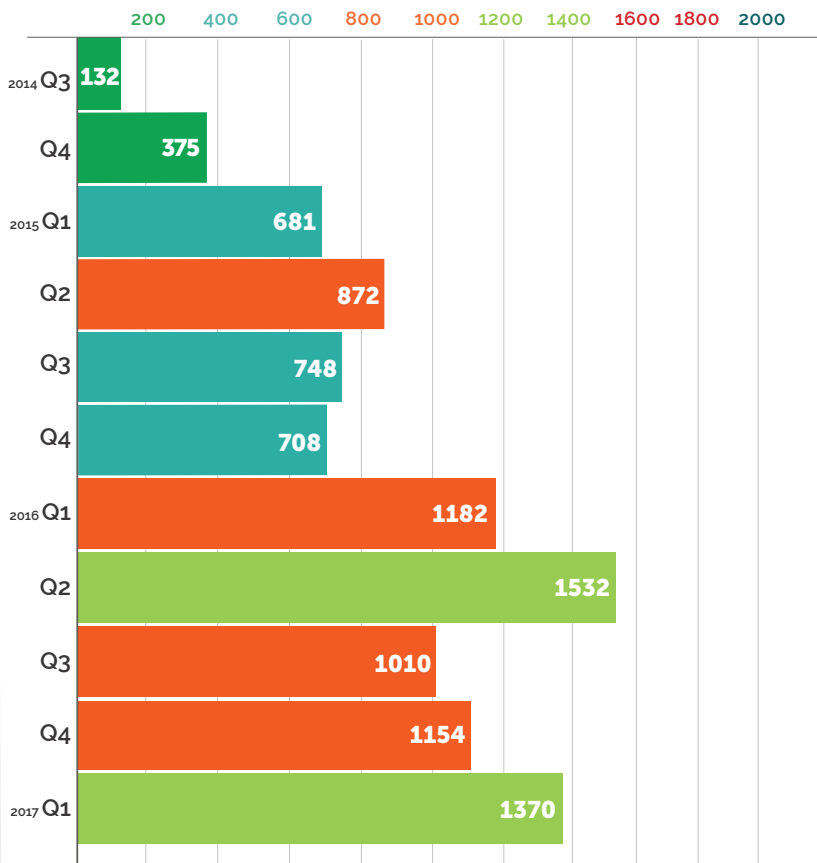


★ Q1 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

The Amader Kotha Helpline was available to 1,283,573 workers in 862 factories by the end of March, 2017. In the first quarter of the year, 1,370 substantive issues were shared with the Helpline from workers at Alliance factories, of which 508 were related to safety. Workers continue to have access to a toll free number that is available nationwide, and worker satisfaction with the Helpline remains high according to Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and live surveys among Helpline callers.

As always, let us have your thoughts and suggestions. We can be reached by email at: workerhelpline@afbws.org.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES REPORTED TO HELPLINE



Only issues that occurred in Alliance factories are shown.

HELPLINE FOCUS: AMADER KOTHA IN ACTION

SAFETY FIRST

Workers in a six-story factory building called the Helpline to urgently report that the building was shaking. Repairs to ground floor columns were underway and suspected as the cause. The workers expressed fear for their safety.

Inspectors were sent to the factory and concluded that factory management had not installed proper temporary support for the columns during construction. At the insistence of the Alliance, construction work was stopped and management was told that steps to support the columns were required before the construction could continue. With the safety precautions in place, the construction resumed and the case was closed.

THE ROLE OF WORKER OBSERVATIONS

Not all reports from workers about safety pose genuine safety risks. For example, reports of cracks in walls may be factual i.e., cracks in walls are correctly identified, but in the end the cracks may be superficial and not pose real risks to the structural integrity of the building. What can factories learn from this observation? First, workers we talk to continue to have a high level of heartfelt concern for their safety in the workplace; their concerns can be addressed in part through consistent communications about the role workers play in maintaining safe workplaces, including access to the Helpline. Second, while workers cannot be expected to have the technical skills to be able to distinguish

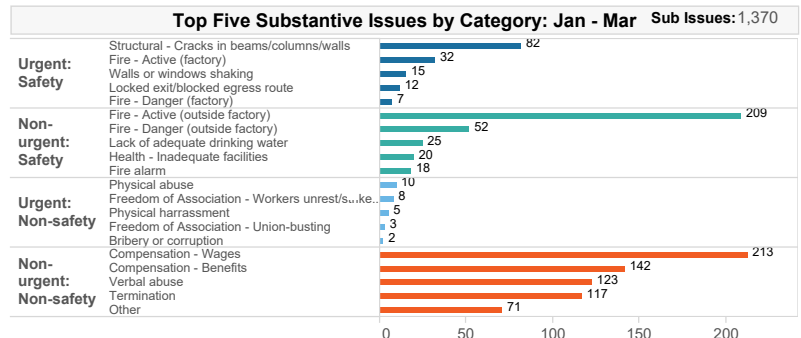
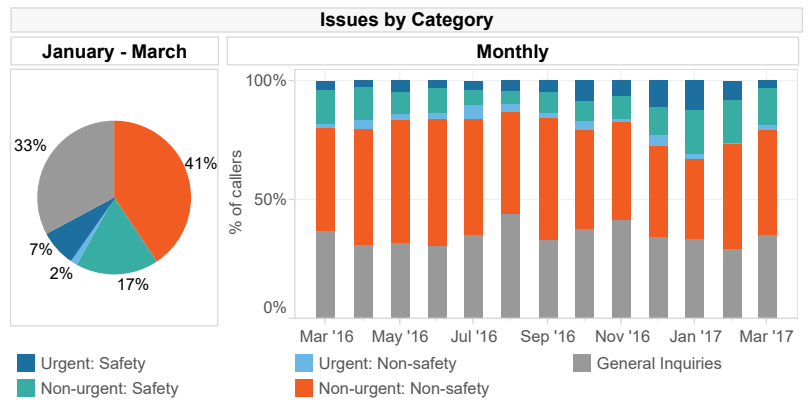
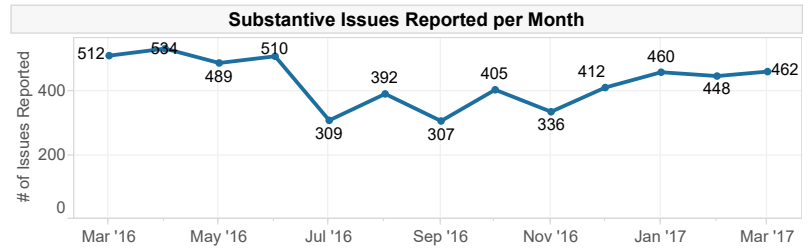
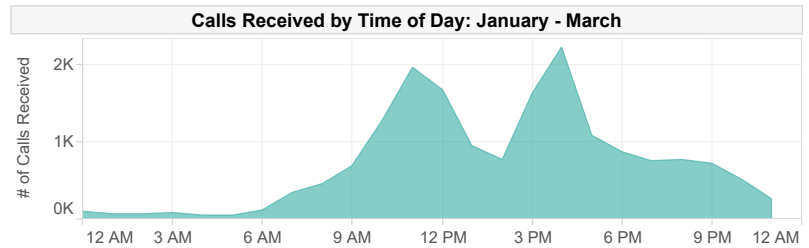
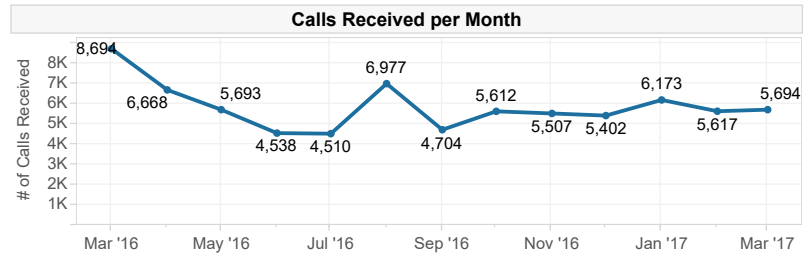
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FIRST QUARTER 2017 FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- **17,484 calls were placed to Amader Kotha this quarter from January through March**, for a total of 126,973 calls received to date.
- **The peak call times this quarter were around 11am and 4pm**, consistent with previous quarters and reflecting test call volume due to Helpline (refresher) trainings.
- **508 safety issues were reported to Amader Kotha this quarter**, of which 152 were urgent and 356 were non-urgent. Among safety issues reported by workers, those most frequently mentioned were fires and fire dangers (primarily outside of factories); cracks in factory beams, columns, or walls; and in-factory fires.
- **General inquiries comprised 33% of issues this quarter**, disregarding missed or test calls. The majority of these inquiries pertained to Helpline support capabilities and labor laws.
- **1,370 substantive issues were shared with the Helpline** from workers at Alliance factories this quarter. The most commonly-reported issues were related to compensation, fires outside of factories, and verbal abuse.





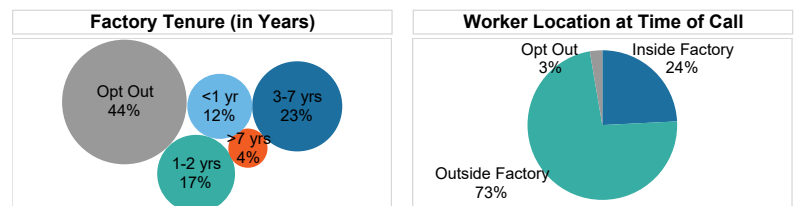
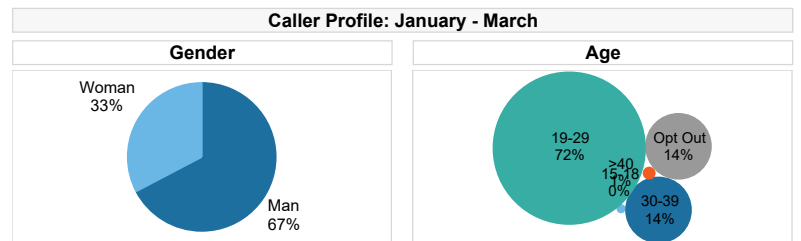
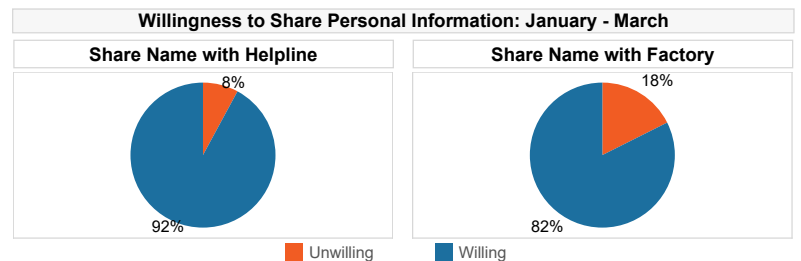
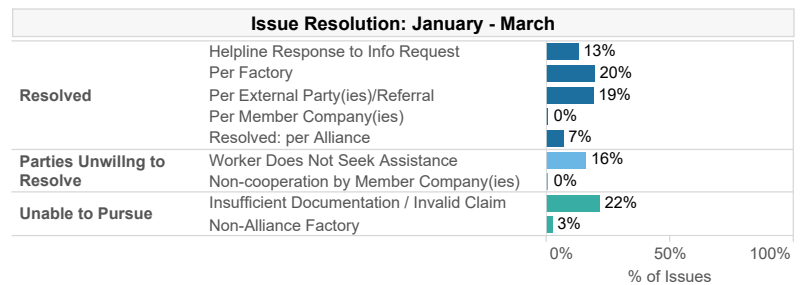
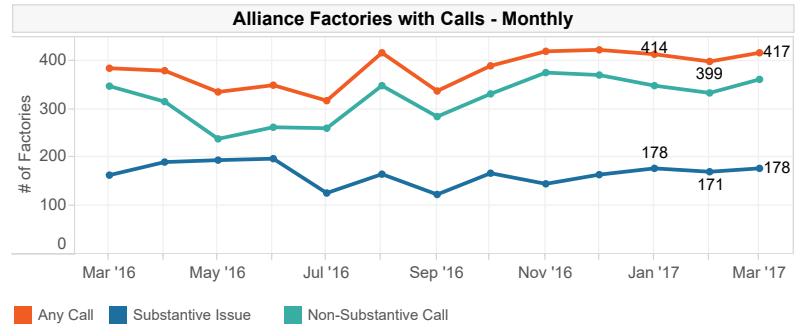
FIRST QUARTER 2017 FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS CONTINUED:

- Among the substantive issues reported by workers from any factory this quarter, 59% were resolved. The remainder were unable to be resolved due to workers not seeking resolution assistance or to the Helpline and/or Alliance not being able to pursue issues further.
- 92% of workers who called to report a substantive issue this quarter were comfortable sharing their name with the Helpline, but only 82% would allow their name to be shared with the factory.
- Of the 862 Alliance factories that have received training on the Helpline, workers from 590 factories (68%) placed calls to the Helpline between January and March 2017. Workers from 337 Helpline-launched factories (39%) reported substantive issues this quarter.
- Workers from 173 non-Alliance factories called the Helpline this quarter. Most calls pertained to compensation and termination.
- 97% of the safety issues reported this quarter from workers at Alliance factories were resolved and closed by the end of March. All remaining unresolved issues are in the process of being closed in accordance with Alliance protocols.

NOTES:

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.



Progress to Date (from July 2014 onward)

Total Calls	Substantive Issues	Helpline Launched Factories
# inbound: 126,973	Alliance factories: 9,763	# workers: 1,283,573
# outbound: 59,684	Non-Alliance factories: 1,157	# factories: 862

- Notes:
- Graphs do not include calls from "General Inquiry", "False", or "No category" issue categories, except graphs on calls received and calls by time of day and where otherwise stated.
 - Calls have been received from non-Alliance factories. For example, calls were received from 173 factories not listed as Alliance factories in Q3. These calls are included in the call volume, call time, and factories with calls graphs above, but not included in the issue or caller profile visualizations.
 - Substantive issues per month graph may not match historical newsletters due to changes in issue categorization over time.
 - # of workers and # of factories where the Helpline has been launched are based on information provided by the Alliance.

HELPLINE FOCUS

continued from front page

between observations that are genuine hazards and those that are not, workers can use the Helpline as a clearinghouse of concerns. Helpline and Alliance staff provide expertise and certified inspectors to differentiate between worker reports requiring actual safety enhancements and those that merit clear communication (e.g., by factory management) about safety-related concerns, but that may not ultimately turn out to be a problem. Third, factory managers can make sure they communicate steps they are taking to ensure safety at all times. Routine reporting of completed safety improvements and plans for further enhancements is one useful strategy. Whether observations are ultimately verified as risks or not, legitimate expressions of concern help all of us understand how to more effectively communicate about factory safety.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Activities to repress legitimate trade unions have been reported in a number of cases, consistent with the increased attention of such activities in the RMG sector in recent months. In such cases, management and buyers are immediately informed so that responsible parties can be fully aware of worker perspectives with the ultimate goal of adhering to applicable law and the requirements of buyers.

IN THE NEWS

The Helpline continues to be a matter of high interest, represented by video crews from media outlets in Bangladesh and from Alliance members who wish to bring greater awareness to the Helpline's work. An Alliance-produced video that describes the Helpline and other Alliance activities from the perspective of workers is now available on the Alliance website.

FACTORY MANAGERS SEE BENEFIT

In a recent safety seminar with factory managers, the Helpline received praise for the value it brings to management. "Access to the Helpline for my workers supports my management team in maintaining a safe working environment at my factory and ensures that our factory remains compliant," said one participant. Information sharing, creating awareness of issues and supporting motivated workers were cited as key attributes of the Helpline. While some management complained that the Helpline was being used to report "silly" problems, such as a broken toilet, support for the Helpline overall remains high. 📞

WHO ARE WE?

Amader Kotha, or "Our Voice" in Bangla, is a unique collaboration among three project partners—Clear Voice, a project of The Cahn Group that operates hotlines and builds effective grievance mechanisms in supply chains; Phulki, a respected civil society organization working to improve the lives of workers and their families in Bangladesh; and Good World Solutions (GWS), a non-profit organization whose flagship tool—Laborlink—has reached more than 1,000,000 workers. Each partner brings years of experience building innovative, best-in-class labor compliance programs in supply chains. 📞



Information about Amader Kotha is publicized in factories