At least 112 were killed in a fire at a garment factory in Bangladesh on November 25, 2012. Officials are still investigating what caused the fire, but many disturbing facts about the disaster have already come to light.

This fire can be analyzed by building a Cause Map, a visual root cause analysis. When constructing a Cause Map, the first step is to fill in an Outline that lays out the basic facts of the incident. The impacts to the goal are also listed in the Outline and are used as the first box in the Cause Map. The Cause Map visually lays out the different things that contributed to an issue and shows the cause-and-effect relationship between the different causes. In this example, the safety goal was the focus because of the number of lives lost.

**Cause Map**

**Problem**

What

Problem(s)

Factory fire, 112 killed

When

Date

11/25/12

Time

~ 7 pm

Differences

No emergency exits, occurred after normal working day

Where

Physical Location

Factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Impact to the Goals

Safety

112 killed

**Analysis**

Safety Goal Impacted

At least 112 killed

**Solutions**

Working in a garment factory

Many people work for Bangladesh's garment industry

Few other opportunities for stable income

Few opportunities are open to women

Many of the workers are women

1/3 of population lives in extreme poverty

Fire in the factory

Spark

Oxygen

Arson?

Consumable materials present

Piles of fabric and clothing in factory

Common materials in garment factory

Only one exit

No emergency exits

Evidence: Investigation into the fire

Evidence: Statements by government officials have said arson or sabotage is suspected.

Workers unable to leave factory quickly

Exit partially blocked

Piles of clothing were stored on the stairs

Evidence: Investigation into the fire

Evidence: Investigation into the fire

Fire burned for a long time

Difficult for fire fighters to reach factory

Not easily accessible by vehicle

Evidence: Took fire fighters all night to put out fire

Evidence: Took fire fighters all night to put out fire

NOTE: Read the Cause Map from left to right with the phrase “Was Caused By” in place of each arrow.