ISEAL GLOBAL LIVING WAGE COALITION TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE VIA BRAND NEW LIVING WAGE PORTAL

Project duration: July 2017 to June 2018

The Global Living Wage Coalition has received a grant from the ISEAL Innovations Fund to build an interactive Living Wage Portal for all stakeholders working on or interested in this topic. Jessica Grillo, Senior Advisor for Livelihoods at Rainforest Alliance explains how this portal will support the industry as a whole, and how this grant helped get the project off the ground.

What was the motivation behind the project?

The Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC) is a coalition of seven ISEAL members (Rainforest Alliance, Social Accountability International, GoodWeave, UTZ, Forest Stewardship Council, Sustainable Agriculture Network, and Fairtrade International) united by the common goal to see improvements in workers' conditions, including wage levels, in the farms, factories and supply chains participating in their systems.

GLWC members recognise the need for a shared approach to measuring living wage and more coordination in living wage implementation efforts. This project seeks to share broadly the cost of living data that it has gathered using this shared approach (the Anker Methodology), along with lessons learned on implementation, to further catalyse wage and income increases for producers and workers both within and external to certification systems globally. Cost of living data is valuable not only to the community of stakeholders addressing living wage, but also to others working on economic policy and tackling issues of poverty.

How will the project work?

The Living Wage Portal will offer the first-ever collaborative space for global living wage and costs of living initiatives, aligned with the Anker Methodology. It will be a user-friendly online platform organised around four main components: front page dashboard and interactive map; database and country-specific pages; forum for sharing implementation strategies and lessons learned; and tools and resources.
The portal will improve collaboration between different actors that have expressed interest in the work of the GLWC, including other voluntary standards, certifying body organisations, purchasers, brands, producers, unions, civil society and governments.

What made you apply to the ISEAL Innovations Fund?

The fund was a natural fit for the Living Wage Portal initiative because the GLWC is made mostly of ISEAL members. This grant will help to amplify the work of the GLWC and set up a better framework for data management to be able to share the work being done on living wages with a much wider community. The portal will be designed for potential benefit to other ISEAL members and other initiatives, such as living income.

What have been the main lessons learned so far?

From the very start, you need to consider how best to balance information sharing with the need to protect privacy. This is particularly true on issues that can be politically charged, such as living wage, where confidentiality can be critical to securing stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement requires ongoing dialogue and flexibility.

What advice do you have for other ISEAL members thinking of applying to the Fund?

Go for it! This Fund provides a unique opportunity to pilot and/or build on innovations within standard systems. It has been well-designed for ISEAL members, with a streamlined application process, reliable communication between the Fund and the applicant or grantee, and willing technical support when needed.

“\[The GLWC and its growing number of collaborators have much to share with these stakeholders, but also much learn from their experience working with these data sets and the living wage benchmarks. Hence the need for an online space where such knowledge can be shared.\]”

Jessica Grillo, Senior Advisor for Livelihoods, Rainforest Alliance

Find out more about the ISEAL Innovations Fund.

The ISEAL Innovations Fund is supported by the following partners: