Wage Auditing Working Group

A peer learning space for sustainability systems working to improve wages in supply chains

There is growing commitment by governments, businesses and civil society to tackle the issue of low wages (or poverty wages) in supply chains across the world. As market-based tools, sustainability standards and similar systems are at the forefront of this movement in many sectors. They have a key role to play in raising the level of debate and action on wage issues. Many businesses themselves are making commitments to progress on wages within their supply chains and are choosing to work with standards or other tools to achieve these goals. While sustainability systems have varying levels of focus on the topic of wages and are at different stages in their journeys to improve wages in their supply chains, the scope for cross-learning and sharing of insight is high.

As a peer learning space, the Wage Auditing Working Group seeks to explore this potential by providing opportunities for sustainability systems to discuss the topic of wages, including auditing and verification of wages, to support their efforts to measure and bridge living wage gaps. The working group will run from May 2021 to June 2022. It is being set up as part of a 1.5-year project being led by ISEAL on supporting effective measurement, verification and improvement of living wage gaps.

Objectives

The working group aims to open up the conversation on concepts related to wages, including auditing and verification, through peer learning, expert insights and discussions on common challenges. Through dialogue with peers and experts, participants will gain insights that will help them to accelerate their work in this space.

The working group will:

- discuss topics of common interest related to wages or living wages (e.g. living wage basics, benchmark approaches or wage improvement strategies)
- provide a space for advancing technical knowledge and learning on specific aspects of working on wages (e.g. standards content, assurance challenges or benchmark adoption)
- provide a space for peer learning amongst schemes working across sectors and regions (we could choose to have sector-specific or region-specific meetings if the group so decides)
- identify innovative solutions or common challenges to inform future work and collective action in this space

Getting involved

An introductory meeting of the working group will take place in May 2021, with subsequent meetings planned for once every month. Meetings will take place virtually and usually last for a maximum of 90 minutes.

We are keen for all sustainability systems with an interest in the topic of wages, including wage auditing and verification, to get involved in the working group. We think this group would be particularly relevant for assurance and living wage or social issues leads. We are happy for more than one person per scheme to join the group. In this case, we will require one regular key contact for communication purposes.

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