

Status, Challenges, Future

[WageIndicator Conference Part 1: Our Work](#)



Global WageIndicator Conference #7 - 29 April 2022: Our Work

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WageIndicator Foundation

WageIndicator Foundation - www.wageindicator.org

WageIndicator started in 2000 to contribute to a more transparent labour market by publishing easily accessible information online. It collects, compares and shares labour market information through online and face-to-face surveys and desk research. It publishes the collected information on national websites, thereby serving as an online library for wage information, labour law, and career advice, both for workers/employees and employers.

The WageIndicator websites and related communication activities reach out to millions of people each month.

WageIndicator Foundation was established in 2003. By 2022 the foundation has offices in Amsterdam (HQ), Bratislava, Islamabad and in many big cities in the world. The foundation has a core team of 20 persons and some 100 associates - specialists in wages, labour law, industrial relations, data science, data collection, statistics - from all over the world. The IT team is independent. On a yearly basis, WageIndicator Foundation offers 100 internships to students from different universities. FLAME University in Pune, India, plays a key role in the intern program.

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Acknowledgements

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Global WageIndicator Conference #7 - 29 April, (2022)

Amsterdam, WageIndicator Foundation

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A fresh start

2015 saw our 6th global conference. And then: nothing, or so it seems. But we are back on track, April 2022. From now on, we hope to organise our global meet, bond, debate, build, project and anticipate-event annually. There are sound reasons for this. What are these?

So, first, let us take stock. What is our present **status** as a would-be 'global' player? Is our organisation up to the tasks that come with such an ambition? What are our USPs (Unique Selling Points), what are our weaknesses? What about non-profit/profit?

Next: identify **challenges**, both in terms of threats and opportunities. Which are these? Would we make a priority list of activities, a kind of global work plan? Would that work for us? Must we reorganise in the face of the challenges we see? Do we go it all alone? Are we looking for partners to merge with?

And what about the **future**, 1 year, 5 or 10 years from now? Must we set a goal, several goals? Annual targets? Internally, externally?

Helicopter view over the past 7 years

Luckily, we don't have to reinvent ourselves completely. A lot has been achieved. We build on something we have created together. So, for starters, a review of the past 7 years.

2015: looking back and forth

2015: 'Results', the compilation of conference papers, were what we could show after 15 years of hard work. Early 2000, at the start of WageIndicator, the initiators certainly had no idea that in 2015 they would be overlooking an emerging global playing field of their own making. Yet, from a modest start, calculating actual salary indications for women and men in the Netherlands, a concept developed, made up of salary benchmarks. It moved to incorporate VIP incomes, Statutory Minimum Wages and Living Wage estimates. Since 2013 all figures collected have been sorted and lined up under Wages In Context: easy to understand, easy to compare. The scale of operations grew tremendously, both of the participating countries and from the outreach to visitors: workers and (small) employers all benefited alike. Content-wise we saw the need to include labour law pages, which turned out to be the most popular section, as had happened with the pages on Minimum Wage before. As from 2015, we may even compare and share Collective Agreements.

Throughout, we have given full attention to the position of women in their labour markets, i.e. in all countries. It is not that we set out with that intention: this focus was brought to us by the need we saw, certainly also more sharply as the majority of our

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core team is made up of working women. It tells you also that WageIndicator is interactive: we try to respond to people's needs immediately. If for instance the simple obligation to pay the legal Minimum Wage is not abided by, we point that out, look up the figure, publish it and - even - provide a means to redress the injustice. Such is our commitment to all who have to make ends meet in the labour markets where we happen to find ourselves and must make sense of the multitude of rules and regulations. We try to understand these ourselves first, in order to be able to share our insights in an easy to read, yet not oversimplified way. And we do that as smart and lean as we can. Because WageIndicator too must survive, as a micro-multinational in a world economy on the fast lane. There was no wizard around to tell us where the world was headed. And there still isn't.

Navigating 7 lean years

In the 7 lean years that flew by since our last global conference which convened in Amsterdam, money constraints, the pandemic and a host of activities prevented us from instituting the practice of getting together on a global scale in person, to socialise, bond, but - first and foremost - to consolidate and build on our collective body of knowledge. But this was not a downtime. By all means operations were scaled up, extended and solidified. And meetings of minds - at least that - intensified in quality and frequency, already prior to the pandemic, but certainly spurred on by it and the continuous demand to automate routine and innovate content-wise.

As far as public exposure is concerned, the goal of covering all countries in the world, having national WageIndicator websites operational in them, was never abandoned and now has been nearly achieved - surpassing 200 in 2020. In academia and the international business community, public exposure was highlighted during the past 7 years, a.o. by participating in and contributing to prestigious international conferences in our field. The overview below also sheds light on the gradual change of course that we witnessed and responded to.

2017: global positioning

2017. During a KIT-conference (University of Amsterdam), WageIndicator squarely put all of its databases in a global context. See the titles of our contributions:

- The Principles of WageIndicator
- Wages in Global Perspective
- WageIndicator for worldwide data-collection and research
- Minimum Wages worldwide
- Minimum Wages in India
- Estimating Living Wage Globally
- Living Wages in Asia

- Enabling apparel workers and employers to check, debate, negotiate and publish wages and working conditions online (the case of Indonesia)
- The WageIndicator Collective Agreements Database

2018: focus industrial relations

In 2018, at the ILERA-conference in Seoul, WageIndicator presented papers on the following topics:

- Are Collective Agreements in Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Vietnam guaranteeing Decent Working Conditions?
- Dynamics of gender pay gap and its implications for industrial relations: a comparative study of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- Do Minimum Wages & Living Wages affect Industrial Relations in Asian Countries?
- Trends in Minimum Wage Laws and Implementation: Experiences of selected Asian Countries (and the Case of India)
- Social Pacts - An Account of Tripartism in the Indian Subcontinent
- Collective Bargaining Agreements and Industrial Relations in the Commerce Sector throughout Europe

2019: from Minimum to Living Wages

2019: The presentations at the 6th ILO Regulating for Decent Work (RDW) 2019 Conference echo this emphasis detected in the previous year. The papers' titles in themselves are revealing:

- Towards a Classification of Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery
- How To Calculate a Living Wage Globally
- Monitoring Minimum Wage and Labour Law Compliance in the Indonesian Garment Industry
- Understanding the Drivers of Minimum Wage-Setting: An Analysis of 146 countries.

Combined, these titles show the reach and ambition of WageIndicator operations at the time, as well as the emergence of Living Wage as the latest and most promising development.

2020: COVID-19 and Zoom

2020: And then the COVID-19 pandemic struck. Of course it meant an abrupt stop to all our global operations in the physical sense: we stopped travelling and presenting our papers in the flesh. Instead we quickly upgraded our online presence (a practice in which we were - luckily - already well-versed). Ever since early 2020, we have relied extensively on Zoom, intensifying our internal and external communications. In a word: Zoom meant a boost to our growth and organisation. Updating and adding

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websites as well as databases by adding new data from online and offline surveying, more and more down from national to regional levels, streamlining and restyling of - by the end of 2021- approx. 200 national websites, all this work had by now become routine, yet needs meticulous care in its execution. Here the training of dozens of interns came as a welcome concomitant, fostering our working relationship with FLAME University from Pune.

Simultaneously, our contributions to international conferences of note (ILO, OECD for instance) were delivered online, during webinars to which we were invited as a global player who has meaningful, authoritative contributions to make. See for instance:

2020: ILO, again at the Regulating for Decent Work Conference (as in 2019)

- The consequences of the implemented COVID-19 measures on gender-specific labour market inequalities: A global perspective
- COVID-19, collective bargaining and social dialogue: A report on behalf of ILO-ACTRAV

2021: international recognition, webinars and partner-search

2021 Highlights were IDH-acknowledgement of our methodology and acceptance of our Living Wage for a Typical Family as standard, as well as the OECD-request to prepare and host a workshop during its prestigious event on Living Wages, held November 2021.

Also, over the past few years we initiated and organised quite a lot of webinars ourselves, events usually accompanied by introductory videos of our own making. Topically, we extended our reach by including a gig-section in our global approach, unknowingly anticipating (indeed, who knew?) the enormous growth of delivery services and remote work by millions of self-employed and freelancers from early 2020. Our motive: why should the self-employed carriers, who deliver our food at our doorstep, and all those who work remotely from home, but have contracts nor financial security, why should these be denied a Living Tariff? Therefore we extended the concept of Living Wage and started to collect relevant data for inclusion in our datasets.

Close customer contact over the past few years has brought home that implementing Living Wages is a complex matter. We cherish the feedback, and use it to further develop and innovate, striving for perfection and global coverage. But we stick to collecting data and offering argued benchmarks. We stop short of certifying, or becoming consultants ourselves. Yet, we can imagine close cooperation with third parties to do a proper job with our data. And indeed promising talks with such a party, a global player, are well advanced.

Reinforced management: 4 directors

In terms of continuity of the organisation, 2021 has seen another important move. Four directors were nominated, all of them old hands. With their nomination as director communications, director data, director research, and director operations came the delegation of responsibilities. Sales received a substantial boost by growing interest in our Living Wage data in particular. This activity therefore became much more time consuming than could have been foreseen and planned for. Increasing demand for Living Wages (particularly from regions) is more than a short-lived hype. It reflects the emphasis many companies today put on Corporate Social Responsibility, or - even - the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, which were proclaimed in 2015 and are to be realised by 2030. Paying a Living Wage (as a minimum) fits in well with these SDGs.

It is therefore high time to put the adolescent tradition of annual global conferencing back on track after 7 years.

We cordially invite you to participate in the 7th Global WageIndicator Conference. Let us face again the proven fact that by confronting **challenges** we ourselves have a say in shaping our own **future**.

2022: 7th Global WageIndicator Conference, April 29 and May 6 CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

1. Minimum Wage Rates for 206 Countries

Kea Tijdens and Iftikhar Ahmed

Brief history of the Minimum Wage (MW) pages

2006

India's WageIndicator team received Minimum Wage requests from web visitors

India has some 13,000 MW-rates for jobs, employment schedules, and states

- € Wage Boards are great decision makers, but not in communicating decisions
- € huge demand from the public for this information

the team published an increasing number of MW-rates on paycheck.in

2007-2012

other WageIndicator teams also received requests from the public

and published MW-rates on their websites

start of systematic collection of MW-rates in websites of approx. 80 countries

MW_APP - database with 20,000+ MW-rates

Since 2018

Development of MW_APP, a database including 20,000+ rates of 206 countries

In MW_APP the rates are updated as soon as Governments update the rates

A script generates web pages from this database, so that the MW-web pages are updated as soon as MW_APP is updated

MW-news is communicated

Who is involved

Iftikhar Ahmad's team in Pakistan maintains the database, Kea Tijdens is back-up

The team races the updates from their worldwide database of MW related URLs

And receives messages of WageIndicator team members or from web visitors regarding updated rates

Related databases

Monthly data dump since 2018

The rates in MW_APP are replaced with new rates with every update

To save the 'old' rates, each month the data of all rates valid in that month is stored in a monthly data dump

Historic database – under construction

All valid MW-rates from 2014 onwards, on a monthly basis

Currently available for approx. 100 countries

MW-rates are used for the Living Wages

All Living Wages are compared to the relevant Minimum Wages

Examples

MW-RATES – search by country

- [Minimum Wages per Country - WageIndicator.org](#)

MW-RATES – example Angola – Span+Eng

- [Salário mínimo – Angola](#)
- [Minimum wage - Angola - WageIndicator.org](#)

MW-REGULATIONS – search by country

- [Minimum Wages Regulations - WageIndicator.org](#)

MW-REGULATIONS – example Brazil - English

- [Salary. Minimum Wage. Regular Pay - Brazil - WageIndicator.org](#)

MW-NEWS about updated rates

- [Minimum Wages News - WageIndicator.org](#)

MW-NEWS – example Honduras

- [Minimum Wage Updated in Honduras from 01 January 2022 - April 8, 2022 - WageIndicator.org](#)

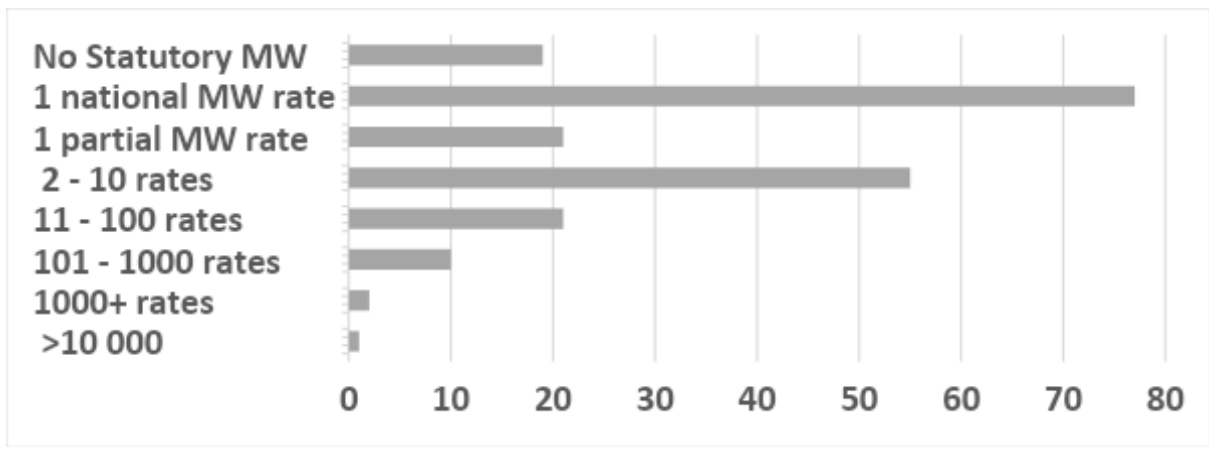
MW-visuals – MW-updates



* Pink raspberry colour indicates those countries which last updated minimum wages in 2017 or earlier.
 ** In countries where minimum wages are collectively negotiated, the last updated date is merely arbitrary and the actual date of minimum wage revision may be different.

How complex are MW-rates by country?

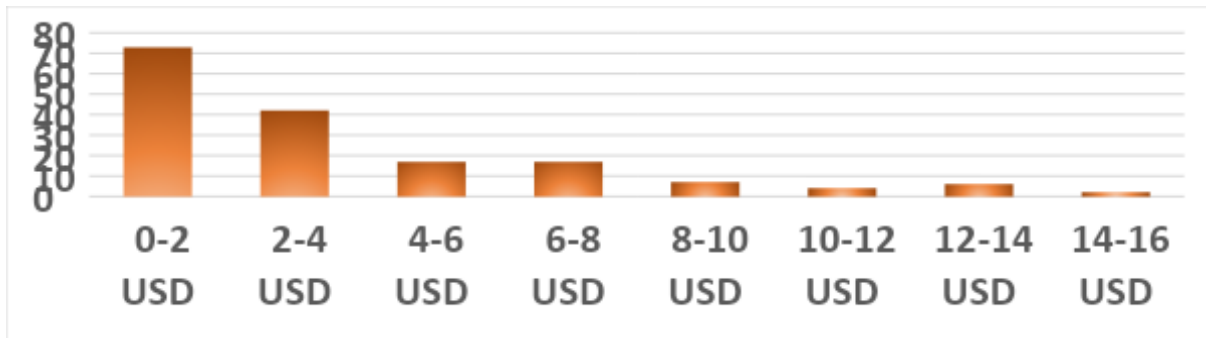
168 countries and their lowest MW-rate in standardised US Dollar
 73 countries have a MW-rate of less than 2 USD per hour, 2021
 42 have so for 2 – 4 USD per hour



What are MW-levels across countries?

168 countries and their lowest MW-rate in standardised US Dollar

- 73 countries have a MW-rate of less than 2 USD per hour, 2021
- 42 have so for 2 – 4 USD per hour



Thank you for your attention

Questions?

See <https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage>

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2. Building Transparent and Inclusive Labour Markets through Mass Awareness

Iftikhar Ahmad, Labour Law Expert, WageIndicator Foundation/Founder, Centre for Labour Research (WageIndicator Labour Law Office) Shanza Sohail, Senior Research Associate, Centre for Labour Research (WageIndicator Labour Law Office)

Why raise awareness of workplace rights?

Goal 8 under the Sustainable Development Goals refers to “full and productive employment and decent work for all”. However, decent work for all cannot be achieved unless the enactment of legislation is in line with the International Labour Standards and there is awareness-raising among workers of their statutory rights. Similarly, Goal 16 refers to strong and inclusive institutions as well as the rule of law under its various targets.

It is comparatively easier to find economic data (prices, wages, GDP, etc.) worldwide than information on legislation mandating minimum wages, working hours, annual leave, employment contracts, equal treatment or prohibiting child labour, etc. Moreover, while the information on statutory labour rights is maintained online by the state and trade unions in some developed countries, such information is widely lacking in developing economies.

Such information gaps may seem convenient for countries with no interest in

raising awareness about legislation and improving it. Employers presumably have no interest in raising a worker's understanding and awareness of labour rights since this means increased compliance and a high cost of doing business. The actual victim in such situations is the worker who never gets to know about their rights.

There is considerable literature on the link between enforcement of labour legislation (compliance) and the level of awareness (both among workers and employers). Worker's awareness is strongly associated with better working conditions. Enforcement can be increased by a vibrant labour inspection system and the strong trade union movement in the country. However, there is a low collective representation of workers in most developing countries, and labour inspection systems are budget-strapped and understaffed. In this situation, workers' rights can be better enforced through a bottom-up approach – based on individual awareness of their rights and subsequent complaints. However, this approach requires the dissemination of legal knowledge among workers.

Historical Background

WageIndicator Foundation has been raising awareness on labour rights since 2008. There was no global format to be followed in presenting labour law information on country websites in the initial years. Each country team decided on the topics they deemed relevant and presented information in easy-to-understand format. For example, information on HIV/AIDS in the workplaces, including bargaining agreements, health arrangements and education sessions, was very relevant in most African countries. Legal information was presented in the form of stories.

From 2010 onward, the labour rights information was presented in a question-and-answer format. While this new format allowed the presentation of information in a personal way, not all websites covered the same questions, which made it difficult to cross-reference labour laws across countries – and thus to establish a practical database.

From 2013 onward, it was decided to provide labour law information on a set number of topics for all WageIndicator country websites, ultimately leading to the creation of the WageIndicator Labour Law Database. It is a complete legal database, giving references to labour law for each provision. This method has proven helpful in raising awareness among workers and compliance among small and micro employers, who found it challenging to know and understand the legal compliance requirements. The database has allowed comparability of labour rights information across countries. In recent years, we have added COVID- related info in labour law pages, next to rights of non-standard contracts, including platform workers.

Status

Decent Work Checks and Labour Law Pages

Currently, there are 110 Decent Work Checks available. These country DWCs have been translated to local languages, which are more than 40. The labour rights information is available in the form of labour law pages (country websites) and comprehensive country guides in pdf format. Since 2015, labour law pages have been the most visited pages. The 2021 data for 124 countries (including WageIndicator global website) indicates that of the 52.16 million page views, 12.98 million (24%) are for labour law. If minimum wage views are also added to it, these views increase to 18.09 million, which translates into 34.69% of the overall views.

The first de jure Index on labour rights

Labour Rights Index 2020

In 2020, the Labour Rights Index was launched. The Index is based on more than a decade of research by the WageIndicator Foundation and the Centre for Labour Research.¹

The Index is grounded in the Decent Work Checks and labour law pages, available on 106 WageIndicator country websites.² Launched on 30 September 2020, the Labour Rights Index is a comparative tool, an international standard that compares labour legislation worldwide. It helps its users navigate the labour markets of 115 countries. The labour market regulation affecting around 80% of the 3.5 billion global labour force has been analysed and scored under the Index.

The Labour Rights Index 2020 looks at every aspect of the working lifespan of a worker and identifies the presence of labour rights, or the lack thereof, in national legal systems worldwide. It has 10 indicators and 46 evaluation criteria. These are based on substantive elements of the Decent Work Agenda and are grounded in UDHR, five UN Conventions, five ILO Declarations, 35 ILO Conventions, and four ILO Recommendations. The Index provides an overall score for each of the 115 countries covered.

Labour Rights Index 2020 is a de jure index, and it measures the presence or absence of relevant legislation only. It recognises the existence of implementation gaps in legislative provisions since well-drafted and inclusive laws are still a precondition for attaining decent work.

Detailed information is available on the official Labour Rights Index website (<https://labourrightsindex.org/>) as well as the WageIndicator website (<https://wageindicator.org/>).

Labour Rights Index 2022

The second version of the Labour Rights Index is to be launched in September this year. The upcoming edition will be the Labour Rights Index 2022. It will include any legal updates from the last two years, i.e., 2020 and 2021, that may change scores under any of the 10 decent work indicators for each of the 115 countries. The 2022 edition of the Index will analyse labour legislation as applicable on 1 January 2022. Moreover, we have planned to extend the coverage to 135 countries; therefore, we will be scoring an additional 20 countries.³ These mainly include countries from Central Asia, North Africa and South America.

In addition, we will review sectoral collective agreements (for sectors with the highest share of employment) for countries that have a strong collective bargaining coverage, mainly in Europe, irrespective of whether minimum wages in such countries are set through collective bargaining.⁴

Furthermore, as our country profiles under Labour Rights Index 2020 have contextual information in the form of Quick Facts, we are also looking (and have gathered data) to include *Trade Union Density, Collective Bargaining Coverage, Female Labour Force Participation Rate, Labour Force Participation Rate, and Labour Inspectors (per 10,000 workers)* under Quick Facts for each country in the upcoming version of the Labour Rights Index.

Finally, the official Labour Rights Index website will be updated as well. Aside from the questions and scores shown on the Labour Rights Index website, we will be providing the legal basis (in the country profiles as well) for each score by adding for the country the answers to all the questions and the legislative source for each answer. This will be added as *Indicators / Answers / Legal Basis* for each component for every country in the Labour Rights Index 2022. Since the Index is based on Decent Work Checks (DWCs) - based on labour law – the relevant links will also be shared on the Labour Rights Index website (<https://labourrightsindex.org/>) for ease of access.

COVID and Labour Market

During COVID, the Labour Law team at WageIndicator/Centre for Labour Research created a comprehensive repository of labour market reforms initiated by countries to deal with the labour market crisis. The reforms are classified into eight different measures. These include cash transfers, employment protection/creation, wage replacement programs, unemployment benefits, social security, sick leave/family care benefits, telework/flexitime, and support for the self-employed.⁵

Challenges

It is not an easy task to winnow labour rights information from thousands of pages of labour legislation (including rules and regulations), especially when the legislation is available in languages other than English. To give the reader an idea, in the 135 countries we are focusing on for the upcoming edition of the Labour Rights Index, only 33 have English as the official language, 18 have French as the official language, 17 have Arabic as the official language, 15 have Spanish as the official language, five have Portuguese as the official language, four have Russian as the official language, and China is the only country with Chinese as the official language. These are 93 countries. The remaining 42 countries have national languages, and most of the time, the legislation is available only in the national language.

Country teams have been helpful in locating legislation and translating the DWC text for creating and populating labour law pages, yet the first responsibility lies on the Labour Law team to create the DWCs in English and deal with different languages. Annual DWC updates for DWCs are a task on their own. It is a significant challenge to keep all text up to date for all these countries as there are always reforms happening on some topics in each country. Not each reform may lead to a score change, though. However, this decision can be made only once all these reforms have been checked and compared with our scoring criteria. Similarly, it is a challenge to maintain a team that is interested in working on labour legislation all the time.

Future

Our aim is to increase the Decent Work Checks and labour law pages to 150 countries by 2025. We also plan to launch the third edition of the Index in September 2025 with 150 countries. Regional indices can also be launched in the coming years.

Although it is challenging to collect data on de facto labour rights involving such a comprehensive list of indicators and components, we do plan to introduce some data on the implementation of labour standards. This is to be in the form of a *Compliance Pyramid*⁶ which would be based on ILO Supervisory body assessments for fundamental conventions (eight core labour standards) and governance conventions (C81 and C144).⁷ However, we do not intend to include it in the scoring and rating of the countries at this stage.

For that purpose, we also plan to collaborate with academic researchers in the field of comparative labour law in order to develop a system to check compliance with national regulations. Other than these initiatives, we plan to work on a contract shop that provides basic employment contracts in each country. Small and

micro-enterprises can use these sample contracts to conclude employment contracts with workers. This will help employers provide workers with written employment contracts in line with the provisions of local labour legislation and increase compliance in the country.

Do we have social impact?

Considering the number of page views/visits on WageIndicator websites, it is safe to claim that our work has contributed to raising awareness among the masses on workplace rights in WageIndicator countries.

Through the legal help desk, country teams have responded to hundreds of questions and guided workers and small/micro employers in complying with the labour legislation.

While we generally hear about a race to the bottom in working conditions in developing countries being highlighted in media exposure, we observe a consistent march to the top among countries where governments are enacting legislation on uncharted areas like non-discrimination, sexual harassment at work, and various kinds of leave related to childbirth. In a small way, we have contributed toward transparent labour markets by increasing awareness of labour rights among all stakeholders.

¹ The Centre for Labour Research, Pakistan is the global labour law office of the WageIndicator Foundation.

² <https://wageindicator.org/Wageindicatorfoundation/wageindicatorcountries>

³ Names mentioned at the end of the document.

⁴ Earlier, the LRI 2020 considered collective agreements for only those countries where wages are set through collective bargaining. These countries included Austria, Italy, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. However, the LRI 2022 will analyse collective agreements for all those countries where collective bargaining coverage is more than 30%

⁵

<https://wageindicator.org/salary/living-and-working-in-times-of-the-coronavirus/covid-19-labour-market-reforms>

⁶ The introduction of this *Compliance Pyramid* is based on Orbie & Tortell (2009) work on 'Pyramid of ILO Condemnation'.

⁷ There are three supervisory bodies at ILO which review a country's progress on International Labour Standards: **Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR)** examines country reports on application of ratified conventions. It issues its observations in the form of a report. **Conference Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)**, a standing committee of the International Labour Conference, examines the CEACR report in a tripartite setting and selects from it a number of observations for discussion. The governments are invited to respond before the Conference Committee and to provide information on the situation in question. **Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA)** examines complaints of violations of freedom of association, whether or not the country concerned had ratified the relevant Conventions. The Compliance Pyramid is created by sifting the key phrases from the reports of ILO Supervisory bodies indicating their satisfaction (or lack thereof) with the country legislative and compliance levels.

3.1. Decent Work Check Project in Ethiopia

By:

Daniela Ceccon: Director Data WageIndicator,

Gashaw Tesfa: Decent Work Check Team,

Eyuel Mekonnen: Manager Decent Work Check Team

Introduction

Until 2018, Ethiopia was believed to be one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. The government of Ethiopia has introduced the establishment of industry parks in different parts of the country. So far, the government established 13 industry parks which have created more than 83,000 jobs. Still the government aims at expanding their numbers. However, since November 2021, the federal government of Ethiopia has been in conflict with the TPLF, which led the country for more than 25 years. Currently, Ethiopia's economy suffers from COVID-19, and an all-out war with the Tigray regional government, as well as other factions in almost all parts of the country. Not only are these challenges dragging the nation backward, but also sanctions from the United States, other international bodies, and the Russia-Ukraine war all aggravate the already deteriorating or stagnating economy. In this context WageIndicator continues to fight the abuses and repression of helpless workers in the textile and flower industries.

Status

Decent Work is one of the most pressing issues in almost all parts of the world. However, the challenge is exacerbated by various factors in developing countries like Ethiopia. As a result, the issue of Decent Work, knowledge and practice of labour laws, Minimum Wage, the development and implementation of Collective Bargaining Agreements are mind blowing problems in Ethiopia. Hence, the need to do Decent Work Check (DWC) surveys, followed up by Social Dialogues (SD) pertinent to the outstanding and often staggering problems identified via the survey, is of paramount importance. The implementation of the Decent Work Check project in Ethiopia has brought practical, tangible progress in the fight against awkward experiences of employees from the textile, garment/apparel industries and flower farms.

The Decent Work Checks, followed by Social Dialogues, have been implemented in textile, garment/apparel factories, and flower farms found in Addis Ababa, Hawassa, and Oromia regions. The project aims first to assess the Decent Work practices in these sectors and regions. The DWC surveys are followed by Social Dialogues on issues detected, which involve representatives of human resource

management/factory owners, trade union leaders, local government and federation representatives. Social Dialogues usually take place in a nearby hotel, to facilitate and host the organising and reporting WageIndicator team. Furthermore, during the Social Dialogue, the team members and federation representatives meet company representatives to evaluate the changes resulting from the Social Dialogue.

Participants

The Decent Work Check survey is conducted using a self-report questionnaire adapted from the international DWC survey English version. The questionnaire is translated into two local languages: Amharic and Afan Oromo. The stakeholders of the project include workers in those industries and farms, the respective management and the trade unions, the Industrial Federation of Textile, Leather and Garment Workers Union (IFTLGWU), and the National Federation of Farm, Plantation, Fishery and Agro-Industry Trade Unions of Ethiopia (NFFPFATU). Participants in the Cost-of-Living survey can be anyone with knowledge of the cost of living.

Goals

The project aims to achieve the following goals in 2021-2022:

1. Conducting 20 Decent Work Check (DWC) surveys in the textile and garment or apparel industries found in Addis Ababa, Hawassa, and Oromia region
2. Conducting 20 Social Dialogues on those textile and garment or apparel industries where the DWC survey has been conducted
3. Conducting 9 Decent Work Check (DWC) surveys in the Flower Farms located in the Oromia region
4. Conducting 9 social dialogues on those flower farms where the DWC survey has been conducted.
5. Evaluating the changes brought about in farms or industries thanks to the Social Dialogues conducted.

Results

The project aims to assess the existing working environment and to introduce Social Dialogues to the stakeholders, to discuss outstanding issues identified via the Decent Work survey. So far, the project has achieved the following results:

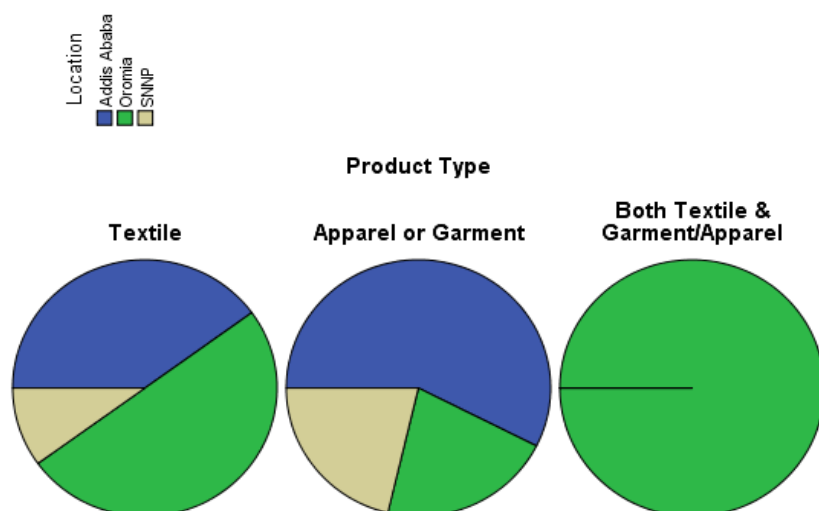


Fig.1: DWC survey coverage among the target areas: Addis Ababa, Hawassa, and Oromia.

S.No	Goal for 2021-2022	Achievement (%)	Remaining (%)
1.	20 DWC in Textile/Garment	> 20 (100%)*	12 (70%)
2.	20 SD in Textile/Garment	6 (30%)	14 (70%)
3.	9 DWC in Flower Farms	14 (100%)**	0
4.	9 SD in Flower Farms	6 (66.67%)	3 (33.33%)

Note: * DWC surveys have been held in more than 20 textile/garment factories. However, conducting SD in all those factories was impeded for various reasons.

** DWC surveys were held in more than the required number of farms and factories for Social Dialogue.

Successful Social Dialogues after the DWC bring the respective management and trade union to take on issues detected. The areas of improvement are diverse. Most frequently issues are identified which complicate workers'/employees' lives. Bringing these issues to the attention of the management by means of the Social Dialogues makes the management reconsider their approach, and improve the working conditions.

Areas of Improvement

1. Sick Leave
2. Equal Pay For Equal Work
3. Collective Bargaining Agreement
4. Salary Payment On Regular Basis
5. On-Site Clinic & Health Related Bills
6. Free Protective Equipment
7. Fire Extinguisher
8. Discrimination
9. Fixed-Term for Task of Permanent Nature
10. Employment Contract
11. Working Hours, Overtime Premium
12. Miscellaneous

Challenges

Decent Work Check Survey & Social Dialogue

- ✓ Resistance and misunderstandings from factory managements for conducting both Decent Work Check surveys and Social Dialogues.
- ✓ Lack of understanding on the purpose of both the Decent Work Check survey and Social Dialogue amongst employees and management.
- ✓ Unorganised employees (lack of trade union). Engaging trade unions is not so easy, given the prevailing old fashioned opinion that TUs only struggle to increase employees' salary/wages.
- ✓ Lack of awareness about labour law, international conventions ratified by Ethiopia, company policies, rules and regulations, even Collective Bargaining Agreements, etc. amongst individual workers.
- ✓ Ethiopia's expulsion from The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) has forced many of the textile/garment industries to partially close their operation.
- ✓ The international crisis, e.g. the Russia-Ukraine war, has started to exert a negative impact on international relations, which would in turn affect the textile/garment and flower industries.

- ✓ The conflict in Ethiopia itself has led to deteriorating opportunities for employees. Many factories have been tuned down.
- ✓ The skyrocketing living cost has exacerbated the challenges that many employees face.
- ✓ Crippled security conditions in Ethiopia may force international investors to withdraw their investment.
- ✓ Reduced Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has left many to remain without any option but to stay with the company they are already working in.
- ✓ Shortage of foreign currency has been complained of by some factories. This would further lead to (partially) closing the factory, leaving employees jobless.
- ✓ Many (or almost all) of the factories have traditional leadership practices. The human resource personnel in most factories are loyal to the factory owners and usually ignorant of employee needs.

Future

Exacerbated by the general developmental status of the country, the issue of Decent Work is worrisome in Ethiopia. The problem becomes more worrying, deep-rooted, and broader as one moves away from the economic and political capital, Addis Ababa. The Ethiopia team aspires to create conducive working environments where employees' satisfaction is maximised, productivity is appreciated, and industrial peace is secured.

In particular, the team would like to work on the following important areas in the textile, garment/apparel, and flower farms industries.

- expand the DWC to other untapped textile and garment industry areas.
- conduct monitoring and evaluation assessments of those factories and farms which have already participated in the DWC and SD.
- extend the Cost-of-Living surveys to other parts of the country so that representative samples can be obtained.
- expand the DWC and SD to other factories such as PP factories.
- impact the government to set Minimum Wages, and apply national labour law and international conventions ratified by Ethiopia.
- create working environments with respect for the rights and privileges (CBA) of employees.

Opportunities

- ✓ Involving factories or farms in creating Decent Work settings through the project presents important and reinforcing opportunities.
- ✓ Expansion of Industry Parks.
- ✓ Unexplored regions for the Cost-of-Living survey, Decent Work Check survey and Social Dialogue (Northern part of Ethiopia)
- ✓ We could only involve 25 % from all 80 flower farms operating in Ethiopia; from the start of the project we did 20 DWC surveys and Social Dialogues. Next to textile factories and flower farms, we could expand the DWC project to other industries which need attention.
- ✓ Strong interest shown by the Industrial Federation of Textile, Leather and Garment Workers Union (IFTLGWU) and National Federation of Farm, Plantation, Fishery and Agro-Industry Trade Unions of Ethiopia (NFFPFATU).
- ✓ Stronger interest from trade unions. The trade unions which were contacted so far showed stronger interest in the DWC survey and the SD following it.
- ✓ Stronger interest from government officials as the problem of Decent Work setting gets more pressing.
- ✓ The WageIndicator Ethiopia team is dedicated to do the Decent Work and Cost-of-Living surveys.

Conclusion

Ethiopia is undergoing huge social, economic, and political changes. The once fast growing economy now faces challenges. The government has been optimistic in its approach to create jobs by supporting industrial and agricultural sectors. Hence, hundreds of industries and flower farms have been set up. Though the industry established using the hard-earned foreign currency, create jobs for 100s of thousands of poor Ethiopians, the challenges these employees face at the workplace need intervention. Poor work settings, lack of awareness of national and international labour laws, deteriorating economy and security, skyrocketing living costs, etc. are the most commonly observed challenges. Thus, conducting Decent Work Check surveys and dealing with the identified issues is very important. Moreover, assessing living costs and bringing the issue of Minimum Wages to the attention of all bodies concerned, is important too. This assertion is supported by situations where Decent Work settings have improved, thanks to our interventions.

3.2. Decent Work Check Indonesia Gajimu

Status

Many brands and companies have tried hard to improve the working conditions throughout their supply chains. Efforts to improve supply chain working conditions visibility can vary, global brands have better control through their brands audit, increasing transparency of information across their supply chain, building capacity of their supplier – to name just a few means. However, in practice, there are still factories that fail to comply with the local mandatory labour law and regulations. Until recently, workers and trade unions did not have easy access to check and compare working conditions between factories and/or audits, which limits the ability for both trade unions and employers to conduct a meaningful Social Dialogue with the aim to improve working conditions.

WageIndicator tries to introduce approaches accompanied by a sustained effort based on worker's needs. While taking into account the industry and national situation/context, WageIndicator offers a way to ask workers questions through its Decent Work Check Survey to stimulate workers' awareness, reflection and learning about their rights. The Decent Work Check Survey collects worker's answers, and, through the publication of survey results in its transparency workers reporting platform, it provides an opportunity to set an agenda, to alert employers, brands and other stakeholders about worker's perception of their working conditions and to facilitate a non-confrontational social dialogue about how working conditions might be improved.

In the project WageIndicator Foundation (Gajimu Indonesia), Mondiaal FNV, Trade Union Right Centre (TURC), and the 3 largest garment trade union federations in Indonesia cooperate, with support from Laudes Foundation. The approach combines all initiatives and efforts that are currently done while focusing on workers' voices and demands.

We now present several activities undertaken to achieve an effective Social Dialogue leading to factory level working conditions improvement.

1. Data Collection

Data collection in the form of a survey was carried out by interviewers who had been trained intensively by the Data Academy, with the support of each trade union at various levels. The nature of the data collection is to find and assess facts related to the working conditions as perceived by workers.

a) Decent Work Check and Factory survey

The Decent Work Check survey was conducted to determine the working conditions in each factory by looking at the factory's level of compliance with applicable labour law and regulations. Decent Work Check surveys have been done since 2018, interrupted by travel restrictions during the COVID pandemic. Up till now, 281 garment factories were surveyed, 214 factories delivered at least 30 surveys. A total of 10,003 worker's surveys have been collected.



b) COVID-19 survey

A special COVID-19 survey was conducted to determine the impact of the pandemic on working conditions, the number of workers and the company's business continuity in a factory in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. 149 factories have participated in these surveys, 78 factories participated in all 3 batches of surveys.

Each survey aims to ensure that related institutions (be it government, brands, employers, trade unions, non-political organisations) have supporting data to make the right decisions in creating better working conditions, taking into account the worker's voice. The results are to be used later on as a database for conducting dialogue and negotiations with employers, government institutions and/or other related parties.

c) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on labour regulations

Next to the survey data, in order to make sure that workers are well informed about the current labour regulations in place, WageIndicator also provides a detailed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on labour rights, wages, employment security, working hours, etc. This FAQ is updated regularly, mirroring changes in labour regulations.

d) Collective Bargaining Agreement Database

Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) are also being collected throughout the project, mainly from the apparel and textile sectors. Since the start of the project in 2017, 118 factory CBAs have been collected, annotated and published in the CBA Database available for free in the WageIndicator Indonesian website Gajimu.com. The CBA Database has been used intensively by trade union officials in the Data Academy CBA workshop for reference and clauses comparison between factories.

2. Data Academy training

Data Academy training is aimed at capacity building for trade union officials and members, preparing students for analysis and use of the available data. In addition to analysing available data, Data Academy training students are trained to build data-based arguments in a Social Dialogue and/or CBA negotiations, for advocacy in factories or at a broader level.



Originally, Data Academy training was limited to evidence-based Social Dialogue training. From there it evolved and came to include a CBA workshop, Women workers' academy, online serial discussion and consultation (consultation forum preparing trade unions for bipartite dialogues), online CBA coaching clinics (follow up activities of the CBA workshop). These were

developed in response to trade unions' demands. Trade unions feel an urgent need to conclude and strengthen CBAs at the factory level. CBAs are seen as a way to mitigate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and labour law reforms, such as the Job Creation Bill and other problematic labour regulations which affect many workers.

Since 2020, through the program, we have trained 214 workers (112 men and 102 women) from 70 factories in how to use data collected for advocating better working conditions in factories (through bipartite dialogue, CBA negotiations).

3. Evidence-Based Social Dialogues and Collective Bargaining Agreements

Previous activities are built to prepare trade union and/or workers to conduct proper evidence-based Social Dialogues and negotiate CBAs. The survey results are used as basic information to trigger a Social Dialogue. The social dialogue can result in corrective actions taken by employers, such as a mutual agreement, adoption of Collective Bargaining Agreements, clause enhancement in CBAs and implementation of the regulations agreed.

Data collected throughout is also used to advocate and conduct Social Dialogues at the national level. Two policy briefs based on the data collected are produced to support the dialogues with the Ministry of Manpower, Ombudsman Republic of Indonesia, and Public Information Body. Each dialogue focuses on different topics, including the impact of the COVID pandemic on workers and factories, religious holiday allowances, weak and lack of labour inspections, and factory data transparency.



As to Social Dialogues on the international level, the data is used to produce comparative graphs related to factories that supply goods for the same brands/buyers.

4. Monitoring Working Conditions

To facilitate monitoring of working conditions by various stakeholders in the garment industry, the results of data collection and efforts to improve working conditions carried out by trade union and factory management are displayed on the Gajimu Garment website.

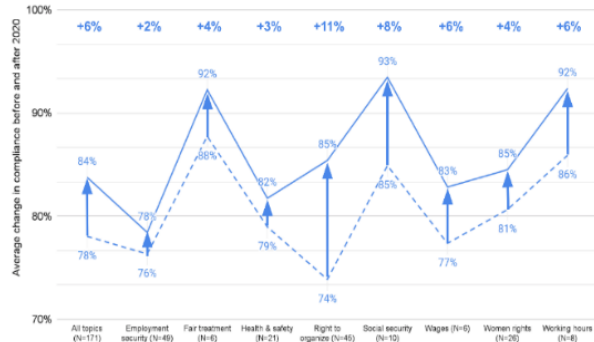
WageIndicator designed several ways to measure whether the intervention had an effect on improving working conditions.

a) Repeat Decent Work Check survey

The analysis of repeat Decent Work Check surveys shows an improvement specifically for topics and/or factories with below 90% compliance. As most of the factories surveyed are unionised, the baseline compliance rate is quite high (above 90%). However, from amongst all topics and factories starting below 90%

compliance, the average increase was 6 percentage-points when comparing before and after 2020. The highest increase was 13%, seen in right to organise, where 45 factories showed 74% compliance. If the scope is widening to include topics and factories below 80% compliance rate, the result shows 8 percentage-points of clear improvements.

On average, factories with less than 90% compliance improved by 6ppt, when comparing before and after 2020

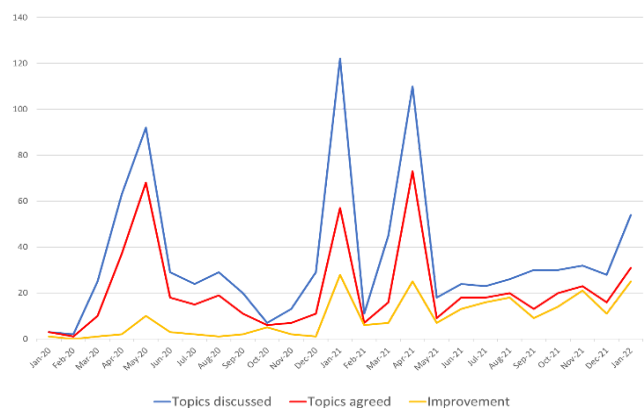


The analysis showed that improvement in factories with a lower percentage of compliance rate, are more likely to be monitored by the DWC survey, while factories with high compliance percentages can be monitored through their bipartite dialogue report and CBA-enhancement before and after the intervention.

b) Bipartite Dialogue report

Since 2020, WageIndicator has developed a reporting format for trade union officials at the factory level to record topics discussed in the bipartite dialogue, and whether the agreed topics are considered improvements by the trade union. This is done in close cooperation with interviewers. The topics discussed in the dialogue are broad, as each factory has different needs, it could range from factory facilities, work rules, to wages. Repeat DWC surveys will not directly show the specific improvements in

Social Dialogue Report



detail from the bipartite dialogue meetings. Many topics are not subject to the laws which DWC is monitoring. Therefore, monitoring the Social Dialogue is needed.

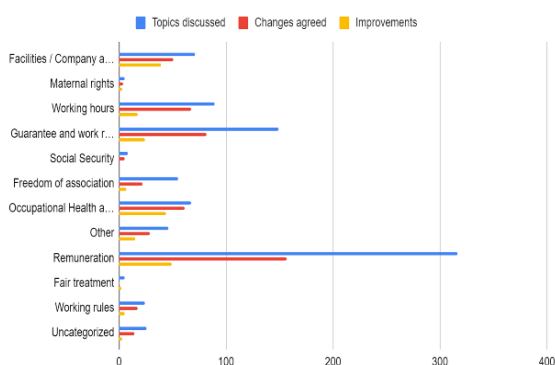
Since 2020, 156 factories combined have conducted 560 bipartite dialogue meetings, discussing 861 topics. From all topics discussed, 510 have led to agreed solutions, and 208 were considered to be an improvement according to trade union officials. The topics most discussed in social dialogues are wages/remuneration, work agreements, job security, and working hours

c) Collective Bargaining Agreement analysis

In Indonesia, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) regenerate every 2 (two) years and may be extended 1 (one) year. However, in practice CBA negotiations can take up to 5 years. Although all CBAs in the WageIndicator CBA Database are being annotated, comparing the previous and current CBAs within a factory it is not yet an established practice. In the coming months, WageIndicator will start analysing two periods of CBAs for the factories that have been surveyed, and where trade unionists conducted the CBA negotiation, and succeeded in enhancing their CBA by adopting new clauses and/or improving existing provisions.

Challenges

The project was carried out in a challenging context of the global COVID-19 crisis and the introduction of the Job Creation Bill, also called the Omnibus Law. The Omnibus Law aims to strengthen labour productivity and a conducive investment climate for foreign investors. However, in practice, it contributed to weakening workers' bargaining power and their claims for decent working conditions. National and global challenges aside, implementation of the project is not easy either, as reality in the field was found to be quite different from what was expected in the early stage of the proposals. Several planned activities did not match needs. Therefore, many adjustments were made during the course of the project. A proper project



assumption check before implementation is highly recommended, in order to align with the needs, national contexts and situations in the field.

Two major challenges have proven to be:

1. Cooperation with trade unions

The project has invested significantly in building networks and links of cooperation with trade unions. The aim was to strengthen trade unions' capability to collect and utilise data in bipartite dialogue with factory managements and to create trust among stakeholders by making sure that the data collected is valid and a credible starting point for dialogue, making sure also that the data collection would not harm the factories, their production and contracts

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with brands. Other reasons to work closely with trade unions is for sustainability purposes, as we hope the approach will be adopted as a trade union way of working.

Although the approach has helped strengthen trade union's bargaining power, improved the quality of Social Dialogue and contributed to some improvements in some factories' working conditions, however, to scale up and reach larger numbers of unionised factories, is a challenge.

Other challenges are to know how and under which circumstances the project contributes to promote decent working conditions. A lot of activities are done within the project which ultimately prepare trade unions to conduct Social Dialogue that leads to improvement. The use of data collected ultimately depends on trade unions' willingness to act. In some cases internal competition and disagreement between different trade unions present in the same factories, reduces the ability of trade unions to act effectively and speak as one.

2. Defining transparency data disclosure

Data transparency is part of the project and in line with WageIndicator's mission. However, in practice transparency is perceived differently by each stakeholder. In the first part of the project (circa 2017 – 2019), WageIndicator emphasised public transparency of working conditions data per factory, by publishing results on the Gajimu website. During the second phase (2020 – 2022), based on experience, we asked permission for data disclosure and/or gave some time to factories to improve their policy or implementation, in order to avoid situations where factories withdraw the cooperation due to 'bad publicity' caused by the disclosure of factory's working conditions data. WageIndicator will keep on publishing factory data as long as it does not endanger workers and/or trade union representatives.

Future

The second phase of the Decent Work Check program in Indonesia is coming to an end in 2022. We have developed, introduced, and improved surveys and training modules. Our interventions have increased compliance with labour laws. They have enabled constructive Social Dialogues between employers and workers. They have helped track those bipartite dialogues and their topics. And they generate insightful data which make conditions and progress in individual factories transparent.

In the future WageIndicator will keep building on these assets, networks, and lessons learned. To achieve material impact, in the next phase we should aim to deliver on the following five ambitions.

1. Expansion: coverage of more factories

Currently, WageIndicator has surveyed more than 200 factories in Indonesia. Data in Open Apparel Registry shows that there are at least 1,500 such factories in

Indonesia. To have a complete overview of the sector and enough critical mass for stakeholders and brands, we should find ways to reach many more factories. Since unions are only present in a very small minority of factories, we need to try using other channels (see next two points).

2. Access to non-unionized factories

Access to non-unionized factories is a real challenge. The issue is not just the survey's implementation, but also to make sure improvement at factories happens. Therefore, for the future, we would like to explore ways to get DWC surveys adopted in non-unionized factories, by using it as an organising tool.

Mapping and selection of factories that are interesting for international brands, asking selected brands to support the adoption of our surveys, where they can introduce us to their suppliers. Track results, hiring professional/academic interviewers next to union reps, getting access to factories together (this approach works well in Ethiopia, where two graduates manage the project, interview, arrange Social Dialogues, together with unions). Also, to intensify cooperation with other initiatives in the sector, e.g. BetterWork, FairWear, Ethical Trading Initiatives, Fair Labour Association. These are several steps that we could take to move forward.

3. Engage more with brands

Presently, we have made small steps in engaging brands. The emphasis is still on compliance. We want brands to use our workers' driven approaches to track actual conditions and commit to improvements.

We do hope that in the future brands are able to identify, mitigate and remedy unfair working conditions by using WageIndicator's workers' driven monitoring system. By showcasing that data-driven Social Dialogue is an effective and sustainable form of grievance redressal, charting working conditions at their suppliers, WageIndicator offers an operational method for brands to be accountable by all applicable labour standards.

4. Improve and track changes beyond the legal minimum

As the initial approach is to check and improve working conditions to a legal minimum, i.e. comply with labour law, for the future we will also aim to raise the level of improvement for factories that comply with labour laws beyond legal minimums.

This can be achieved by integrating our structured data to offer indicators on conditions per factory and apply these indicators in monitoring and supporting bipartite dialogues in factories, Social Dialogues with brands and other stakeholders. This brings together the current Decent Work Check (for non-compliance factories), Collective Bargaining Agreements (for conditions above legal minimums), and issues that laws or CBAs do not cover, but which still are important to workers.

From the experience, we learn that each factory has different needs, therefore tailor-made tools/surveys should be introduced. Aside from the rigid, comparable surveys, we also would like to develop an easy survey for worker representatives in each factory. This should generate input on the most urgent issues to negotiate with the management. Develop from free text content in the initial stages, to more structured data. This makes it easier for users to enter their issues, and delivers data more suitable for reporting.

5. Expand to more countries

Ideally one would first develop a method to perfection in one country, before spreading it out to other countries. However, from the experience, there are reasons to expand our approach to other countries before getting full coverage in Indonesia, or brands engaged.

This is important. as we found it hard to engage brands while we are only active in one country. By adding one or two well-chosen countries, we could become valuable for some brands well before we reach full coverage in Indonesia, if we can cover at least their suppliers.

Also, by focusing on Indonesia we are in danger of tailoring to circumstances specific to Indonesia. We are missing other important aspects present in other countries. Piloting during the pandemic has not been the perfect setting to develop a model to scale. With more countries, you learn faster. The sister project in Ethiopia for instance, has found ways of working differently from Indonesia, with quite some success.

Ultimately, WageIndicator plans to develop the current Decent Work Check system and approach into a shared toolkit to be used by stakeholders for improving conditions in their day-to-day work.

4. The Collective Agreements Database

Status

The CBA Database in numbers

The WageIndicator Foundation has developed a web-based platform for uploading, annotating, and coding CBA texts, using a predefined coding scheme. A web-based platform is advantageous because it allows annotators to work from any place in the world and the CBAs and their annotated and coded content are nevertheless centrally archived.

The CBA Database aims to enrich the content of the national WageIndicator websites and allows users to browse CBAs online, to view CBA visualisations and to use the CBA comparison tool, which provides a unique opportunity to closely examine the variation across agreements and countries. The annotated CBA texts are published on the national websites.

Currently (April 2022), the database hosts more than 1700 CBAs from 67 countries from all over the world. Half of them come from EU countries. Agreements are collected, transformed in HTML-format and annotated according to a coding scheme of around 800 variables and published in WageIndicator national websites, all in national languages.

The questionnaire is composed of 12 macro-topics and respective sub-questions.

Table 1: Twelve topics in the coding scheme of the WageIndicator CBA Database

Nr	Topic
1	Job titles
2	Wages
3	Working Hours, Schedules, Paid Leaves And Paid Holidays
4	Employment Contracts
5	Work and Family Arrangements
6	Health and Safety and Medical Assistance
7	Sickness and Disability
8	Social Security and Pensions
9	Training
10	Gender Equality Issues
11	Workers' representation & Conflicts
12	New Technologies & Green clauses

The CBA Database team

CBA coding and analysis is performed by a skilled multilingual team of professionals. Currently, ten people, within annotators and researchers, are involved in the database activities, with thirteen languages spoken at a mother tongue level. All team members manage several languages.

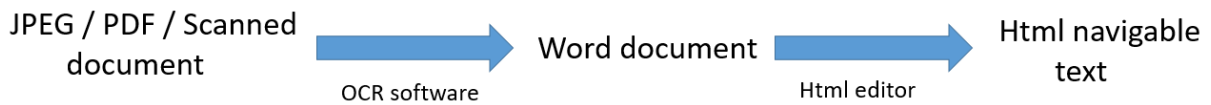
The process of collecting, transforming and coding CBAs

WageIndicator employs three approaches for gathering CBAs:

- Downloading from official national CBAs database registries
- Directly asking to the social partners - trade unions & employers' organisations - signatories of full-text agreements
- Through smart Google searches

Gathered CBAs can have various formats, e.g., Word, PDF, or JPEG, or even a printed booklet. These formats need to be converted, or 'cracked', into a plain text editor. In a next step, Amaya software is used to assign headings for titles, chapters, and articles. Then, the text can be uploaded in HTML format in the WageIndicator CBA Database.

Once texts are uploaded on the platform, called COBRA, they can be coded according to the above mentioned coding scheme.



A comprehensive coding scheme* in continuous evolution

The WageIndicator CBA Database has been conceived in order to detect and highlight as much information as possible coming from the analysis of collective agreements from all over the world. In order to do so, a constant update of the coding scheme is required, according to the following principles:

Findings coming from the CBAs analysis

Annotators and researchers' inputs and insights

Industrial relations Projects (ongoing, in the pipeline as well as potential ones)

Highly relevant topics emerging in the public debate (remote work, Industry 4.0, green transition, gender equality).

*See the latest CBAs Database Codebook available here: [Ceccon, D., Medas, G. \(2022\). Codebook WageIndicator Collective Agreements Database – Version 5 – February 2022. WageIndicator Foundation, Amsterdam.](#)

COBRA annotation system

COBRA is the annotation system used by the annotators' team of WageIndicator to analyse the collective agreements according to the above mentioned coding scheme. Here the annotators answer the questions according to this coding scheme which addresses twelve main topics (Table 1). Each topic starts with a Yes/No question: Does the CBA include any clauses on this topic? If so, the coding scheme follows with detailed questions. If not, the scheme moves on to the next topic. Annotators read the full text to select the sentence or sentences relevant for the question and enter a numerical answer to the question. Both elements, the relevant text as well as the numerical code, are stored in the CBAs Database.

National CBA Databases of WageIndicator.org

The annotated CBA texts are published on the national websites:

<https://wageindicator.org/cbadatabase>

The national websites, all in the national language, are available for free to the users, i.e. citizens, trade unions, researchers.

Together with the original text of the CBAs, here it is possible to access all information coming from the agreements' analysis previously made by the annotators while answering the questionnaire in the COBRA system.

Through a comparison tool, which provides a unique opportunity to closely examine the variation across agreements, it is possible to compare the agreements according to one or more topics or questions, one or more countries, and one or more industries.

The projects of the CBA Database

Several past projects have gotten the database to where we are today

CBAs from Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia were collected in various Living Wage and Decent Wage projects (2012-2017). These projects taught us how to find CBAs, how to prepare them for coding, and how to share them.

The European sample of the database was built in the BARCOM project, focused on the commerce sector, and the COLBAR project. For these projects hundreds of EU CBAs were collected and we made the first attempt at machine coding in Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.

Current projects developing the CBA Database

In BARCOVID we research the effects of COVID on bargaining and are building a time series by collecting renewals of CBAs already in the database.

For the Eurofound CBA Database project we're developing new methods of sampling CBAs and coding wage floors in CBAs.

In the SSHOC project, we're developing new methods for machine reading and Natural Language Processing (NLP) to be able to code faster.

Decent work and living wages projects in garment sector in Indonesia and garment and flower sectors in Ethiopia

Two more projects for the CBA database have been approved and will start soon:

BARMETAL (Contents of CBAs in the metal sector & developing coding scheme for automatization, digitalization and decarbonization)

BARWAGE (Coding pay scales & sampling)

Challenges

We currently focus on three challenges for the further development of the CBA database.

1. How to sample collective bargaining agreements?

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A non-probability sample of CBAs can tell us what is agreed in each CBA. However, we would like to be able to say things about all CBAs in a country, a region or the world – so to be able to say things like, '80% of CBAs in this country include clauses on maternity leave'. A probability sample is crucial to draw conclusions about the average CBA. But sampling CBAs isn't straightforward because each CBA covers a different number of people, and sometimes workers are covered by more than one CBA. We are developing sampling methods in the Eurofound, BARCOVID and BARWAGE projects

2. Wage analysis-oriented projects in the EU

Wage bargaining is one of the most, if not the most crucial elements of collective bargaining. Agreements on pay are made in different ways across countries, and data is scattered across the agreements. This makes it difficult to compare the wages negotiated in different agreements. How to make these pay data comparable? New questions were introduced in BARCOVID to harmonise and improve the way we measure pay. Furthermore, in the BARWAGE project a coding scheme for pay scales will be developed.

3. How to code more agreements

Coding CBAs takes a lot of time. To expand the CBA database, we want to code more CBAs. Advances in natural language processing in the SSHOC project (interactive tool which uses machine learning to find clauses related to specific topics in new collective agreements) will help us do so.

Future

Build a WageIndicator CBA Database with a representative sample of CBAs to become the reference for the analysis of CBAs in the EU

Extra-EU CBAs (Africa, Asia, Latin America)

Integrate the interactive tool built during the SSHOC-project into our annotation system.

Publish the CBA Database as

Full texts and web-tool for stakeholders

Coded database

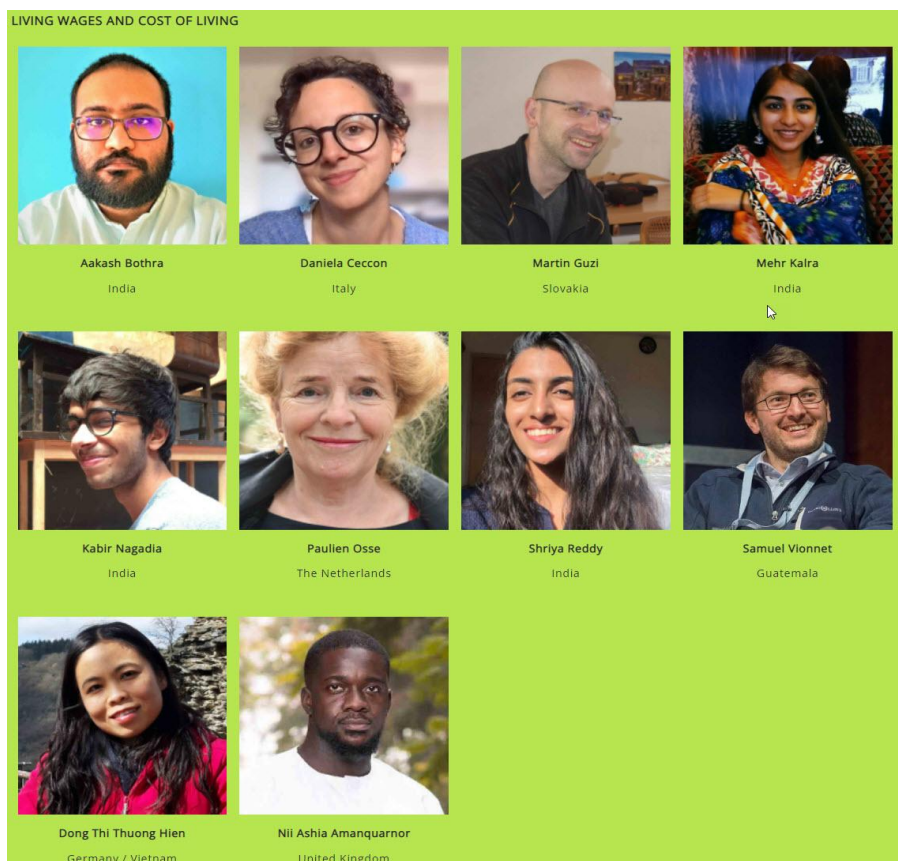
Corpus of collective bargaining agreement texts

5. Living Wages

- Team
- Clients
- Challenges
- Future

Status

Team



The roles of the team are to recruit and train (Shriya, Rupa, Hien, Paulien), to collect data (100 interns for webshops; 30 people face to face; millions via WageIndicator sites), to maintain (Huub), to improve the survey (Mehr c.s., Dani), to clean and calculate (Martin, Lucia, Nii) and to reflect, innovate and develop (Martin, Martin, Dani, Kea, Maarten, Samuel, Murray, Nii, Rob, Paulien + a nice set of Universities involved).

Of course, when dealing with raw data and processing them, a lot of checking and double checking is ingrained in the work. A select sub team is responsible (Dani, Nii, Aakash). Presenting and selling the data is mainly done by Dani and Paulien,

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Status, Challenges, Future

supported by Aakash, Kabir and Rupa. Overall coordination rests with Dani and Paulien.

Projection

Number of countries with a Living Wage estimate 2014 - 2030

TIME	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	January 2022	April 2022	2023	2024	>>>>> 2030
COUNTRIES	45	50	56	64	48	76	118	130	134	129	135	145	200
REFLECTION						improvement	more interns			improvement	improved data collection: face-to-face / hybrid / webshop / scraping		

Reflection

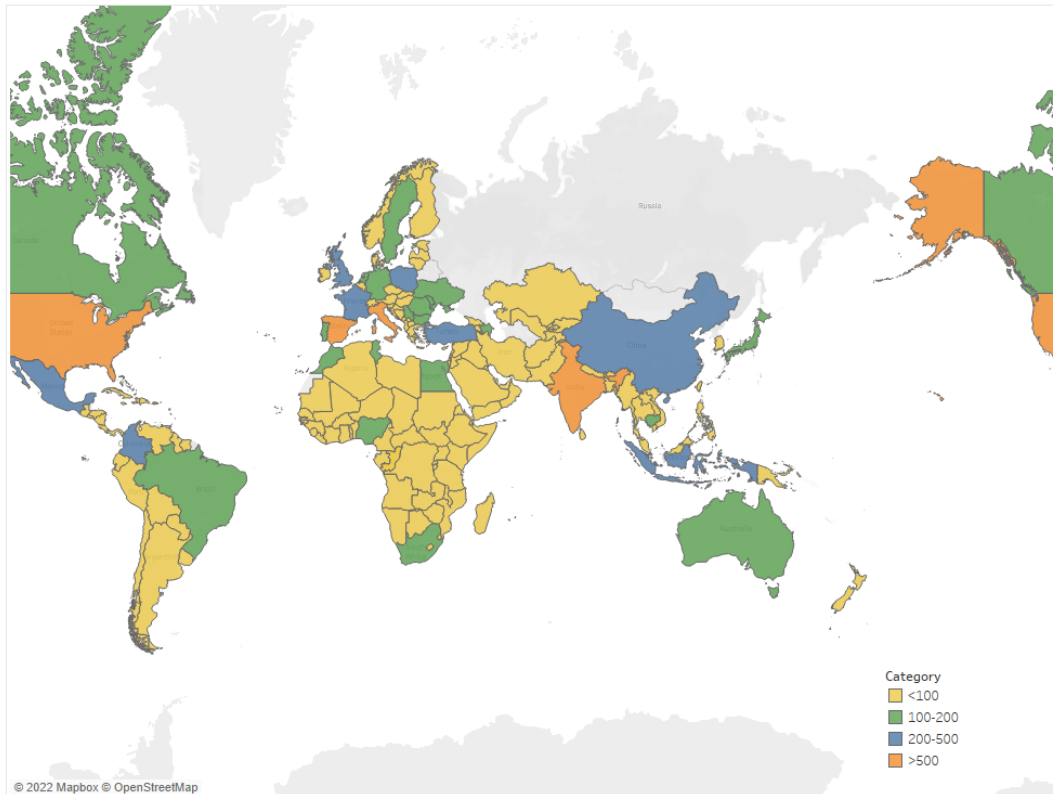
Interns assist in enlarging the database.

The effect of calculation improvements is a short-lived setback each time: less countries and regions, but after a while it picks up again.

The combination of face-to-face, telephone, whatsapp, FaceBook-groups, webshops, and scraping is seen as the future. Each type of data collection has specific pros and cons as to the quality and quantity of data.

Clients

Clients (MNEs, SMEs, NGOs) show preferences for certain countries and regions within - 177 Countries covered.



Clients favourites

- US
- India
- Italy, Spain
- China, Turkey
- Mexico, Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan
- Poland, France, UK
- Brazil
- Egypt
- South Africa, Ghana

Countries for special clients in Africa, America's, Asia

- Doctors without Borders (war zones)
- Maersk - many ports
- Invest International (development investing)
- Canva (online design)

Greenland & Mongolia

- Data collection just started

Russia & Belarus

- Currently no-go area

In theory WageIndicator can create estimates for 2,227 regions.

In April 2022 WageIndicator covered 1,564 regions in 129 countries.

Sectors, clients' countries of origin, impact

- 100 Clients in total early 2022
- They represent almost all sectors, however more in manufacturing, consultancy, food industry, retail/wholesale, relatively less in construction.
- One-offs: 2/3. These are clients who need less than 33 regions, but come back each year. These are usually suppliers of MNEs.
- Most of the annual clients are Multinational Enterprises (European or American based, a few from Hongkong).
- NGOs: MSF, FAIRWEAR, Socio-Economic Council (NL).
- Some companies use the data for their annual report.
- Others use the data to make sure they pay the Living Wage in 2023 or in 2030.
- At this moment just one company wants to send all their suppliers to WageIndicator - to make sure they pay a Living Wage soon.

Theoretically we may say: thanks to our work millions of people get a Living Wage. The truth is that we don't know for sure, nor exactly how many. And most of the companies don't know, since they are in the initial phases of checking how huge is the gap between the Minimum Wage and Living Wage.

WageIndicator runs many interconnected databases.

Typically, clients' darlings seem to be: 1. Living Wages. 2. Minimum Wages. 3. Labour Rights Index.

Surprise: the Collective Agreement database attracts most public funding

Challenges

- More data, less spikes
- Better scraping
- Secure funding for the data collection
- Webportal sharing data sheets

Future

Inside WageIndicator

- Explore data quality of scraped food price data - *started*
- Explore data quality of food prices and housing costs across different modes of data collection (face-to-face, registry at shops and markets, phone, whatsapp, scraping) - *started*
- Collect data about the costs/prices and characteristics of several types of social security, health care insurance, health care, childcare on a global scale; to what extent employers provide these services and for which types- *started*
- Conduct a worldwide inventory of the goods and services needed for calculating a Living Tariff for platform workers- *started*
- Explore expenditure patterns across various income groups within and across countries - *from 2023*
- Improve understanding of the pricing strategy of global versus national producers of goods and services, hence imported versus locally produced goods and services - *from 2023*
- Contribute to the understanding of trends in price data of selected goods and services, identify measurement errors and explore their impact on trends - *from 2023*
- Compare price data collected by national statistical offices and by the Living Wage data collectors - *from 2023*

Outside WageIndicator

- Publication of all Living Wages - *in the process*
- Continuous standardisation of Living Wages - *in the process*

Data availability

<https://wageindicator.org/salary/living-wage/list-of-country-region-living-wages-data-availability>

FAQ

<https://wageindicator.org/salary/living-wage/faq-living-wage>

Data visual

<https://wageindicator.org/salary/living-wage/living-wages-explanation-visual>

Living Wages Report 2022

<https://wageindicator.org/Wageindicatorfoundation/publications/2022/guzi-m-amanquarnor-n-ceccon-d-kahanec-m-tijdens-k-2022-living-wages-worldwide-update-2022-amsterdam-wageindicator-foundation-february>

6. Wages

Status

1999

- Paulien Osse came to visit Kea Tijdens, told about a website that showed the wage earned in occupations, with focus on highly educated males
- Can we develop a similar tool focusing on females and males, the low and high educated alike?
- Result 1: Salary Survey, published in women's magazines and posted on frequently visited websites
- Result 2: launch of 'Vrouwenloonwijzer' website in the Netherlands; web visitors could explore the wages earned: SHARE AND COMPARE

2022

- A Salary database with millions of observations in 2021
- Salary Checks and Salary Surveys in 147 countries and 40+ languages
- A database of 1,700+ occupational titles in 40+ languages

Sources of wage data

- From web visitors, continuously
 - Salary Survey in all WageIndicator websites (in national language), continuous since 2001
 - Salary Check in all WageIndicator websites (in national language), continuous since 2004
- From Face-to-face Salary surveys, project based
 - Face-to-face Salary Surveys, e.g. Bangladesh, Myanmar
 - Decent Work Check surveys, e.g. Indonesia, Ethiopia
 - Gig-workers surveys in selected countries, e.g. Argentina, India
- From Salary Guides and Pay Tables, annually updated
 - Salary Guides are online available for free, from Salary Tables or Job Ads
- From External survey data, whenever available
- EU SILC data - European Income Survey
 - Other external surveys

Wage data is used for

- Salary Check
 - Select your occupation and see what peers earn for 1000+ occupations
- Jobs & Salary Pages
 - Landing pages for the Salary Check to capture search terms for 1000+ occupations
 - Shows minimum and maximum earnings per occupation
 - Will soon include data from Salary Guides

- Salary News from Content Generator
 - Automated news items containing data extracted from Salary Check and Survey
- Living Wages tables
- Calculations of actual wages for the Living Wages tables

Challenges

In order to also offer wage information on the Jobs & Salary pages for new WageIndicator websites, interns have been collecting wage information from Salary Guides that are freely accessible. These wages will be used on those websites that do not have enough survey intakes to show reliable data.

Currently, the available salary data in WageIndicator's databases is mainly used in two ways for website visitors:

- Via a tool: the Salary Check
- On landing pages: Jobs & Salary

Even though the traffic numbers of both tool and landing pages are reasonable, they are not ideal search engine optimisation (SEO) magnets. For example, the Salary Check does not offer static content, which makes it impossible for search engines to highlight any specific job. The Jobs & Salary section does offer separate pages for separate jobs, but the large number of hyperlinks is not appreciated by Google's algorithm.

Future

Salary News from Content Generator

The most effective way to present salaries is to write a news story or data page, as these are picked up well by search engines. This is shown by specific, existing pages on WageIndicator websites, such as Loonwijzer's [Salaries and Rates for 50 Occupations page](#).

Ideally, to make use of all the salary data that is available, news items would be written on all specific jobs, containing links to the surveys for these specific jobs only. However, this would add up to thousands of news posts per year. Therefore, we had to think of a better way to realise this.

Inspired by various news websites that use automatic journalism to report on local and national elections, a new idea came up: automatically generated salary news.

To address this, software designer Wietze is now working on the Content Generator, a tool that generates news items on salary data, based on a predetermined template.

This template is limited to presenting data that is collected through the Salary Check, in order to make sure that enough data is available to create these posts. The same threshold applies whether to show data, thus to create a news post, as used for the Salary Check and the Jobs & Salary pages. If there is too little data, no news item will be generated.

We would achieve at least 3 goals:

- Improving search engine optimisation (SEO)
- Increasing survey intakes
- Creating a (limited) archive of previous data

Plans for coming years

- Incorporate sources of wage data, not yet used
 - WageIndicator Minimum Wage database for countries with occupational rates
 - WageIndicator CBA-database for CBAs with occupational rates
 - Public Sector wages, to be collected from the Internet
- Create a database of job titles + wage amount per country per year
 - Minimum Wage data, CBA-data, Salary Guides >> all have occupational title, amount per pay unit, country name, and year
 - Useful for Jobs & Salary pages and Salary News

7. Platform economy

Status

- why the project started
- when it started
- who work or worked on it
- what is the Platform Economy project: surveys, newsletter, webinars...

Why the project was started

Millions of people around the world are current or recent platform workers. They earned or are earning income by working through on-location platforms such as Uber or Glovo or microtasking platforms such as Upwork or Fiverr, in both high- and low-income countries.

The Gig economy in numbers

- In total, 9% of U.S. adults have earned money through an online gig platform in the past 12 months (Pew Research Center).
- Boston Consulting Group predicted India's gig economy could triple over the next 3-4 years to 24 million jobs.
- It is estimated that 43 million people will be working through digital platforms by 2025 in the European Union.

Businesses are also benefiting, as they can use these platforms to access a global workforce. Regulators and policymakers are called daily to make the best decisions ever to improve workers' conditions. Unions are at the forefront to raise their voices. **It's a global phenomenon engaging different groups at many levels.**

It's also true that **opportunities come with a long list of challenges**: social protection, minimum pay, data portability, labour laws, collective bargaining agreements, gender equality.

But, it's out there, everywhere. And it's here to stay. So we need to talk about it.

When did it start

Those are the reasons why in 2020 WageIndicator Foundation decided to deal with one of the most widespread phenomena in today's global labour market, creating the Platform Economy project.

Since then, **the Platform Economy project has been collecting and regularly updating information regarding the Gig economy worldwide, directly linked to**

the WageIndicator databases about pay, Minimum Wage and Living Wage.

The intention is to **have more grip on the platform economy**, inspire discussions between the interested parties, identify case studies, and lead to the implementation of better agreements between platforms and their workers.

Who started the project

The Gig Team operates global & local. From the very beginning, the so-called Gig Team was meant to be an heterogeneous group of people who would share their experience in the project. It consists of platform experts, researchers, journalists, interns from all around the world, from Argentina to India, who can contribute to the analysis of a fast-changing working environment, like through platforms, so that the Gig Team can have as many eyes as possible on this global development.

Having local team members is extremely useful: such collaborators are in direct contact with platforms, academics, cooperatives on the ground; they speak the national language in the countries where most changes are happening, i.e. Spain and its Rider Law. They allow monitoring events more closely, as they develop.

How does the Platform Economy project operate

- In April 2020 Wageindicator launched the [Platform Workers: Decent Rights & Pay project](#), funded by Instituut Gak, a data collection in the Netherlands and abroad to collect and compare data on Gig Work reality, and give workers the possibility to fill in an online survey and share their stories.
- WageIndicator could process and offer target group and global action-oriented information related to the platform economy for the benefit of platform workers themselves.
- WageIndicator started by collecting data from platform workers in 5 countries: [India, Argentina, South Africa, Spain, The Netherlands](#). 3,157 valid surveys on Platform workers' conditions were collected from April 2020 to March 2022. Results are visible on the [data visual](#) created with Tableau software: users can find out which platforms - and which countries - have the shortest and longest working hours, which contracts are relatively better as compared to other contracts, which are the wage differences between the platforms selected, and much more.
- This data was presented for the first time on October 23, 2020, during the [first Gig Work Conference](#) by WageIndicator Foundation.
- In order to offer a systematic and possibly complete source for research, WageIndicator opened up a "Working for a Platform" section in each of the countries evolved in the survey: [India, Argentina, South Africa, Spain, The Netherlands](#). "Working for a Platform" sections include different useful informations related to the platform economy in those countries:

1. Information about some of the biggest platforms. Example: <https://mywage.co.za/work-smart/working-for-a-platform/platform-economy>
2. Contracts: terms & conditions in the platforms, including workers' employment status, working hours, pay, fair treatment, social security. Example: <https://mywage.co.za/work-smart/working-for-a-platform/platform-economy/5006-uber>
3. Rights of Platform Workers: more detailed information about platform workers' rights in each country compared to the other ones. Example: <https://mywage.co.za/work-smart/working-for-a-platform/rights-of-gig-workers>
4. [Frequently Asked Questions about the Platform Economy](#): the basics, what is a platform, what does gig mean, are gig workers employees, and so on.

The new Platform Economy section

Platform Economy is a global phenomenon, and needs a global perspective to be correctly analyzed. Therefore, at the beginning of 2021, WageIndicator launched the new [Platform Economy section](#) on its main website, Wageindicator.org.

Over time, the section has been enriched with new and updated contents:

- [Platform Work News](#), a collection of news about the gig economy around the world;
- [Platform Economy Court Cases](#), a list of court decisions about platforms and gig workers from different countries;
- [Platform Economy Case Studies](#), big and small innovations in the gig economy divided by four categories: [projects or collaborations by existing platforms](#); [economic security and benefits service providers](#); [community & empowering gig workers initiatives](#); [accelerators & investment funds](#). Each case study is described through the type of innovation that is put forward; the advantages for workers; the websites to visit.

The Gig Work Newsletter

In the meantime, the COVID-19 pandemic underlined the importance of the so-called “gig workers”: think about meal delivery in the midst of the lockdowns. But many other types of platform workers (domestic workers, freelancers) needed to become more and more visible: for this reason WageIndicator has invested in a new project to reach an ever larger and interested audience. In March 2021 the first Gig Work Newsletter was out: a bi-weekly newsletter to keep readers updated about Gig Work around the world. Today, thanks to the Gig Work Newsletter, WageIndicator can

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share news on platforms, workers, regulations, court cases, reports and 'nice to know' items too.

The Gig Event Series: webinars by WageIndicator

After the success of the first gig conference in October 2020, the discussion on the platform economy continued with webinars dedicated to Gig Work:

- [Theory & Practice in the Global World of Platforms](#) held on March 26, 2021. A Reshaping Work Onward-event organised by WageIndicator to engage policy makers, labor organisers, academics, activists and platform workers in a multistakeholder debate. What has been the real impact of approved and deployed regulations? With this webinar, WageIndicator inaugurated the format based on a panel discussion followed by elevator pitches and breakout rooms for Q&A sessions.
- [Migration and tele-migration in the gig economy](#) held on September 24, 2021. This event aimed at deepening the impact (benefits and issues) the platform economy has both on physical migrations (from one country to another, from rural to urban areas and vice versa) and tele-migration, alias "telecommuting from abroad": digital workers with the opportunity to work with companies and customers from anywhere in the world, regardless of their country of residence.
- [Gig Work: Grip on Pay](#) held on March 25, 2022. The most actual and hotly debated topics in the world of platforms revolve around payment: how can gig workers have more grip on their pay? Data transparency, real pay and Minimum Wages, living hourly rates for freelancers, the gender pay gap, fair pay principles were analysed thanks to a panel of high-level speakers, economists, academics, researchers, as well as cooperatives, organisations and initiatives that give gig workers faster access to pay, and/or transparent algorithms.

WageIndicator will continue to organise events to give the floor to platform economy specialists and gig workers from all around the world: the next one, Women in Gig Work, will take place on October 27, 2022.

Collaboration

Events like these give the possibility to explore the world of platforms more deeply, and to create precious collaboration with the leading representatives and experts in the field:

- the **International Labour Organisation** joined the Grip on Pay event with participation of the Senior Economist Uma Rani.

- Alessio Bertolini, researcher at **FairWork Foundation**, took part in this event too.
- Before this, Glovo, one of the biggest and popular on-demand courier services, turned to WageIndicator for its Living Wage database to arrive at fair earnings country by country and city by city. Today Glovo uses the WageIndicator Living Wage Database to pay their riders fair earnings.
- **Temper**, a Dutch digital bulletin board for day jobs like catering, logistics and retail, started working with WageIndicator Foundation. Representatives of Temper FreeFlexers take a critical look at income control for independent platform workers in the Netherlands. WageIndicator developed a Minimum Living Tariff. As a first step and result of the collaboration, Temper recently increased the minimum hourly rate on the platform from 14 to 15 euros.

Challenges

High level of information

We are aware that everyone is talking about the platform economy right now. It's one of those burning topics that draw attention and trigger a lively debate at various levels, because it revolves around sensitive subjects: working conditions, social protection, minimum and living pay, health safety at work, transparency, fair representation.

It's always good to talk about workers' rights, but it's undeniable that this kind of media exposure often leads to the spread of inaccurate news in the heat of the moment. Therefore **distinguishing real news from fake is crucial**, especially when events occur fast and many factions have their say.

More heterogeneity in the working group

Though the Platform Economy project team is already heterogeneous, it would be even more stimulating if people **both from the global North and the global South** could join our weekly meetings, if experts in related topics (labor law, collective agreements) could give their contribution. Platform Economy brings together so many topics for discussion: **different experiences and know-how would give the project a boost.**

The pros and cons of webinars

The Gig Work online events are an **agile solution** to gather people all around the world who are interested in the platform economy, and **encourage discussion** in a reasonable time frame. They don't last too long, they are less expensive to organize, and contribute to giving insights and hints on the world of platforms.

There are also some challenging aspects: in our experience. Webinars can be only two hours long, as after that time people can **hardly stay engaged** looking at the screen. Online events need to be a **condensed and dynamic stream of presentations and discussions**. This is made possible only by **high-quality speakers** who are able to “take the stage”.

We believe that our audience deserves high-quality speakers, and the entire process to contact and involve them in the webinars may take months. Nevertheless, speakers are the key, and we are motivated to put care and effort into the research of the best ones. This means trying to **reach the upper levels** too, as we did in our last webinar that was attended by the International Labour Organisation.

Future

The Platform Economy project, the team intends, will continue to explore the world of platforms. Reports and experts agree that the **platform economy will keep growing globally** in the next few years, with undeniable economic and social consequences.

More and more people are choosing to work through platforms, and the aim of the Platform Economy Project will be to **keep these workers informed about their rights**, and to give an overview of what is happening in the platform economy around the world.

It won't be about giving a moral, telling what is bad or good. It's not our job, it never was, and it would not be a **constructive contribution** to the debate.

Therefore, the Platform Economy Project will remain a **quality information space**: WageIndicator will keep collecting Gig Work news, court cases and case studies on wageindicator.org, sharing all this information through the Gig Work Newsletter, as well as add and update gig workers' labor rights in the [Labour Rights Index](#) and the [Labour Law webpages](#).

The team plans to continue a **healthy dialogue with platforms** to make good solutions real. We think that it's the only viable way to improve gig workers' current conditions and their future work. One of our wishes is to **build more quality collaborations**, not just to talk, but to do something remarkable. Some examples: WageIndicator is working on showing a combined database with the Fairwork Foundation. Selling the concept of the living minimum tariff is the next step. WageIndicator is dialoguing with Glovo about this, and there will be more clients.

Last but not the least, we consider **webinars** an extraordinary opportunity to enrich the ongoing debate on the platform economy, meet interesting people, learn more about promising projects around the globe.

WageIndicator can be a messenger of real change in the platform economy: this is our first and highest goal.

8. Outreach and Communications

By Niels Peuchen, Karen Rutter, Vasudha Ghai and Rogério Junior

Websites

Status

Currently, WageIndicator has an online presence of **210 websites**, covering **202 countries**. A select number of countries have two websites, such as the Mywage.com and Africapay.com websites for specific African countries where English is one of the main languages spoken. Moreover, a few websites are internationally oriented, such as WageIndicator.org. So, 23 years after launching the first website, Vrouwenloonwijzer.nl, WageIndicator truly has a global presence.

In total, these websites receive around **3 million visits per month**. In 2021, the three most-visited websites were:

1. Gajimu.com (Indonesia): 6,233,896 visits
2. Loonwijzer.nl (Netherlands): 4,987,556 visits
3. Paycheck.in (India): 3,813,319 visits

Most people visit the websites on their **mobile device**. For Gajimu.com, around 79% of the visits take place through a smartphone. On Loonwijzer.nl, mobile users have a 61% share; for Paycheck.in, it counts up to 69%. The same trend applies to all other websites.

All websites have or should have a basic setup, consisting of **Salary, Labour Law** and **Career** information. The goal of all websites is to provide all employees, employers and workers in general with labour market information that they can use for their own benefit, such as access to wage data for salary negotiations. The labour market 'libraries' are also openly accessible to governments, academics and media, which they can use for their own research and dissemination.

Within these three sections, the central elements are the surveys, since these enable WageIndicator to gather data from around the world, do research and determine Living Wages. These are the **Salary Check**, the **Salary Survey** and the **Cost of Living survey**. The **Minimum Wages, VIP Salaries, Decent Work Check (Labour Law information)** and **Jobs & Salary** section are also available in most of the websites. Newly created websites often start with only national and/or regional Minimum Wages available.

Challenges

The ever-continuing challenge for all website managers is to **increase the websites' traffic**. This is the main focus of their work, since more visits lead to more survey intakes, which in turn lead to more data, better research and more income via new projects and partnerships. More visits can also lead to higher ad revenues and more referrals, which lead directly to more income. This is essential for WageIndicator Foundation to grow. In order to increase traffic, underlying challenges are to **keep the contents on all websites up-to-date**, to **constantly improve the websites' search engine optimisation (SEO)** and to **make sure all contents are easily accessible on mobile devices**.

Because website managers often have their own expertise and local knowledge, the **activities undertaken to address these challenges have often differentiated greatly**. To make sure all website managers are at least starting off their activities from a common basis, three main activities were selected in 2021: improving SEO titles and descriptions, updating the most-visited pages and creating VIP salary lists.

Another important challenge is **how to find the balance between generated and handcrafted content**. While writing unique and data-driven content for a specific website is often the best way to gain traffic, this is a labour-intensive task. On the other hand, automatically generated pages keep the amount of work limited, but seem to attract fewer visitors. The Salary News from the Content Generator could be one answer to this dilemma (learn more about this in the Wages presentation).

Future

Ideally, **every website visit ends with the visitor filling out either the Salary Check, the Salary Survey or the Cost-of-Living survey**. As stated earlier, this contributes to the growth of WageIndicator.

To achieve this, two steps have to be taken - at least. First, **all websites should contain the three surveys**, plus Minimum Wages, VIP salaries, Decent Work Check (Labour Law information) and Jobs & Salary. By having all of this information online, the websites are more likely to get (increased) traffic and survey intakes. The first step for this is already ongoing: Dani, Valeria and Giulia are currently checking all related APIs to get the Salary Check and Salary Surveys online in all websites.

Secondly, the **websites should direct all visitors to one of the surveys within one step**. To determine what kind of journey works best, A/B experiments will have to be scheduled. Preferably, these experiments would go very quickly. We would have one experiment per week, focusing on one specific aspect of the websites, in order to increase the survey intakes. Because most people visit our websites on a mobile device, the mobile view should be prioritised in these experiments.

Another future wish is to use **more automation for large-scale tasks and more handcrafted content for specific topics**. This is not possible on all websites, because handcrafted items often have to be maintained - which requires a website manager with the resources and language skills available. Therefore, a specific group of websites has to be selected that will get original content, such as news articles and videos.

Newsletters

Status

Currently, WageIndicator produces **6 newsletters**. More people are now involved with the content, design and distribution of the newsletters compared to one year ago. This is done to ensure the continuity of the newsletters, and to avoid being dependent on one person. Most but not all of the newsletters are in **English**, except for Gajimu (Indonesian) and Loonwijzer.nl (Dutch), which cater to the biggest websites in the WI collection. Currently, WI has 7,362 subscribers among the six newsletters. The newsletters are:

- General
- Gajimu
- Gig Work
- Loonwijzer.nl
- Collective Agreements (BARCOVID)
- Event Invitations

Challenges

While the newsletters are generally well-received, certain challenges present themselves. Firstly, establishing the **general goal** of the newsletters needs more discussion. Are they only focused on providing information? Or are they also about building a community? Are they aimed at those who are predominantly "inside" the foundation (as colleagues, interns, partners, etc) or do we want to consciously expand this subscriber base? A second issue following on from this would be how to **significantly increase** the number of subscribers.

A third issue notes that newsletters are now the main driver behind **registrations for webinars**. This presents a risky situation, as people become increasingly uninterested in the newsletters' contents the more newsletters they receive. Do we need to look at alternative ways of alerting people and registering them for webinars?

Newsletters provide a steady stream of content: people keep using email for the foreseeable future. However, this could be affected by **tracking restrictions**.

Future newsletter statistics would depend on these restrictions.

Future

It could make sense for the newsletters' contents to also be used in **websites and on social media**, in order to increase registrations of newsletters. This would be part of setting up more **integration** between website and newsletters: having more website contents in the newsletters and vice versa.

Bold Idea

We offer a **paid newsletter subscription** based on a topic that we are extremely knowledgeable on. This unique and exclusive newsletter will contain premium content that is based on our own research or knowledge, which is not easily found elsewhere. The target audience would probably consist of professionals that could make use of our information in their work, such as [The Stratechery Update](#) and [Blogging Guide | Casey Botticello](#).

Social media

Status

WageIndicator is active on the following platforms:

- 15 Facebook pages
- 3 Twitter accounts
- 2 Instagram profiles (WageIndicator and Gajimu)
- 1 YouTube channel
- 1 LinkedIn company page

Among these, **LinkedIn, WageIndicator's Instagram account and some of the FB pages** (General WageIndicator, Paycheck India, Gajimu) tend to be the best and give us maximum reach and followers. We are constantly trying to experiment with the type of content to figure out what works best for us on each platform. Content for these accounts is mostly made by the interns we have and hence, the posting schedule gets erratic at times.

Challenges

The main challenge we face is to get the followers we have to actually **engage with our content**. We have tons of followers and direct messages but nothing on our posts. Another thing we struggle with is to **drive website traffic from our social media**. After looking at our analytics, there is hardly any traffic coming from organic social media. When we were running ads we did get traffic, but organically the numbers are much lower. Given these reasons, we need to decide **which platforms to focus on** considering our target audience and the evolving digital

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platforms. (E.g., young people using Instagram instead of Facebook?) Some other questions we need to find answers to are - How to target people from different countries (different social media outlets handle that differently) if yes, regional language posts? Who makes them, how can we maintain it? If not, how do we choose which regions to focus on? Combining regions might lead to some irrelevant content for some people which may result in loss of audience.

Future

In the near-future, we want to **expand our audience and increase their engagement**. We want to have a community of people who can be brand loyalists. In the long run, we want to be able to **drive significant amount of website traffic from our social media channels** and are currently in the process of finding out ways to improve. The goal would also be to have a special team dedicated to social media who look after specific platforms and its strategy. Something we would also like to achieve is our **YouTube channel getting monetized** allowing the organisation to have a passive source of income while also achieving what it really set out to do: "More labour market transparency for the benefit of all employers, employees and workers worldwide by sharing and comparing information on wages, Labour Law and career". This would also allow us to find industry leaders in our sphere and have collaborations with them for our webinars or other social media platforms (Live sessions, Q & A's etc). Additionally, having a defined budget for running ads for the next 2 years will help us find our audience sooner since we are still working on creating our online presence on social media.

Bold Idea

With the technological revolution, there is a high chance that we could **automate our content for different platforms**. This would act as an efficient way to focus on regional content allowing us to curate better quality content.

Videos

Status

WageIndicator's videos are mainly published on our YouTube channel. This channel has been growing very fast in the last few years. This results from frequent updates with videos, webinars and animations. Since January 2021, WageIndicator has published on average 1 video per week. From January 2021 to April 2022, the channel reached 39.5 thousand views, corresponding to 616 hours. The channel managed to gain 390 more subscribers, now totaling 749 subscribers. 61% of the visitors come from channels external to YouTube, and only 17% come from YouTube itself. Netherlands and Mozambique are the countries with the most

visitors to our channel, with 16% and 14% respectively. Most of our visitors, about 87%, are **between the ages of 25 and 34**. Likewise, we have a highly male audience of 68%, versus 32% female. In terms of devices, visitors often access our videos via smartphones (54%) and 43% access them via computer. Of all the playlists created on the channel, two are the most visited, namely Gajimu and Meusalario.

Challenges

YouTube has proven, over the last few years, to be a channel worth betting on to promote the work and build a very positive image of WageIndicator. Lately, videos are a great way to pass on information and people have more preference for them. However, due to the scarcity of time, it becomes necessary that videos are able to pass information quickly. In this regard, **WageIndicator's videos are very technical and therefore for a highly technical audience**. People often use the internet to have fun while learning. WageIndicator's videos are not at all humorous, and may, in the short or long term, disenchant our visitors.

There is **weak promotion of WageIndicator videos on their respective websites and social networks**. At the moment, the videos are only available on YouTube, which restricts the possibility of expanding our reach. Moreover, there is a **shortage of human resources in video production**. The demand for the videos has been increasing. However, since there is only one person responsible for this section, meeting the deadlines has been a major challenge. Finally, **The WageIndicator videos are available in only a few languages, although the organisation is operating globally**.

Future

Investing more in the humanization of the videos is the only way to get more and more engagement and gain more followers. Additionally, **translating WageIndicator's general videos to as many languages as possible** would help to reach a global audience. These would be videos with cross-cutting themes of interest to WageIndicator (Labor Law, Cost of Living and Wages), which are easy to translate into all of WageIndicator's working languages.

We would **produce short videos for social media, of 30 seconds or 1 minutes maximum**. For example, making cuts of important passages from WI webinars with a maximum length of 30 seconds for easy dissemination via social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook.

We want to **tell stories about the day-to-day life of the organisation and its employees**. Through a storytelling approach, we would produce dynamic videos of up to 1 minute that illustrate the contribution of each WI employee. This will be an

opportunity for people to tell and show the world their contribution to the world's progress, in a relevant channel.

Finally, given the young audience that is already watching, we should **reach out to young people more**. For example, we could create online contests for youth engagement in WageIndicator's work.

Bold Idea

We dream of a WageIndicator Youtube channel that has truly become a reference and the number 1 preference of Internet users, especially in matters related to the scope of WI. A WI that establishes a weekly video journal, presented in all languages, to report the main local news about labour, laws, wages, unions, workers' strikes, etc.

Webinars

Status

WageIndicator takes part in **dozens of presentations and webinars per year**, of which a select few are entirely organised by WageIndicator. These webinars attract hundreds of people specifically interested in the events' topics, which are:

- Gig Work
- Collective Agreements
- Living Wages
- Labour Rights Index

Because of the dedication that these attendees show by showing up, these people can be deemed very valuable. They are attracted mainly via newsletters and social media posts, mainly LinkedIn.

Challenges

The challenges that occur are logical ones: we have to **make sure every time around that enough people have registered**, to make the webinar worthwhile. However, this is a very labour-intensive process. This is why recently more people are involved in webinar promotion than before, in order to spread the work. After people have registered, the next challenge is to make sure that **as many attendees as possible show up**.

Future

WageIndicator offers a number of webinars on topics that it has specialised in, and in which field it holds an unique position. Gig Work is now such a topic, Living Wages/Cost of Living could be another one. It would be wise to **make use of**

[Global WageIndicator Conference #7 - 29 April 2022: Our Work](#)

[Status, Challenges, Future](#)

WageIndicator's reputation and knowledge in these fields in the future. However, to do this successfully, it would be helpful to have a **clear strategy with predefined goals**.

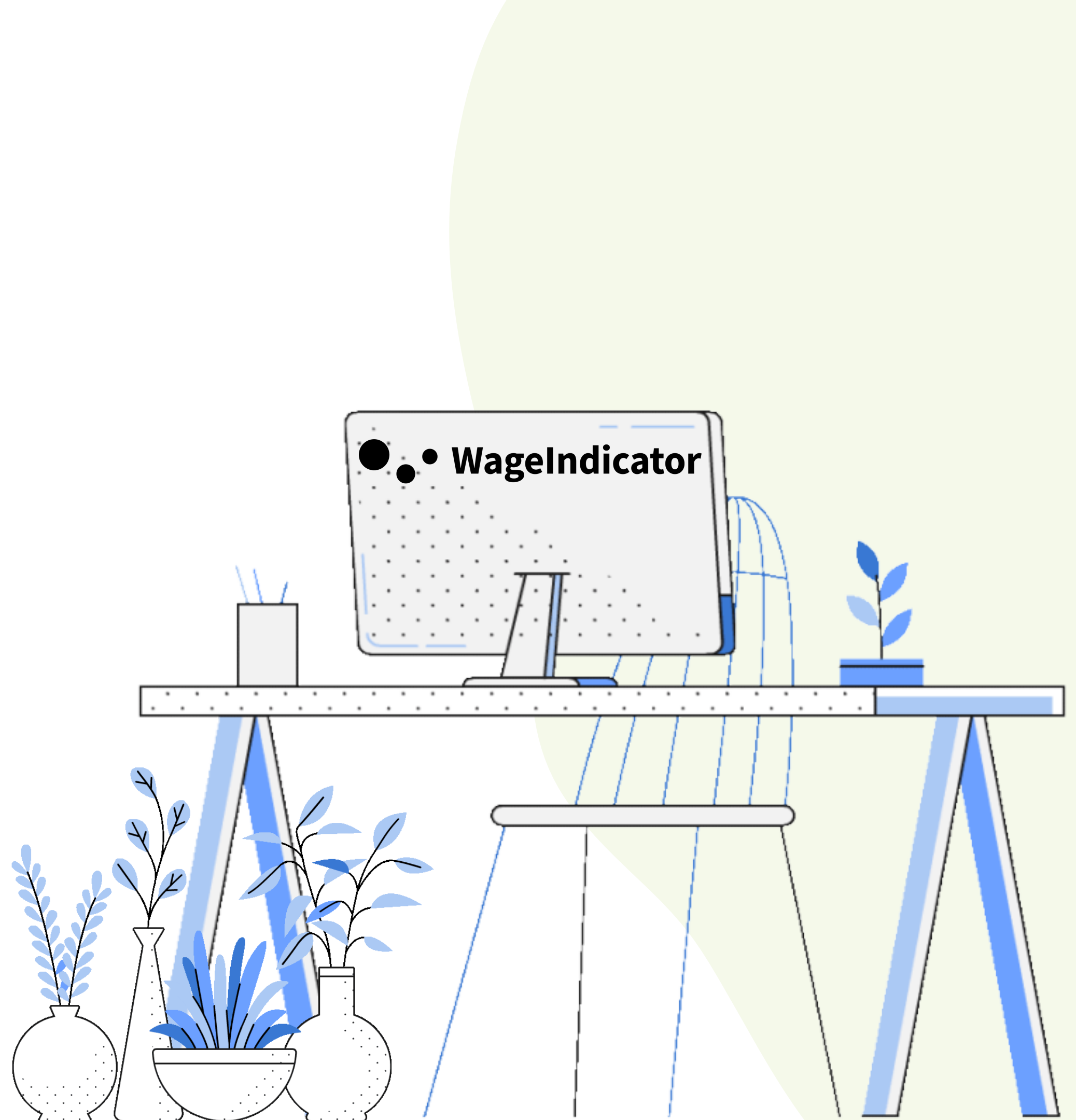
Operations, Teams and Finance

Status, Challenges and Future

RUPA KORDE
DIRECTOR OPERATIONS
WAGEINDICATOR FOUNDATION



1. Status



People at WageIndicator

● ● WageIndicator



4 on payroll, 20 Full-time, 60 Associates,
100+ Interns

44% Male and 56% Females

+ Many data collectors across the World

Teams are usually small, task-related
and multidisciplinary.

No formalised hierarchical structure

A team of directors is ultimately
responsible

WageIndicator Internship Program

- It all started in a small café in South Korea
- First partnership FLAME University, India
 - 55 interns in 2019–2020
 - 85 interns in 2020–2021
 - 100+ interns in 2021–2022



Interns @ WageIndicator

- FLAME University
- Bucharest University
- University of Kassel
- University of Amsterdam
- University of Sussex
- University of Hertfordshire
- Kenyatta University
- King Saud bin Abdulaziz University
- Dar Al-Hekma University
- Majmaah University
- University of Business & Technology
- Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena
- Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
- Vietnam National University
- Hanoi University
- VNU University of Social Sciences and Humanities
- University of Languages & International Studies (ULIS)
- Foreign Trade University
- Vietnam Trade Union
- Trade Union University

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Effect:

- **More data collection**
- **Better visuals**
- **Fun environment to work**
- **More learning and improvements**
- **Lots of questions**
- **Management skills**
- **Interns training interns**

Interns @ WageIndicator

- FLAME University
- Bucharest University
- University of Kassel
- University of Amsterdam
- University of Sussex
- University of Hertfordshire
- Kenyatta University
- King Saud bin Abdulaziz University
- Dar Al-Hekma University
- Majmaah University
- University of Business & Techn
- Friedrich-Schiller-University
- Otto-von-Guericke Univers
- Vietnam National Universit
- Hanoi University
- VNU University of Social Sc
- University of Languages & I
- Foreign Trade University
- Vietnam Trade Union
- Trade Union University



Financials



- WageIndicator is a not for profit foundation
- We have tried to keep our expenses at minimum, however ensured that everyone is paid at least living wages
- Previously most of the income was from projects and funding (for example, EU, Academic)
- In the recent years 50% is from projects and 50% from commercial activities
- Sustainance is the key and we are trying to build a reserve fund through the minor profit generated

Project Management

PROJECT MANAGERS

WageIndicator Global + Local

PROJECT REVIEW

Weekly and Bi-weekly meetings

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Quarterly review – internal

Half-yearly review – external

WEBINARS

Share experiences, challenges and success stories



2. Challenges



Global HR

● ● WageIndicator



COMMUNICATION

- Email and WhatsApp
- Missing connect
- Building a Global team

CONTRACTS

- Multiple countries
- Multiple contracts
- Management
- Tracking

INFORMATION

- Emails
- WhatsApp
- Outdated information

● ● WageIndicator



Global HR

COMMUNICATION

- Email and WhatsApp
- Missing connect
- Building a Global team



CONTRACTS

- Multiple countries
- Multiple contracts
- Management
- Tracking



INFORMATION

- Emails
- WhatsApp
- Outdated information



Payments

CORRECT INFORMATION

Date, IBAN, SWIFT, etc

TIMELY SUBMISSION

Delays and reminders

DESCRIPTION

As per the contracts



WageIndicator – Mini MNC

NO. OF ASSOCIATES

Increasing

NO. OF FREELANCERS

Increasing

NO. OF COUNTRIES

Increasing

NO. OF CONTRACTS

Increasing

NO. OF JOBS

Increasing

●● WageIndicator



WageIndicator – Mini MNC

NO. OF ASSOCIATES

Increasing

NO. OF FREELANCERS

Increasing

NO. OF COUNTRIES

Increasing

NO. OF CONTRACTS

Increasing

NO. OF JOBS

Increasing

- Organising everyone
- Ensure principle of equality

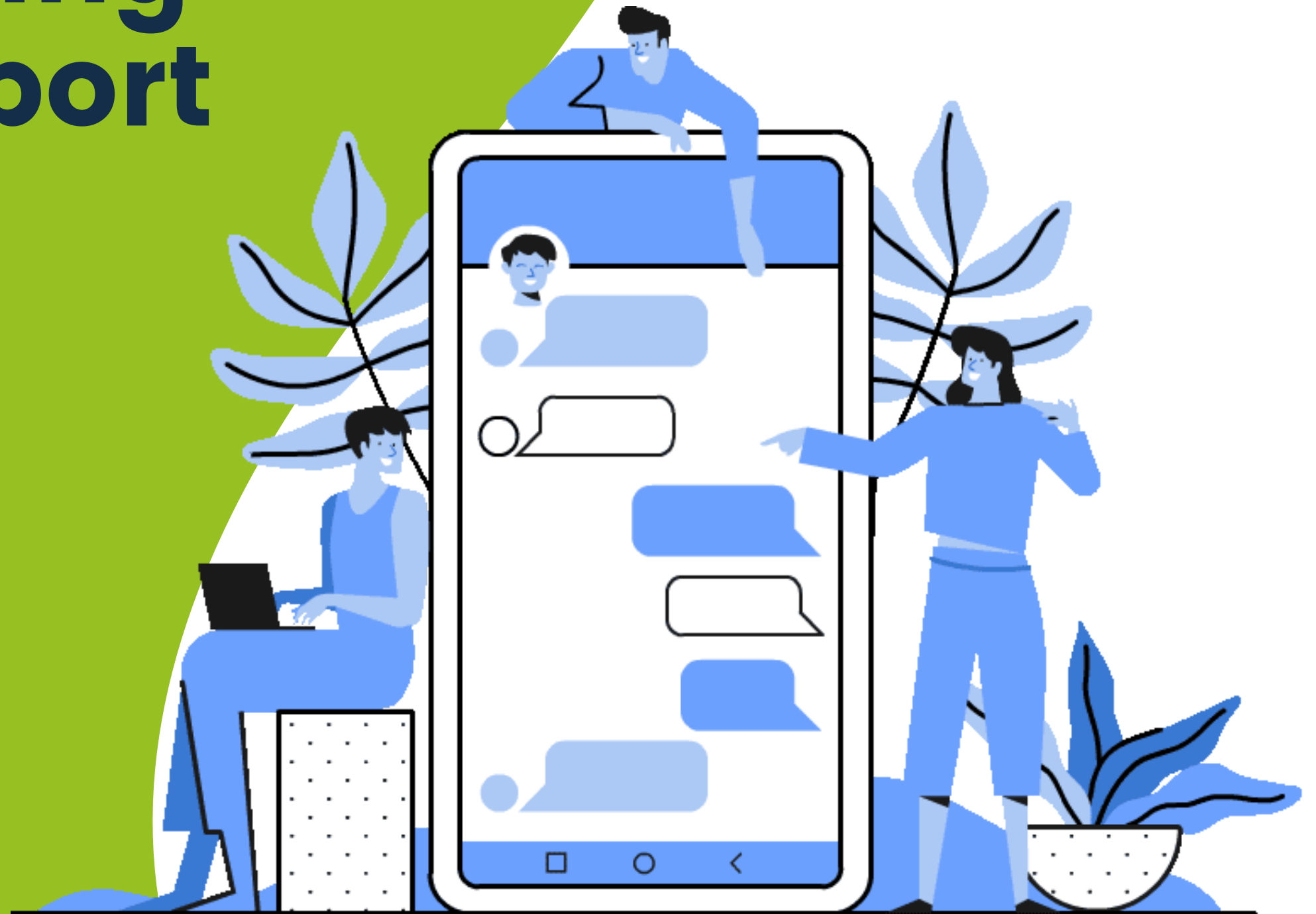
● ● WageIndicator



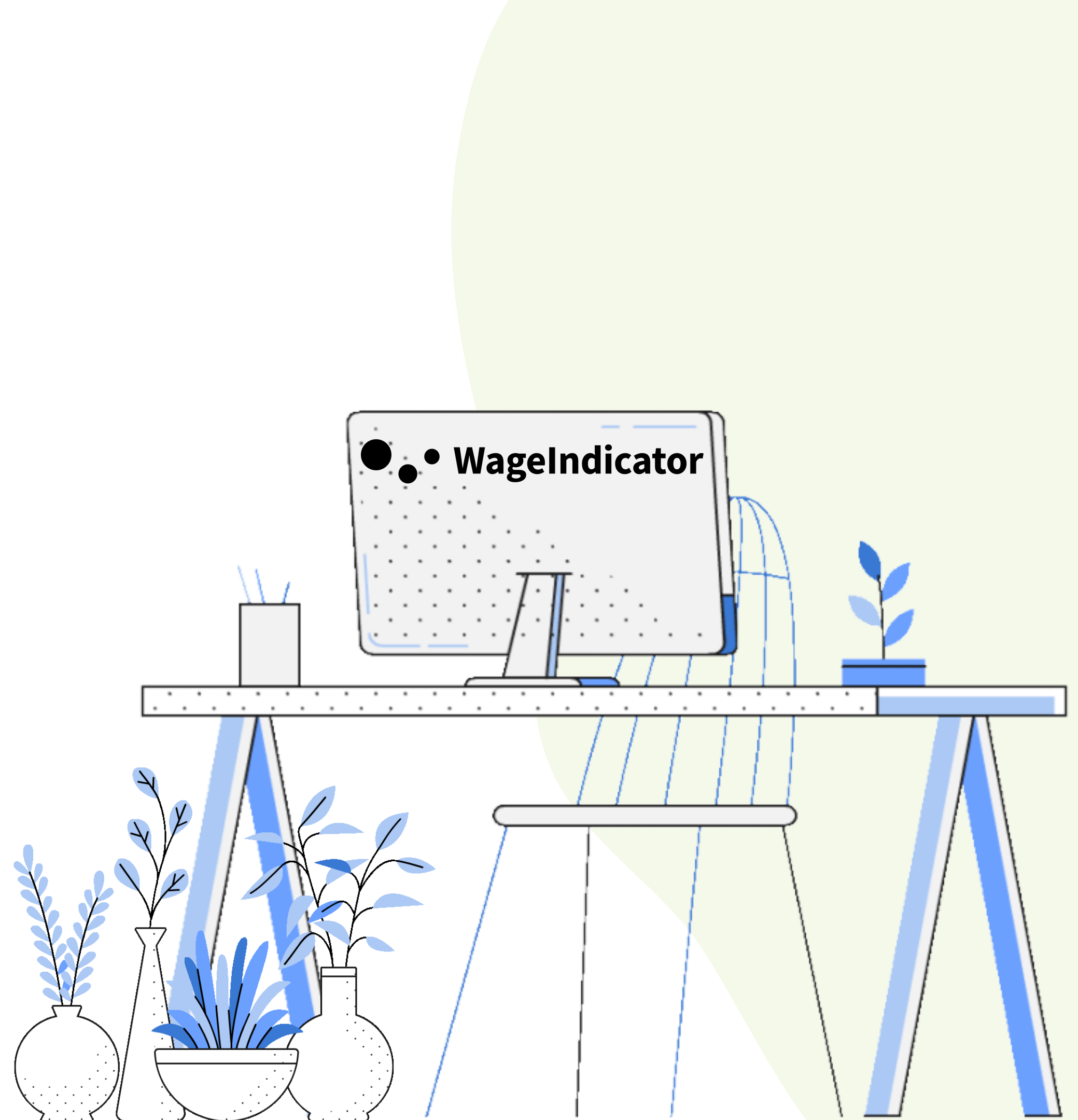
WageIndicator Outreach & Branding Social Media Support

FOLLOW - LIKE - SHARE

- Critical for outreach, marketing
- Essential for brandbuilding
- Increase followers to increase awareness
- Social media income might be a reality for WageIndicator



3. Future



Long way ahead We get there step-by-step-by-step

- HR Policy

- A wholistic HR policy
- Gender Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Finance and Operations Manual Revision
- Code of Conduct



- Funds

- Some job security for all
- Upgrading and technological investments
- Reserve fund – emergencies



- Welfare fund

- Education
- Emergency / calamities



- Paulien's Dream

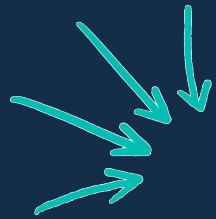
- Pension fund for all
- Savings fund for all



We are working on

People

- Associates with right skills
- More interns from different parts of the World



Projects

- Prestige value
- Sustainance



Funds

- Survival
- Sustenance
- Security



Any questions?

rupakorde@wageindicator.org

