

SA8000:2026® **STANDARD FOR** **DECENT WORK**

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Introduction

The human rights of people and communities have been defined through foundational documents agreed by countries and stakeholders. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the eleven fundamental instruments of the ILO, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and others.

Through a "Protect, Respect, and Remedy" framework, the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights establish the respective responsibilities of states (governments) and business. States have a duty to protect human rights, including through policy, legislation, regulation, and adjudication. Businesses have a duty to respect human rights, which means they should avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts and addressing such impacts when they occur. These UNGP requirements apply not only to adverse impacts caused by a business, but also those to which it has contributed or is directly linked through its operations or business relationships. Finally, states and businesses have an obligation to provide or participate in, respectively, effective remedy in the case of rights abuses.

SAI is a mission-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing human rights in workplaces around the world based on these foundational frameworks of human rights. One of the ways we pursue this mission is through the establishment of the **SA8000® Standard for Decent Work**, which helps organizations practically fulfill their duty to respect human rights in workplaces. The SA8000 Standard was first published in 1997 and has been regularly revised, always through a multi-stakeholder process. This is the fifth issue of the Standard.

Decent work refers to work that supports the full enjoyment and realization of worker's human rights. According to the ILO, decent work "involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for all, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all..."¹

The SA8000:2026 Standard establishes principles and criteria for decent work in any context. The principles describe the fundamental rights of people that must be protected

¹ ILO, [Decent work](#).

by states and respected by organizations. The criteria provide the specific requirements for organizations in respecting human rights in workplaces.

SA8000 Foundational Criteria establish the overarching expectations for organizations applying the SA8000 Standard.

SA8000 Section 1: Management Systems: Due Diligence and Governance describes the due diligence approach organizations must take to ensure decent work across their operations and business relationships.

SA8000 Section 2: Decent Work Principles

and Performance Criteria describes the human rights associated with decent work and the specific criteria that must be fulfilled for workers to fully enjoy and realize their rights. These two sections are interdependent—organizations must both take a management systems approach to meeting performance criteria and take a performance-oriented approach in developing and implementing their management system (see Figure 1).

Sections 1 and 2 are each divided into multiple Clauses (sub-sections), which contain Criteria (individual requirements for organizations). Sections 1 and 2 also contain Principles, which set the context for the Criteria. These are not requirements, but an articulation of the high-level rights and obligations that the Criteria support.

Implementation and interpretation of the principles and criteria should be focused on the aspects of an organization's operations and interactions that impact human rights related to decent work.

Definitions are a normative part of the Standard and are included in this document in Appendix A.

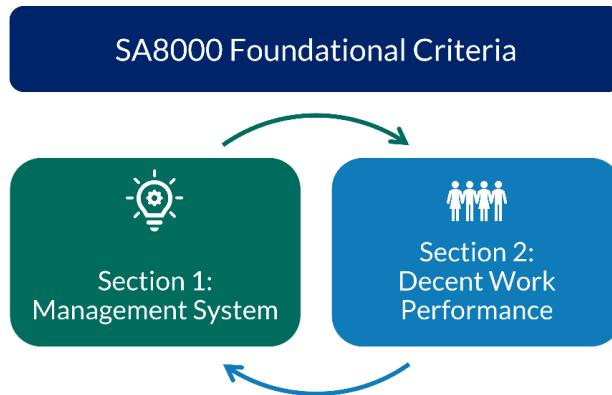


Figure 1. SA8000:2026 Sections

Table 1. Standard and Supporting Documentation [Updated January 1, 2026]

Document	Authority	Status
SA8000:2026 Standard	Normative	Published
Definitions	Normative	Published (Appendix A)
Indicator Library	Guidance	Published
Guidance Document	Guidance	Pending

This table will be updated as additional documents are developed and finalized.

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Foundational Criteria

Foundational expectations for all organizations in meeting this Standard.

F1 – The organization shall respect the principles of the Standard and the international documents it draws on, and seek to continually improve its performance.

F2 – The organization shall ensure its performance, at minimum, meets:

- a) Legal and regulatory requirements relevant to this Standard;
- b) Collective bargaining agreements; and
- c) Other requirements relevant to this Standard to which the organization subscribes.

F3 – Where legal and/or regulatory requirements differ from this Standard, the organization shall apply the criteria most beneficial to personnel.

F4 - Where legal and/or regulatory requirements contradict this Standard, the organization shall identify, prevent, mitigate, and remediate the risks to personnel, to the extent permitted by law.

F5 – To ensure decent work for all personnel, the organization shall establish, implement, maintain, and continually improve a management system grounded in leadership commitment and worker and stakeholder involvement.

Section 1. Management Systems: Governance and Due Diligence

This section describes expectations for how organizations should fulfill their responsibility to respect human rights under the UNGP Framework through a management systems approach.

Management systems vary for organizations based on their size, maturity, and context, but there are shared core elements to ensure decent work across an organization's operations and business relationships. This section describes those core elements, through a practical step-by-step approach. It draws on long-standing SA8000 criteria and widely used and referenced management systems frameworks, including the UNGPs, OECD Due Diligence Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, ISO Annex SL, and others.

Built on involvement and integration of leadership, workers, and stakeholders at all levels, this section describes criteria for development and implementation of a management system that:

- **Enables effective due diligence**—a comprehensive and proactive process to identify, prevent, mitigate, and account for the actual and potential adverse impacts that an organization causes, contributes to, or is directly linked to through its operations and business relationships;² and
- **Enables good governance**—operating with integrity and efficiency.

Interpretation Note: Stakeholder engagement is a key element of an effective management system. Stakeholders are all actors that can affect or are affected by an organization's operations or business relationships. As this Standard is related to decent work, personnel are the primary rightsholders and therefore the most important stakeholders for engagement. We treat them separately from other stakeholders in the Standard to highlight their importance. As such, manager integration and involvement are covered in M1 and worker integration and involvement in M2.

² Adapted from [UNGP](#)s.

Management System Principles

- I. **Leadership** – The organization's top decision-making bodies and top management should advocate for and demonstrate commitment to human rights in their operations and business relationships.
- II. **Accountability** – Organizational leadership and responsible personnel should be held accountable for their actual and potential adverse human rights impacts.
- III. **Agency & Dignity** – Organizations should respect personnel's and stakeholders' rights to agency and dignity and should take steps to empower personnel and build their capacity to understand and advocate for their rights.
- IV. **Integration** – Organizations should uphold their commitments to human rights consistently across their operations and business relationships.
- V. **Long-Term Planning** – Organizations should develop management systems to plan for and consistently respect human rights in the short-, medium-, and long-term.
- VI. **Responsiveness** – Organizations should be proactive in understanding, addressing, and remediating their adverse human rights impacts and risks.
- VII. **Transparency** – Organizations should make clear, accurate, and relevant information about their human rights performance and management system accessible to stakeholders.
- VIII. **Participation & Inclusiveness** – Organizations should meaningfully involve personnel at all levels and other stakeholders in developing and implementing their management system.
- IX. **Social Dialogue** – Social dialogue should play a central role in the organization's approach to ensuring decent work for all personnel.
- X. **Support** – Organizations should dedicate adequate investment, internal competence, and other internal and external resources to meet their human rights commitments.
- XI. **Continual Improvement** – Organizations should continually improve their human rights performance and management system.

Management System Criteria

- M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration
- M2: Worker Involvement and Integration
- M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration

Guidance note: Clauses M1-3 form the basis for developing and implementing the remaining management system categories M4-10.

- M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence
- M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks
- M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources
- M7: Awareness and Implementation
- M8: Integrity and Transparency
- M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms
- M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement

M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration

M1.1 - The organization's top decision-making bodies and top management shall demonstrate commitment to the principles of this Standard by, at minimum:

- a) Integrating the principles of this Standard into organizational strategy and performance measurements;
- b) Approving the organization's policy commitment and mutual expectations for business partners;
- c) Periodically conducting strategic management review of the organization's performance against this Standard and organizational objectives;
- d) Involving functional areas across the organization in meeting this Standard;
- e) Assigning responsibility and accountability for meeting the Standard through an integrated management system at all levels of management; and
- f) Aligning roles, competencies, personnel goals and incentives, performance review criteria, compensation, promotions, disciplinary actions, termination, and decision-making processes with the organization's policy commitment.

M1.2 - Composition of decision-making bodies and management shall be adequately representative of stakeholders.

M1.3 - Responsibility and accountability for meeting this Standard shall ultimately rest with top management. This shall be demonstrated, at minimum, by integration of this Standard's principles and criteria in:

- Organizational structure;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Competencies;
- Goals and incentives;
- Performance review criteria;
- Compensation;
- Promotions;
- Terminations; and
- Decision-making processes and authorities.

M1.4 - Top management shall ensure that conflicts of interest in meeting this Standard are identified, disclosed, and appropriately managed.

M2: Worker Involvement and Integration

M2.1 – The organization shall engage workers, including labor unions and other worker representatives, and integrate their input in the development and implementation of its management system for meeting the requirements of this Standard, including in:

- a) [Defining policies](#);
- b) [Identifying, assessing, and prioritizing adverse impacts and risks](#);
- c) [Setting objectives and planning for implementation](#);
- d) [Monitoring performance and management systems, including of business partners](#);
- e) Designing and operating [grievance channels and processes](#); and
- f) Determining options for remediation.

M2.2 – Where present, the organization shall collaborate with labor unions to meaningfully engage workers in its management system.

M2.3 – The organization shall ensure workers have access to effective and inclusive channels for communication and involvement, which at minimum:

- a) Actively seek the input and feedback of workers;
- b) Enable workers to represent their interests to management;

- c) Provide varied means of participation in a manner convenient to workers;
- d) Enable representation of workplace demographics;
- e) Are accessible for all workers;
- f) Are trusted and actively utilized;
- g) Are confidential if desired;
- h) Align with worker interests and concerns; and
- i) Do not result in retaliation or retribution.

M2.4 – The organization shall establish social performance team(s) to support and facilitate the organization’s management system. The organization shall ensure that established and existing teams, at minimum:

- a) Are composed of a balanced representation of workers and managers, personnel demographics, and organizational functions and roles;
- b) Include representation of present labor unions and workers’ organizations, if they choose to serve;
- c) Provide for independent peer election of worker participants;
- d) Do not undermine the role of labor unions; and
- e) Facilitate worker involvement in key management system functions, including: defining policies; identifying, assessing, and prioritizing adverse impacts and risks; setting objectives and planning for implementation; monitoring performance; and designing and operating grievance mechanisms.

M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration

M3.1 – The organization shall periodically identify and prioritize relevant stakeholders to engage in its management system for meeting the requirements of this Standard, with first priority given to those most impacted by the organization.

M3.2 – The organization shall conduct meaningful stakeholder engagement for the development and implementation of its management system, at minimum when:

- [Defining policies](#);
- [Identifying, assessing, and prioritizing adverse impacts and risks](#);
- [Monitoring performance and management systems, including of business partners](#);
- Designing and operating [grievance channels and processes](#);
- Determining options for remediation; and
- The organization lacks needed knowledge.

M3.3 – Stakeholder engagement shall, at minimum:

- a) Actively seek the input and feedback of relevant stakeholders;
- b) Be accessible;
- c) Be conducted in good faith;
- d) Be responsive to stakeholder concerns; and
- e) Not result in retaliation or retribution.

M3.4 – The organization shall consider stakeholder needs, expectations, concerns, and complaints in organizational decision-making.

M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence

M4.1 - The organization shall establish, document, and periodically update a policy statement that articulates its commitment to the principles of this Standard. At minimum, the organization shall commit to:

- a) Meet or exceed the requirements and principles of this Standard, [relevant legal requirements, and other relevant requirements](#);
- b) Address [risks](#) that it causes, contributes to, or is directly linked to through its operations or business relationships through measures that are commensurate to their severity and likelihood;
- c) Prioritize solutions that prevent adverse impacts in both the short- and long-term;
- d) Behave ethically and with integrity in meeting this Standard;
- e) Maintain integrated management systems to ensure coherence in meeting the requirements of this Standard;
- f) Maintain consultation with and respond to the expectations of [workers](#) and other [stakeholders](#), including by seeking to engage in social dialogue;
- g) Consider risks to personnel when conducting business planning and commit to mitigate associated impacts; and
- h) [Continually improve](#) its performance and management systems related to this Standard.

M4.2 – The organization shall establish, document, and periodically update a policy of mutual expectations for business partners. This policy shall, at minimum, commit to:

- a) Require business partners to respect the principles of this Standard, [relevant legal requirements, and other relevant requirements](#);

- b) Conduct due diligence of business partners;
- c) Address ways in which the organization causes, contributes to, or is linked to business partners' inability to meet the above expectations; and
- d) Set clear expectations for ending relationships with business partners, including appropriate engagement and consideration of risks to personnel before ending business relationships.

M4.3 - The organization's policies, practices, goals, and incentives shall not contradict or undermine its commitments to the principles of this Standard or the [organization's objectives](#).

M4.4 – The organization's policies, lobbying, and other external interactions shall not contradict or undermine its commitments to the principles of this Standard or the [organization's objectives](#).

M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks

M5.1 – The organization shall periodically identify and seek to understand its context, including:

- a) The organization's own operations;
- b) The organization's direct and indirect business relationships;
- c) The needs and expectations of [workers and their representatives](#) and other [relevant stakeholders](#); and
- d) Other aspects of its internal and external operating environment, including relevant regulatory, market, cultural, social, economic, and other factors.

M5.2 – Considering its context, the organization shall periodically identify:

- a) Actual and potential adverse impacts relevant to this Standard that it causes, contributes to, or is directly linked to (or may cause, contribute to, or be directly linked to) through its operations or business relationships under normal or exceptional circumstances, including those specific to vulnerable populations;
- b) Risk factors related to its actual and potential adverse impacts;
- c) The degree of its contribution to actual and potential adverse impacts caused by its business partners; and
- d) Actual and potential adverse impacts related to its performance against this Standard that may result from business ethics or integrity issues.

M5.3 - The organization shall periodically assess, prioritize, and document its risks based on severity of adverse impacts and severity and likelihood of potential adverse impacts.

M5.4 - For prioritized risks, the organization shall identify root causes, taking into consideration potential causes including:

- Management systems causes;
- Operational causes, including the organization's business model; and
- External causes, including those that are social, cultural, regulatory, and/or environmental.

M6: Objectives, Planning and Resources

M6.1 – The organization shall periodically establish, document, and update organizational objectives. These objectives shall be designed to:

- a) Meet or exceed the requirements and principles of this Standard, [relevant legal requirements, and other relevant requirements](#);
- b) Meet the organization's [policy commitments](#);
- c) Address the organization's [risks](#);
- d) Address business ethics and integrity issues relevant to this Standard;
- e) Address emergency preparedness and response issues relevant to this Standard;
- f) Seek social dialogue, including in support of tripartite and other binding agreements to achieve its objectives; and
- g) [Continually improve](#) the organization's performance and management systems related to this Standard.

M6.2 - To address [risks](#) that it causes or contributes to, the organization shall (with due consideration for unintended consequences) plan for actions to:

- a) Bring an end to adverse impacts;
- b) Prevent future adverse impacts;
- c) Mitigate risks; and
- d) Ensure remediation for individuals and groups affected by adverse impacts.

M6.3 - To address [risks](#) that it is directly linked to, the organization shall plan to collaborate with and use its leverage to influence [relevant stakeholders](#), including business partners, to end, prevent, mitigate, and remediate those risks.

M6.4 – The organization shall periodically define and plan for actions and processes needed to achieve its objectives. In doing so, the organization shall consider necessary:

- Management systems – including verbal and written policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, documentation, personnel incentives and goals, training and capacity building, monitoring, worker and stakeholder awareness, and indicators and metrics;
- Resources – including financial, material, personnel, and information resources, such as needed competencies and external expertise, infrastructure, media, and information systems; and
- Relationships – including social dialogue, support for relevant tripartite and other binding agreements, and relationships with business partners, government, and other internal and external stakeholders.

M7: Awareness and Implementation

M7.1 – The organization shall implement its [planned processes and actions](#) and deploy [allocated resources](#), periodically adjusting plans and resources as necessary to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

M7.2 – The organization shall ensure personnel have appropriate awareness, understanding, access to information, and channels for communicating about:

- Their legal rights;
- Their rights as defined in this Standard;
- [Risks](#) related to their employment;
- [Organizational policies, objectives, actions, and processes](#);
- Their roles and responsibilities in meeting the organization's objectives and commitments;
- [Relevant mechanisms and channels for their involvement in the management system](#); and
- Relevant mechanisms and channels for protection of their rights, including mechanisms for accessing remedy.

M7.3 – The organization shall ensure [stakeholders](#) are appropriately aware of:

- Relevant [risks](#);

- Organizational policies, objectives, actions and processes; and
- Channels for their involvement and protection of rights as defined in this Standard.

M7.4 – In its interactions with business partners, the organization shall:

- Ensure business partners have appropriate awareness, understanding, access to information and channels for communicating about the organization's policies, objectives, actions, and processes;
- Ensure that its business terms and practices do not undermine business partners' ability to meet the mutual expectations it has set;
- Provide business partners with support to end, prevent, mitigate, and remediate risks, commensurate with the organization's contribution to those impacts;
- Seek to minimize the administrative burdens of mutual expectations on business partners, where possible; and
- Not end business relationships in response to risks, unless:
 - The business partner repeatedly fails to address the risk after appropriate engagement and support from the organization; AND
 - Risks of ending the relationship are not greater than the original risk.

M7.5 – Documented information relevant for meeting requirements of this Standard shall be:

- Available and suitable;
- Accurate and clear;
- Effectively controlled; and
- Identifiable.

M8: Integrity and Transparency

M8.1 – In meeting the requirements of this Standard, the organization shall operate and communicate with integrity.

M8.2 – The organization shall periodically report publicly about its processes and outcomes relevant to this Standard. Public reporting shall, at minimum:

- Be transparent, truthful, and clear;
- Meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders;
- Include the organization's policy commitment;

- d) Describe the organization's business operations;
- e) Communicate about how the organization is addressing its risks;
- f) Provide information, upon request, about the use of grievance mechanisms and results of grievance processes;
- g) Meet [legal, regulatory, and other reporting requirements](#); and
- h) Be appropriately accessible and available to [stakeholders](#).

M8.3 – The organization shall engage transparently and openly with authorized third parties, including by providing access to required documentation, records, materials, persons, and work-related environments.

M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms

M9.1 – The organization shall monitor its performance against and management systems for meeting the requirements of this Standard. Monitoring shall, at minimum:

- a) Assess implementation of [planned actions and processes](#);
- b) Assess adherence to this Standard;
- c) Assess performance of relevant business partners against [established mutual expectations](#); and
- d) Be appropriately documented.

M9.2 – The organization shall incorporate information from multiple sources in its monitoring processes, including as relevant:

- [Assessment and prioritization of risks](#);
- [Planned indicators and metrics](#);
- Internal and external grievance mechanisms and communication channels;
- [Worker engagement and communication](#);
- [Stakeholder complaints and concerns](#);
- Social dialogue and feedback from relevant tripartite and other binding agreements;
- Publicly available news and information sources;
- Internal and external audits; and
- External experts.

M9.3 – The organization shall establish, maintain, and monitor a grievance mechanism for personnel to raise concerns, issues, complaints, incidents, and grievances relevant to this

Standard against the organization or its business partners. The organization's grievance mechanisms for personnel shall:

- Be legitimate; accessible; predictable; equitable; transparent; dialogue-based; rights-compatible; and a source for [continual improvement](#);
- Maintain users' confidentiality;
- Not result in retaliation against users, whether by the organization or other parties; and
- Not result in loss of earnings for personnel participating in grievance procedures.

M9.4 – The organization shall establish, maintain, and monitor a grievance mechanism for external stakeholders to raise concerns, issues, complaints, incidents, and grievances relevant to this Standard against the organization or its business partners. The organization's grievance mechanisms for external stakeholders shall:

- Be legitimate; accessible; predictable; equitable; transparent; dialogue-based; rights-compatible; and a source for [continual improvement](#);
- Maintain users' confidentiality;
- Not result in retaliation against users, whether by the organization or other parties; and
- Not result in loss of earnings for personnel participating in grievance procedures.

M9.5 – The organization shall engage in good faith with external grievance and remediation processes related to adverse human rights impacts and risks it caused, contributed to, or is directly linked to through its operations or business relationships.

M9.6 - The outputs of monitoring and grievance mechanisms shall result in actions (including changes to [management systems, resources, and/or relationships](#)) to:

- a) Bring an end to adverse impacts;
- b) Prevent future adverse impacts;
- c) Mitigate risks; and
- d) Ensure remediation for individuals and groups affected by adverse impacts.

M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement

M10.1 – The organization shall periodically review its performance against its [objectives](#) and this Standard. During its review, the organization shall assess, at minimum:

- a) Progress toward achieving its [objectives](#);
- b) Effectiveness of its [planned and implemented actions and processes](#);
- c) Appropriateness and adequacy of [planned and implemented actions, processes, and resources](#);
- d) Effectiveness of its management system; and
- e) Opportunities to improve its performance.

M10.2 – The organization shall incorporate information from multiple sources in its review, including as relevant:

- [Assessment and prioritization of risks](#);
- [Monitoring processes](#);
- [Internal and external grievance mechanisms](#) and communication channels;
- [Worker engagement and communication](#);
- [Stakeholder complaints and concerns](#);
- Social dialogue and feedback from relevant tripartite and other binding agreements;
- Publicly available news and information sources;
- Internal and external audits; and
- External experts.

M10.3 – Outputs of this review shall:

- a) Inform the organization's periodic [assessment and prioritization of risks](#) and [monitoring processes](#);
- b) Inform organizational strategy and decision making; and
- c) Lead to changes to organizational [policies, resources, objectives, processes, and actions](#), as needed.

M10.4 – The organization shall demonstrate continual improvement of decent work performance and management systems in its operations and business relationships, including by:

- a) Continually addressing risks across priority levels;
- b) Identifying and pursuing opportunities to improve working conditions beyond the requirements in this Standard; and
- c) Identifying and pursuing opportunities to increase [worker](#) and [stakeholder involvement and integration](#) in the organization's management system.

Section 2: Decent Work Principles and Performance Criteria

This section describes the fundamental human rights (principles) associated with decent work and the specific requirements (criteria) for achieving decent work.

Each clause begins with a listing of Principles. These are fundamental human rights that must be protected by states and respected by business. Some fundamental rights apply to all people, others to only workers, and others to specific groups of people (such as children). Rights are absolute, meaning that they apply equally to all people, workers, or other groups as indicated.

To fully respect human rights, organizations must avoid infringing on human rights and must address any adverse human rights impacts they are involved with. The Principles in this section define the specific human rights related to decent work that organizations must respect. They do not impose specific requirements on organizations, but rather set the context for the Criteria in each clause.

Criteria provide the requirements for organizations. These are the outcomes that organizations must achieve to demonstrate respect for the Principles. Whereas Principles apply to all people, workers, or other broad groups, Criteria apply to the personnel (or other specific stakeholders) of the organization. This is the scope of the organization's responsibility under the Standard.

- D1: Protection of Children and Young Workers
- D2: Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining
- D3: Free and Fair Recruitment, Employment and Termination
- D4: Decent Hours, Wages and Benefits
- D5: Freedom from Discrimination
- D6: Health and Safety
- D7: Privacy

D1: Protection of Children and Young Workers

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. Children have the right to be protected from child labor.
- II. Children, including young workers, have the right to support their basic needs.
- III. Children, including young workers, have the right to physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development.
- IV. Children, including young workers, have the right to pursue an education, free from any work that deprives them of the opportunity to attend school.
- V. Children, including young workers, have the right to fair treatment, safety, and special protection in employment.
- VI. Children, including young workers, have the right to be heard and represented in the workplace.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D1.1 - The organization shall respect the rights of children, including young workers.

D1.2 - The organization shall not employ children under 15 years of age (or under the age of compulsory schooling, if higher). Exceptions may be made where cases meet the definition of “Legally Working Child(ren)” in this Standard.

D1.3 - The organization shall ensure that employment of young workers:

- a) Protects the workers’ social, moral, and physical development and does not constitute a hazard to their general health and well-being;
- b) Is not so demanding as to undermine their educational attainment;
- c) Provides pay and benefits commensurate with those of adult workers in similar positions; and
- d) Does not exceed hours of work limitations, including:

- i. 8 hours work in any one day (or the legal maximum if less than 8 hours),
- ii. 10 hours per day for school, work, and transportation combined (or the legal maximum if less than 10 hours), and
- iii. Does not occur during night hours.

D1.4 – Where non-working children are present in work-related environments, the organization shall ensure:

- a) Protection from hazards and health risks;
- b) Provision for basic needs appropriate to each child's age (e.g., access to food, water, toilet facilities, etc.);
- c) Adequate and continuous adult supervision; and
- d) Non-interference with the organization's processes.

D1.5 – The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Protection of Children and Young Workers throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);
- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);
- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

D2: Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. Workers have the right to form, join, and participate in independent labor unions and other workers' organizations of their choosing to promote and protect their interests.
- II. Workers have the right to bargain collectively for their interests and to good faith bargaining by employers and employers' organizations.
- III. Workers have the right to be free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation based on their status or affiliation with labor unions and other workers' organizations.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D2.1 - The organization shall respect and recognize the rights of personnel to freely form, join, and participate in labor unions and other workers' organizations of their choosing and to bargain collectively.

D2.2 - The organization shall ensure personnel are informed of their rights to form, join, and participate in labor unions and other workers' organizations of their choosing without negative consequences or retaliation from the organization.

D2.3 - The organization shall ensure that it does not interfere, either directly or through third parties, with the establishment, functioning, or administration of labor unions or other workers' organizations.

D2.4 - The organization shall ensure that members of labor unions and other workers' organizations, worker representatives, and any personnel engaged in organizing workers are not subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation based on their labor union membership or activities.

D2.5 – The organization shall ensure that members of labor unions and other workers' organizations, worker representatives, and any personnel engaged in organizing workers have fair access to members in work-related environments.

D2.6 - The organization shall conduct collective bargaining in good faith with worker representatives, unions, and other workers' organizations, if they so request.

D2.7 – Where a sectoral collective bargaining agreement exists, the organization shall respect and fulfil its obligations under the agreement. This does not preclude additional collective bargaining by labor unions or other workers' organizations at the organization level, so long as such agreements are more beneficial to workers than any sectoral agreements in place.

D2.8 - The organization shall ensure that workplace consultation committees, including social performance teams, and other worker groups do not interfere with the establishment, functioning, or administration of labor unions and other workers' organizations or with collective bargaining.

D2.9 – The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);
- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);
- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

D3: Free and Fair Recruitment, Employment and Termination

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. People have the right to agency and dignity during recruitment, employment, and termination.
- II. People have the right to be free from deception, coercion, exploitation, intimidation, threats, and violence.
- III. People have the right to decent and fair treatment by all work-related persons.
- IV. People have the right to be free from modern slavery, human trafficking, and forced or compulsory labor.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D3.1 - The organization shall respect the rights of personnel and applicants to free and fair recruitment, employment, and termination.

D3.2 - The organization shall ensure that personnel and applicants understand and voluntarily agree to the applicable terms and conditions of recruitment, employment, and termination, including through:

- a) Use of accessible and understandable language(s) and communication methods;
- b) Clear, accurate, and comprehensive description of relevant processes, details of the role, and work conditions;
- c) Clear, accurate, and comprehensive working agreement; and
- d) Clear, accurate, and comprehensive description of living conditions where relevant.

D3.3 - The organization shall clearly communicate to affected personnel in advance any changes to their terms and conditions of employment or termination, with sufficient time for personnel to make alternative arrangements if desired.

D3.4 - The organization shall ensure that personnel and applicants have freedom of movement in recruitment, employment, and termination, including:

- a) Continuous access to identification and other important documents;
- b) Voluntary, non-excessive overtime, where applicable;
- c) Freedom from threats, ransoms, or holds against persons, wages, or property;
- d) Reasonable physical autonomy and movement in work-related environments; and
- e) Freedom to transfer their skills and knowledge to new employment without undue restriction.

D3.5 - The organization shall ensure personnel and applicants are free from financial burden related to recruitment, employment, and termination, including:

- Debt bondage;
- Financial penalty;
- Fees;
- Theft or forfeiting of wages; and
- Exploitative piece-rate systems.

D3.6 - The organization shall ensure that fees and costs related to recruitment, employment, and termination are not borne, in whole or in part, by personnel or applicants.

D3.7 - The organization shall ensure personnel and applicants are free from harassment and intimidation in recruitment, employment, and termination, including:

- Physical and sexual violence;
- Threats to self or others; and
- Psychological and emotional violence.

D3.8 - The organization shall ensure that disciplinary policies and practices:

- Are clearly communicated to personnel upon their hiring;
- Are applied consistently and fairly across the organization; and
- Are clearly documented and communicated to involved personnel.

D3.9 - The organization shall ensure that its terms and conditions of work, including location, provision of housing, provision of private communication channels, available transportation, work schedule, and others do not unduly isolate personnel.

D3.10 - The organization shall ensure that its terms and conditions of work, including location, provision of housing, provision of private communication channels, available transportation, work schedule, and others do not unduly force personnel to separate from children and dependents.

D3.11 - Where the organization participates in or uses apprenticeship, internship, or vocational education programs, it shall ensure that positions created through these programs:

- a) Are not used to replace regular positions;
- b) Are for a pre-specified duration;
- c) Are not compensated below the legal minimum wage; and that they
- d) Contribute to the development of personnel's skills, professional competence, and/or other work-related attributes.

D3.12 - The organization shall ensure any termination of employment is fair and transparent, including:

- a) Non-discriminatory;
- b) Adequate allocation of resources to meet contracts, binding collective bargaining agreements, and [applicable laws and regulations](#);
- c) Timely payment of severance, wages, and other compensation; and
- d) Use of large-scale retrenchment only as a last resort.

D3.13 - The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Free and Fair Recruitment, Employment, and Termination throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);

- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);
- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

D4: Decent Hours, Wages and Benefits

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. People have the right to a decent standard of living that supports health, security, and participation in society.
- II. People have the right to be fairly compensated for their time, labor, and other contributions.
- III. People have the right to reasonable work schedules, including provision of adequate leave.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D4.1 – The organization shall respect the rights of personnel to hours, wages, and benefits that support a decent standard of living.

D4.2 - The organization shall respect the rights of personnel to at least a living wage or living income (or legal minimum wage, if higher) and to receive legally required benefits.

D4.3 - Where contextual barriers prevent the organization from independently providing personnel with living wages and incomes, the organization shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders to address these, including by:

- a) Engaging in social dialogue, including in support of relevant tripartite and other binding agreements; and
- b) Engaging with business partners, government, and other internal and external stakeholders.

D4.4 - The organization shall respect the rights of personnel to reasonable hours, which at minimum limit:

- a) Regular hours to 48 hours per week (or the maximum permitted by law, if lower); and
- b) Overtime to 12 hours per week (or the maximum permitted by law, if lower).

D4.5 – The organization shall ensure that overtime:

- a) Is voluntary, unless national law and a binding collective bargaining agreement allow;
- b) Is paid at a premium rate;
 - a. In cases where premium rate is not defined in law, prevailing overtime rates across sectors in the country apply;
- c) Is calculated per work week, unless national law and a binding collective bargaining agreement allow;
- d) Meets [relevant legal requirements, and other relevant requirements](#); and
- e) Is not required on a regular basis, including due to inadequate planning or non-payment of living wage or living income.

D4.6 - The organization shall ensure personnel work schedules, including hours:

- a) Support a decent standard of living;
- b) Are predictable and convenient to personnel;
- c) Do not pose health and safety risks;
- d) Include adequate breaks and rest periods;
- e) Do not use hours-averaging to deprive personnel of premium pay;
- f) Provide at least one 24-hour rest day following six consecutive days of working, unless one of the below exceptions applies:
 - i. National law and a binding collective bargaining agreement allow, or

- ii. ILO convention allows, or
- iii. Longer consecutive work is required by exceptional circumstances and personnel request the additional consecutive days;
- g) Provide personnel with adequate paid and unpaid leave, including:
 - i. Sick leave,
 - ii. Family leave,
 - iii. Vacation leave, and
 - iv. Public holidays;
- h) Are considerate of needs for flexibility based on personnel demographics; and
- i) Do not unfairly limit access to organizational or government benefits.

D4.7 - Where personnel are legally exempt from overtime pay, hours maximums, and other requirements, the organization shall ensure:

- a) Compensation meets or exceeds the amount they would earn by working the same number of hours at the living wage with overtime premiums; and
- b) Personnel have reasonable discretion over hours worked.

D4.8 - The organization shall render all due wages and benefits regularly, punctually, and in a manner convenient to personnel.

D4.9 - In addition to compensating personnel for time spent performing their roles, the organization shall provide personnel with adequate compensation for:

- Time during which they are required to be at their place of work;
- Lost work time due to work-related injury or illness; and
- Lost work time due to participation in training, social performance teams, or grievance processes.

D4.10 – The organization shall ensure that personnel regularly receive compensation records that clearly, fully, and accurately detail hours worked and the composition of due wages, benefits, and deductions.

D4.11 - In the event of disruption to business continuity, the organization shall prioritize payment of severance, wages, and other compensation to personnel.

D4.12 - The organization shall ensure disciplinary deductions from wages or hours:

- a) Are only taken from wages due if national law and a binding collective bargaining agreement allow;
- b) Are reasonable and for a limited period of time;
- c) Do not bring wages below a living wage (or the legal minimum wage, if higher); and
- d) Provide opportunity for appeal.

D4.13 - The organization shall ensure the use of piece-rate compensation, part-time employment, seasonal employment, short-term contracts, homeworkers, non-employee personnel, and work from home arrangements:

- a) Are measured and evidence based;
- b) Do not contradict the requirements of this Standard;
- c) Provide wages and hours that support a decent standard of living;
- d) Do not pose undue health and safety risks; and
- e) Are transparent, predictable, and convenient to personnel.

D4.14 - The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Decent Hours, Wages, and Benefits throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);
- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);
- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

D5: Freedom from Discrimination

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. People have the right to education and employment.
- II. People have the right to non-discrimination, including equal access and opportunity in educational and employment processes.
- III. People have the right to a work environment that supports their mental, emotional, and psychosocial well-being.
- IV. People have the right to freedom from any form of unwelcome conduct, including harassment, bullying, and intimidation.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D5.1 - The organization shall respect the rights of personnel to freedom from discrimination.

D5.2 - The organization shall ensure personnel have equal access and opportunity and are free from discrimination in all their interactions with the organization, including:

- Hiring and recruitment;
- Employment and working conditions;
- Work placement;
- Performance review and feedback;
- Training and mentoring;
- Promotions and opportunities;
- Grievances;
- Wages and benefits, including accommodation, transportation, meals, partner and family benefits, and others;
- Disciplinary processes; and
- Termination and retirement.

D5.3 - The organization shall ensure personnel are free from unwelcome conduct, including harassment, bullying, and intimidation in work-related environments and from work-related persons.

D5.4 - The organization shall take reasonable steps to be inclusive of personnel's differences, including:

- Abilities;
- Religious and customary practices;
- Literacy and language levels;
- Personal hygiene needs;
- Caretaking responsibilities; and
- Other needs that do not unduly impact personnel's ability to perform their role.

D5.5 - The organization shall ensure personnel are not subject to invasive medical/bodily procedures as part of their employment, including:

- "Virginity" tests;
- Pregnancy tests;
- HIV/AIDS tests; and
- Other medical/bodily tests, inspections, or procedures not relevant to their specific role.

Exceptions may be made only:

- a) As necessary to identify, prevent, and mitigate severe adverse impacts and risks to the individual or other personnel; and
- b) When clearly communicated and agreed with personnel in advance.

D5.6 - The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Freedom from Discrimination throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);
- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);

- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

D6: Health and Safety

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. People have the right to safe and healthy work-related environments.
- II. People have the right to physical and mental well-being.
- III. People have the right to remove themselves from imminent danger without seeking permission.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D6.1 - The organization shall respect the rights of personnel to health and safety, including physical, social, and mental well-being.

D6.2 - The organization shall assign a competent management representative whose responsibilities include ensuring safe and healthy work-related environments for personnel and for meeting this Standard's health and safety requirements.

D6.3 - The organization shall periodically identify hazards and assess and prioritize their associated health and safety risks in work-related environments that the organization causes, contributes to, or is directly linked to through its operations or business relationships under normal or exceptional circumstances. The organization shall include both immediate and long-term or cumulative effects in its consideration of risks.

D6.4 - The organization shall adequately address risks from workplace hazards, including, but not limited to:

- Hazardous materials;
- Hazardous equipment, work environment, and/or utilities (e.g., machinery, air quality, electrical, lighting, dust, pathogens, noise, temperature, injury hazards, etc.); and
- Ergonomics.

D6.5 - The organization shall adequately address risks from natural and human-made disasters and emergencies, including, but not limited to:

- Fire and explosion/implosion;
- Earthquakes;
- Floods;
- Drought;
- Extreme environmental conditions, including extreme temperatures;
- Other (non-fire) emergency;
- Pathogens (communicable diseases); and
- Other foreseeable abnormal or emergency situations.

D6.6 - The organization shall adequately address risks from all other conditions that may pose a hazard to personnel, including, but not limited to:

- Structural safety of buildings and facilities;
- Safe and sanitary conditions (bathrooms, kitchens, housing, etc.); and
- Safety of transportation.

D6.7 - The organization shall adequately address risks from psychosocial hazards, including, but not limited to:

- Unreasonable deadlines or work expectations;
- Aggressive, bullying, or intimidating behavior by work-related persons;
- Inadequate personal privacy in work-related environments;
- Lack of transparency or conflicting expectations; and
- Unreasonable lack of security or stability in employment.

D6.8 - The organization shall ensure personnel have appropriate awareness, understanding, access to information, and channels for communicating about:

- Hazards related to personnel's roles and the related health and safety risks;
- Related [policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities](#); and
- Their rights related to health and safety.

D6.9 - In the event of a work-related injury, the organization shall provide first aid and assist the affected personnel in obtaining follow-up medical treatment.

D6.10 - The organization shall provide, maintain, and replace appropriate personal protective equipment, as needed, at the organization's own expense.

D6.11 - The organization shall ensure that work-related environments (whether owned, leased, or contracted from a service provider) are clean, safe, meet the basic needs of users, and provide personnel reasonable access to:

- Clean toilet facilities;
- Potable water;
- Suitable spaces for meal breaks;
- Sanitary facilities for food storage (where applicable);
- Changing rooms and secure storage (where applicable); and
- Private spaces for nursing parents (where applicable).

D6.12 – The organization shall ensure that employer-provided housing, transportation, food, and other goods and services meet relevant national and international standards of quality.

D6.13 – The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Health and Safety throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);
- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);

- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

D7: Privacy

Principles

Fundamental human rights, to be protected by states and respected by business in the context of work.

- I. People have the right to a reasonable expectation of privacy in their personal lives and in work-related environments.
- II. People have the right to be aware of and understand how their personal data is used.
- III. People have the right to a reasonable degree of control over their personal data.

Performance Criteria

Specific performance requirements for organizations to demonstrate respect for these rights in the context of work.

D7.1 - The organization shall respect the rights of personnel to privacy.

D7.2 - The organization shall only collect, process, and use personal data of personnel:

- a) For reasons directly relevant to the personnel's work and/or services;
- b) For the purposes for which they were originally collected;
- c) In a manner that respects the personal autonomy of personnel;
- d) On a limited basis when making decisions on employment, promotion, or termination; and
- e) In a non-discriminatory manner.

D7.3 - The organization shall ensure the collection, distribution, use, maintenance, and disposition of personal data of personnel, at minimum:

- a) Is accurate, valid, and reliable;
- b) Minimizes the types and amount of data collected;
- c) Provides appropriate security and confidentiality;
- d) Ensures data is kept only as long as necessary for the specified and legitimate purpose;
- e) Respects the intellectual property rights of personnel; and
- f) Considers risks specific to vulnerable populations.

D7.4 - The organization shall ensure personnel have appropriate awareness, understanding, access to information, and channels for communicating about:

- The collection and use of their personal data;
- Related [policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities](#); and
- Their rights, including their rights to refuse or limit collection and use, where applicable.

D7.5 – The organization shall develop and implement effective management systems to meet or exceed the requirements and principles associated with Privacy throughout its operations and business relationships, including:

- a) [M1: Leadership Commitment, Involvement and Integration](#);
- b) [M2: Worker Involvement and Integration](#);
- c) [M3: Stakeholder Involvement and Integration](#);
- d) [M4: Policy Commitment and Coherence](#);
- e) [M5: Context, Impacts, and Risks](#);
- f) [M6: Objectives, Planning, and Resources](#);
- g) [M7: Awareness and Implementation](#);
- h) [M8: Integrity and Transparency](#);
- i) [M9: Monitoring and Grievance Mechanisms](#); and
- j) [M10: Strategic Analysis, Review and Continual Improvement](#).

Appendix A. Definitions

Published: January 1, 2026*

Definitions may be updated periodically.

*Definitions were misnumbered in a previous version of this document; this version corrects that.

1	Adverse impact(s): An effect on an individual or group that removes or reduces their ability to enjoy, exercise, or realize their human rights, as defined in the Principles of D1-7 in this Standard. ³
2	Authorized Third Parties: Parties with a legal or contractual right to engagement with the organization. This may include auditors, audit team members, and representatives from SAI.
3	Business Partner(s): ⁴ Entity with which the organization has a business relationship for the purpose of meeting its business objectives. Includes entities with which the organization has a direct or indirect relationship across its entire value chain, upstream and downstream, such as recruiters and recruitment firms, suppliers, sub-contractors, agents, licensees, brokers, distributors, service providers, and minority as well as majority shareholding positions in joint ventures.
4	Business Relationship(s): The relationships an organization has with business partners, entities in its value chain, and any other State or non-State entity directly linked to its operations, products, or services. They include direct and indirect relationships across the organization's entire value chain, upstream and downstream, such as recruiters and recruitment firms, suppliers, sub-contractors, agents, licensees, brokers, distributors, service providers, and minority as well as majority shareholding positions in joint ventures. ⁵
5	Child(ren): Any person under 18 years of age.

³ Adapted from [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights \(UNGPs\)](#).

⁴ Adapted from [GRI Standards Glossary 2022](#).

⁵ Adapted from [UNGP Reporting Framework Glossary](#), Shift.

Child Labor:⁶ Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It includes work that:

- a) Is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or
- b) Interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely, or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Worst Forms of Child Labor:⁷

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- a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, serfdom, and forced or compulsory labor, including the forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- b) The use, procuring, or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performances;
- c) The use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties; and
- d) Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.

Setting(s) Hazardous to Children:⁸ Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children, this includes, but is not limited to, work that:

- Exposes workers to physical, psychological, or sexual harm;
- Is underground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces;
- Involves dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- Is in an unhealthy environment that may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents, or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; or

⁶ ILO, [What is child labour](#).

⁷ ILO, [Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 \(No. 182\)](#).

⁸ ILO, [What is child labour](#).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.
7	Decent Standard of Living: A decent standard of living allows for mental and physical well-being, security, and participation in society by an individual and their family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transport, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events. ⁹
8	Discrimination: In the context of decent work, decisions made about recruitment, employment, or termination based on someone's personal characteristics, rather than their work-related abilities. Personal traits that shall not be used as a reason to discriminate against someone include: race; color; religion; caste; birth; ethnicity; sex (including pregnancy status, gender identity, and sexual orientation); national, territorial, or social origin; nationality; disability; age; labor union status, affiliation, or activities; marital status; family or caretaking responsibilities; political opinion; military or veteran status; genetic information; disease or illness unrelated to ability to perform role; and any other characteristics unrelated to the person's ability to perform the role.
9	Employment: For the purposes of this Standard, employment refers to any personnel employed either directly or indirectly through a third party, within the organization or its business partners. It encompasses the organization's relationship with all personnel.
10	Exceptional Circumstances: Events or circumstances that substantially disrupt the organization and that are out of the ordinary and out of the control of the employer, including earthquakes, floods, fires, national emergencies, force majeure, or periods of prolonged political instability. The definition does not include peak production periods that can be foreseen, holidays, or seasonal fluctuations.
11	Fees and Costs related to Recruitment: Any fees or costs incurred for personnel to secure employment, regardless of the manner, timing, or location of their imposition or collection. Such fees and costs must never be borne by personnel. They include, but are not limited to: ¹⁰

⁹ Global Living Wage Coalition, [What is a Living Wage](#).

¹⁰ Adapted from ILO, "[General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and Definition of recruitment fees and related costs](#)."

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments for recruitment services offered by labour recruiters, whether public or private, and any other payments made for the recruitment, referral, or placement of personnel; • Other costs related to recruitment of personnel, including advertising, disseminating information, arranging interviews, submitting documents for government clearances, confirming credentials, organizing travel and transportation, and placement into employment; • Medical costs, insurance costs, costs for skills and qualification tests, costs for training and orientation, equipment costs, travel and lodging costs, administrative costs, and other costs that are required for personnel to begin work; and • Bribes/inducements to labor recruiters, employers, or other intermediaries to secure employment. <p><i>This list does not include fees and costs related to employment and termination, which also must not be borne by personnel.</i></p>
12	Grievance Mechanism(s): A systematic process through which stakeholders can raise and seek remedy for grievances concerning an organization's actual and potential adverse human rights impacts. ¹¹
13	Hazard: An intrinsic condition or situation that has the potential to cause harm, injury, ill-health, or damage.
14	Integrity: Transparency, accuracy, coherence, and adherence to the principles of this Standard.
15	Legally Working Child(ren): A child working in one of the following permitted situations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Young Worker – A child over the age of 15 (or over the age of compulsory schooling, whichever is higher), performing work that complies with the requirements of this Standard; II. Child(ren) Engaged in Light Work¹² - Children aged between 13 and 15 (12 to 14 in some countries) performing work that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Does not jeopardize the child's attendance at school and is not so demanding as to undermine their educational attainment,

¹¹ Adapted from UNGPs.

¹² Adapted from [ILO Convention 138](#).

	<p>b) Does not jeopardize the child's social, moral, or physical development and does not constitute a hazard to the child's general health and well-being,</p> <p>c) Does not exceed 4 hours per day or 14 hours per week,</p> <p>d) Does not occur during night hours,</p> <p>e) Does not occur in a setting hazardous to children or young workers,</p> <p>f) Provides for competent adult supervision, and</p> <p>g) Meets the requirements of this Standard;</p> <p>I. Child(ren) Helping in a Family Setting – Children supporting or assisting family members in the home, farm, or business, with work that:</p> <p>a) Does not jeopardize the child's attendance at school and is not so demanding as to undermine their educational attainment,</p> <p>b) Does not jeopardize the child's social, moral, or physical development and does not constitute a hazard to the child's general health and well-being,</p> <p>c) Does not occur in a setting hazardous to children or young workers, and</p> <p>d) Provides for guidance and supervision by an adult member of the immediate family or legal guardian;</p> <p>II. Child(ren) Working in Entertainment - Children and young workers in the entertainment industry who are subject to a lawful agreement(s), that:</p> <p>a) Is authorized by an appropriate government authority,</p> <p>b) Is authorized by a parent or legal guardian of the child or young worker,</p> <p>c) Is authorized by the employer or agent of the child or young worker,</p> <p>d) Is authorized by the young worker (in the case of young worker agreement(s) only),</p> <p>e) Does not risk impairment of the social, moral, or physical well-being of the child or young worker,</p> <p>f) Limits the hours of work per day and per year (including the provision of adequate sleep and rest periods and limitations on work during night hours),</p> <p>g) Provides for the health and safety of the child or young worker,</p> <p>h) Provides for the continuing education of the child or young worker,</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Provides for a portion of earnings to be set aside in a trust for the benefit of the child or young worker, j) Meets the requirements of this Standard, and k) Ensures that all contract terms are understood and met by all parties concerned.
16	Living Income: The net annual income required for a household in a particular place to afford a decent standard of living for all members of that household. ¹³
17	Living Wage: The remuneration received for a standard work week by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and their family. ¹⁴
18	Management: Roles with decision-making authority, including the authority to hire, terminate, formally discipline, promote, and determine wages.
19	May: Indicates a possibility. It is not used to indicate a permission in this Standard.
20	Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement: Characterized by two-way communication; it depends on the good faith of participants on both sides. It is responsive, ongoing, and, in many cases, includes engaging with relevant stakeholders before decisions have been made. ¹⁵
21	Mental Well-being: Occurs when an individual can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and make a contribution to their community. ¹⁶
22	Night Hours: 22:00 – 06:00, or as defined in national law.
23	Non-Working Child(ren): Child(ren) not engaged in work, e.g., children in employer-provided crèches, daycares, or schools; community children that may inadvertently enter work areas; children that accompany their parents to work; and children of personnel that live in work-related environments.
24	Organization: The entity responsible for meeting the requirements of this Standard. Organizations can include: companies, corporations, farms,

¹³ Living Income Community of Practice, [The Concept](#).

¹⁴ Global Living Wage Coalition, [What is a Living Wage?](#)

¹⁵ Adapted from [OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct](#).

¹⁶ WHO, [Health and Well-Being](#).

	plantations, cooperatives, NGOs, government institutions, or any other entity that may cause, contribute to, or be directly linked to adverse impacts and risks related to this Standard.
25	Periodic(ally): (1) At regular intervals, (2) when circumstances change, and (3) as indicated through monitoring, complaints, non-compliance, or grievances.
26	Personal Data: Any information relating to an identified or identifiable person; an identifiable person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, such as through a name, identification number, location data, online identifier, or one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural, or social identity of that person. ¹⁷
27	<p>Personnel: Any individual, at any level, performing work for an organization or their business partners. Includes, but is not limited to, directors, executives, managers, supervisors, workers, apprentices, interns, young workers, children engaged in light work or entertainment (but not children helping in a family setting), and personnel contracted directly by the organization. It includes individuals in the informal economy, migrant workers with or without documentation, and others performing work for the organization or its business partners who may not usually be captured in traditional understandings of 'personnel', including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Indirect Personnel: Individuals who provide labor to the organization and who are contracted through a third-party or are self-employed (e.g., personnel engaged through a recruiter or recruitment firm, drivers, homeworkers, small-holder farmers, gig workers, and security, maintenance, janitorial, canteen, or specialist personnel, etc.); and II. Government-Required Personnel: Personnel, whether engaging directly or indirectly with the organization, whose labor is administered or coordinated in accordance with requirements specified by a government entity (or an authority designated by a government entity) (e.g., personnel work placement or community support programs). <p>For the purposes of this Standard, personnel are the primary rights-holders.</p>

¹⁷ [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#).

28	Psychosocial Well-being: The feeling of being able to participate fully in the workplace without unwelcome conduct and to be able to speak up, take risks, and make mistakes without fear of negative consequences. ¹⁸
29	Remediate(ion): Restoration of person(s) or communities to a situation equivalent, or as close as possible, to the situation they would have been in had an adverse impact not occurred, including by financial or non-financial compensation and actions to prevent reoccurrence of the impact. ¹⁹
30	Respect: Avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts and address actual and potential adverse impacts the organization causes, contributes to, or is directly linked to. ²⁰
31	Risk(s): A measure of the severity of actual adverse impacts and of the likelihood and severity of potential adverse impacts.
32	Risk factor(s): Characteristics, conditions, or behaviors that increase the likelihood or severity of adverse impacts.
33	Severity: Scale, scope, or irremediable character of a potential adverse impact, taking into account its gravity, the number of potential or actual individuals affected, its irreversibility, and any limits on the ability to restore affected individuals to a situation equivalent to that prior to the impact within a reasonable period of time. ²¹
34	Shall: In this Standard the term “shall” indicates a requirement.
35	Stakeholder(s): Any individual or organization that may affect or be affected by a company’s actions and decisions. The primary focus is on affected or potentially affected stakeholders, meaning individuals whose human rights have been or may be affected by a company’s operations, products, or services. Relevant stakeholders include workers, communities, and their representatives,

¹⁸ Adapted from: Edmondson, Amy. “[Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams](#).” *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

¹⁹ Adapted from [OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector](#).

²⁰ Adapted from UNGPs.

²¹ Adapted from [OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector](#).

	including labor unions, civil society organizations, and others with experience and expertise related to business impacts on human rights. ²²
36	Top management: The group or individual(s) with authority to make financial and policy decisions for the organization. May or may not be the same as the top decision-making body.
37	Worker(s): All non-management personnel, including junior managers, crew leaders, or supervisors who have coordinating, not decision-making, authority and similar pay rates and benefits as other workers.
38	Workers' Organization(s): Worker-led organizations, including labor unions and advocacy groups, organized for the purpose of furthering and defending the rights and interests of workers, including through engagement with management.
39	<p>Work-Related Environment(s): A physical or virtual space where personnel work or are required to be present as a condition of their role or in order to meet the requirements of their role. Work-related environments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workstation or workplace; • Employer-provided and employer-subsidized housing; • Employer-provided transportation; • Online communication platforms used as part of personnel's work; • Public or external locations that personnel visit as part of their role; • Employer-provided recreation, changing, childcare, and dining areas; • Employer-provided sanitary facilities; • Spaces used by home-workers and remote workers; • And others.
40	Work-Related Person(s): Individuals that personnel may interact with in the context of their role, either at the place of work, while performing their role, or as part of their relationship with their employer. This includes all personnel, business partners (including clients, vendors, and service providers), and third-parties acting on behalf of the organization or management.

²² UNGPs.