



WageMap BACKGROUND

Round 2 Public Consultation



Our Launch Partners (selection)



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1. About WageMap



WageMap's mission is to support the achievement of living wages for workers globally, **drive alignment across living wage methodologies** and frameworks.

Core Priorities

1. Establish a Living Wage Reference Standard



Develop a universally accepted Living Wage Reference Standard method to calculate a living wage



Guide data providers, offer a foundation for creating incentives, and promote transparency in employer actions

2. Create an aggregated map of living wage estimates



Assess existing national and global living wage benchmarking methodologies against the living wage reference standard



Determine a single living wage estimate value that is most aligned with the Living Wage reference standard in a specific geography

Secondary Priorities

Build Living Wage Knowledge Hub

Expand the Global Movement

The Living Wage Data Problem

While progress on living wages has been made – WageMap seeks to tackle the following core issues...

Lack of Transparency

- There is a lack of transparency **in the differences between the methodologies.**
- This makes it challenging for actors to identify how estimates compare to one another.

Limited Comparability

- The **lack of a standardized and universally accepted method** to calculate a living wage.
- This **leads to market distortion** and disparities in compensation and working conditions.

Weak Implementation Capacity

- These factors have weakened implementation efforts as **actors across value chains use different living wage data, driving greater confusion.**

Founding member organizations

WageMap's six founding organizations are **leading living wage data and service providers** who came together in 2023 to try to address the data inconsistencies and confusion that are a major blockage in the living wage movement.



BSR is a sustainability and human rights organization that builds impactful multi-stakeholder collaborations and supports companies to establish living wage programs.



Creates public benchmarks across the U.S. and certifies U.S. employers that pay their workers and contractors a living wage based on real costs of living.



The research organization behind the UK Living Wage Foundation's cost-of-living number that also supports research teams globally to determine the true cost of living in decency.



Strategy consultancy firm with expertise across the full living income and living wage journey working to firm driving transitions towards sustainable economies in over 35 sectors and 45 countries.



UK accreditation scheme for over 14,000 recognized Living Wage Employers, including over half of the FTSE 100.



Global not-for profit organization. Co-creator of the WageIndicator Living Wage methodology. Publishes data and information to inform workers, trade unions, employers and policy makers to improve wage negotiations - in every country in the world, in national languages.

Funders

Launch Partners	Members	Sponsors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch partners provide a fixed, three-year financial commitment to enable the WageMap proposition to be put into practice. Current paying Launch Partners are Hershey, Mondelez, and an undisclosed partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members provide a fixed, three-year financial commitment to enable the WageMap proposition to be put into practice. WageMap's current paying Member is Target Corporation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsors provide a financial commitment determined on an individual basis to contribute to the WageMap activities. WageMap's current sponsors are ISS World, Bettys and Taylors of Harrogate, and an undisclosed partner (made public soon).
 		 

2. How does WageMap work?

Our Principles



Transparency: Share information, actions, decisions, and decision-making processes in a clear and accessible manner to all stakeholders involved.



Human Rights: Uphold the fundamental, universal, inalienable and indivisible rights that every person is entitled to.



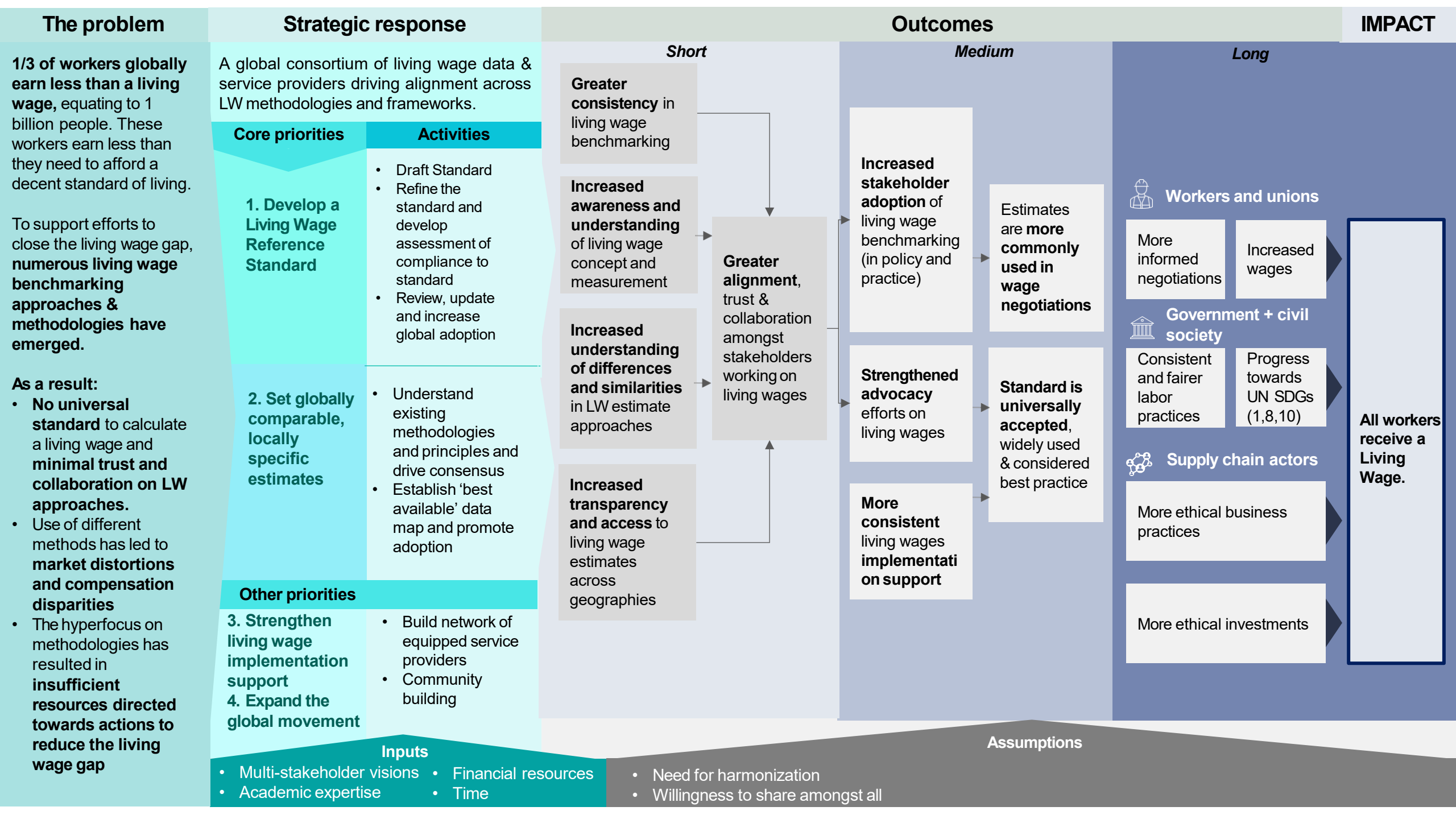
Evidence-Based Decision Making: Prioritize evidence-based insights in all decisions, minimizing political influences. Involve both external and internal experts to ensure a well-rounded perspective on each issue.



Multiple Perspectives: Consider multiple perspectives on any given topic or question to inform decisions. Ensure that the ultimate goal remains the guiding principle throughout the decision-making process.



Adherence to Academic Standards: Apply rigorous academic norms, such as the principle of hearing both sides (*audi alteram partem*), forming and revising hypotheses, and maintaining scholarly integrity.



Alignment with existing living wage efforts

There are many organizations that have established living wage methodologies and approaches to implementation.

The purpose of WageMap is to drive alignment across these platforms while also building on best practices.

WageMap remains open to additional members joining the consortium, actively consults other living wage organizations on the strategic vision, and references recommended practices generated by these organizations into the Living Wage Reference Standard. This should not be misinterpreted as implying these organizations have endorsed the WageMap effort. Rather, it is an acknowledgment of their independent work and a credit that we referenced this work in the standard creation from publicly available documentation.

Several contributors beyond the WageMap consortium include:



... in addition to local trade unions and community led initiatives

Building on ILO principles for a Living Wage

The Living Wage Reference Standard is designed to be in alignment with the ILO principles. As the ILO expands its guidance on living wage WageMap will continue to evolve the standard.

Definition

In line with the ILO Constitution and the Philadelphia Declaration, and consistent with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), **the ILO denotes that the concept of the living wage is:**

“the wage level that is necessary to afford a decent standard of living for workers and their families, taking into account the country circumstances and calculated for the work performed during the normal hours of work; calculated in accordance with the ILO’s principles of estimating the living wage, as outlined below; and to be achieved through the wage-setting process in line with ILO principles on wage setting.”

ILO Principles for living wage benchmarking

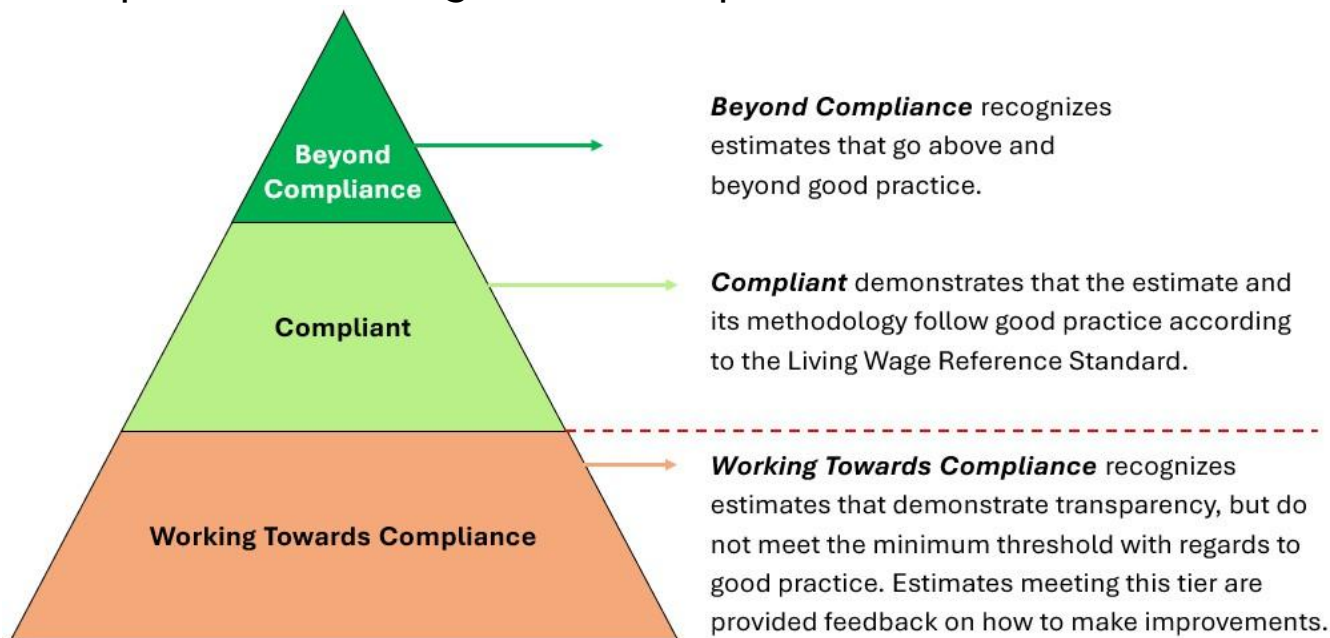
- Estimation of the **needs of workers and their families** through **evidence-based methodologies**;
- **Consultation with representative employers’ and workers’ organizations** on living wage estimates and **involvement of social partners** throughout their development, with a view to ensuring **national and/or local ownership**;
- **Transparency**, including details with regard to data sources and methods of processing, that are open to scrutiny, are comprehensive and replicable;
- Robustness of the data in terms of **representativeness and transparent data collection** methods;
- **Timely** public availability of the estimates, data and methodologies;
- Specification on whether estimates are gross or net, namely **whether items such as social security contributions are included or not**;
- **Regular adjustments** to consider changes in the cost of living and the patterns of consumption;
- quality control, including sound technical review, validation, as well as periodic review for continuous improvements;
- **Promotion of gender equality** and non-discrimination;
- Consideration of the **regional or local context** and socio-economic and cultural realities.

3. What is the Living Wage Reference Standard?

What is the Living Wage Reference Standard?

Definition

The Living Wage Reference Standard is a document which can be used to assess living wage estimates according to three categories containing quality criteria: Beyond Compliant, Compliant and Working Towards Compliance*.



Purpose

Create a universally accepted 'Standard' that:

- ✓ Provides greater consistency, clarity and alignment on approaches to living wage estimation
- ✓ Guides methodology owners about good practices, and
- ✓ Increases credibility and transparency of employer initiatives on living wages.

Contents of the Standard – Part 1 [Overarching Frameworks]

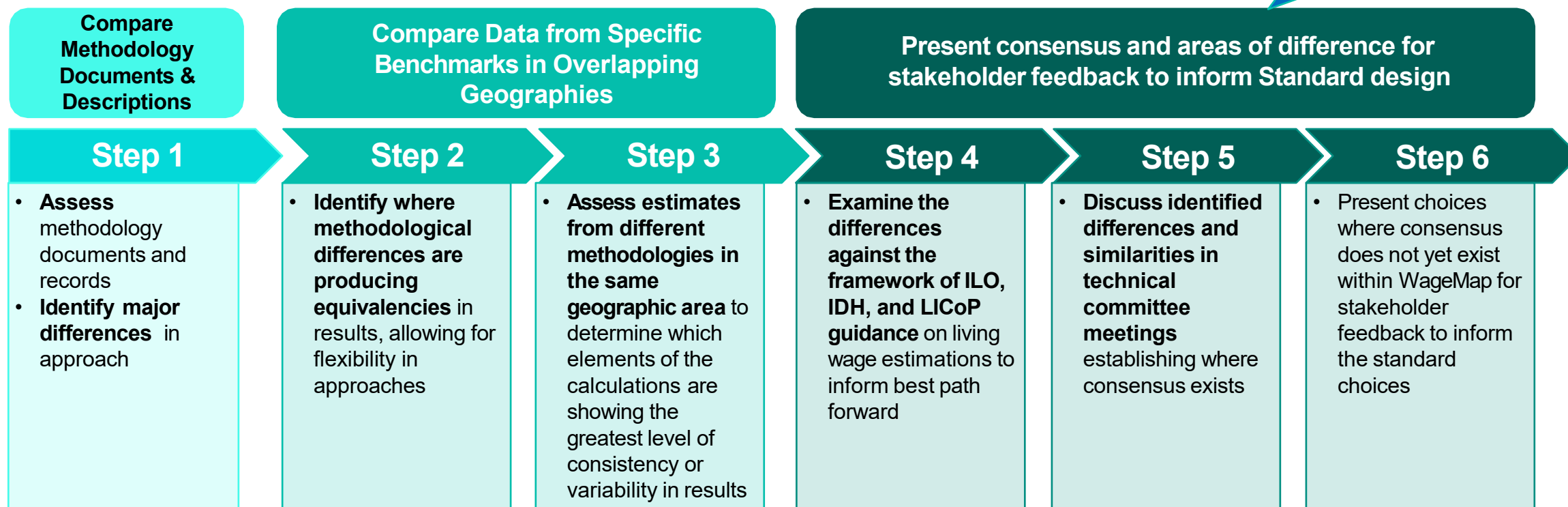
Section	Overview
Data collection and Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data Collection and Sharing• Academic Rigor – Survey-based Data and Focus Groups• Transparency• Conflict of Interest• Representative Data
Geographic scope and Timing of estimates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geographic Scope• Quality Control• Local Input of Ownership• Migrant Labor• Timing for Updates of Data
Family size, Number of workers per family and Working hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family Household Size – General• Family Size – Number of Adults and Children• Number of Workers Per Family• Working Hours
Accounting for public Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicability of Public Benefits• Accessibility of Public Benefits• Accounting for Public Benefits

Contents of the Standard – Part 2 [Items on Cost of Living]

Section	Overview
Nutritious Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition • Variability of Diet • Price Collection
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Size • Rent vs. Home Ownership • Utilities, Furnishings, Insurance, Maintenance and Repairs, Taxes, and Mandatory Services Charges
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Collection and Transparency – General
Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Timely Childcare Payment • Elder Care / Retirement
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Transportation
Other Categories (COICOP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics • Clothing and Footwear • Furnishings, Household Equipment and Routine Household Maintenance • Information and Communication • Recreation, Sport and Culture • Education Services
Savings for Special or Emergency Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount Included
Mandatory Deductions from Pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth and Specificity

How have we developed the Standard?

We are here



Methodologies and estimates reviewed in comparative analysis – Using publicly available or shared data and details

Alberta Living Wage Network	Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives	Living Wage Ireland	NewForesight
Anker Methodology	ILO Methodology	Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand	Ontario Living Wage Network
Anker Reference Values	Institut de recherche et d'informations socio-economiques	Loughborough University	Seoul Metropolitan Council
Area Metropolitana de Barcelona	Living Wage for Families BC	MIT Living Wage Calculator	UK Living Wage Foundation
Asia Floor Wage	Living Wage For Us	National University of Singapore	WageIndicator Foundation

4. How will the Standard be applied?

How are methodologies evaluated?

WageMap has developed a draft methodology to evaluate living wage estimates and their methodologies. To evaluate these methodologies, WageMap will work with separate organizations and individual contributors (see Evaluators).

1. Assess methodology against questions in Standard

- To ensure evaluations are as clear and consistent as possible, we've adopted a **binary approach** – each criterion is scored as **Met** or **Not Met**.
- This binary approach eliminates ambiguity and allows users to quickly understand whether a requirement has been fulfilled.

2. Conduct overall assessment against quality criteria

- The framework is organized into structured categories – **Working towards compliant, Compliant, Beyond Compliance** – with each tied to a specific set of yes/no questions.
- We've developed scoring templates to illustrate how this approach works in real assessments.



1. Data Collection and Transparency – 1. : Data Collection and Sharing - General

Working towards requirements

Is data IDH-aligned?

Does the estimate rely on data sources accepted by IDH (i.e., field-level research, representative online surveys, national statistics, and/or modeling—but not modeling alone or self-selected online surveys)?

Met
Not met
N/A

Is data ILO-aligned?

Does the methodology reflect the ILO principle of estimating the needs of workers and their families through evidence-based approaches?

Met
Not met
N/A

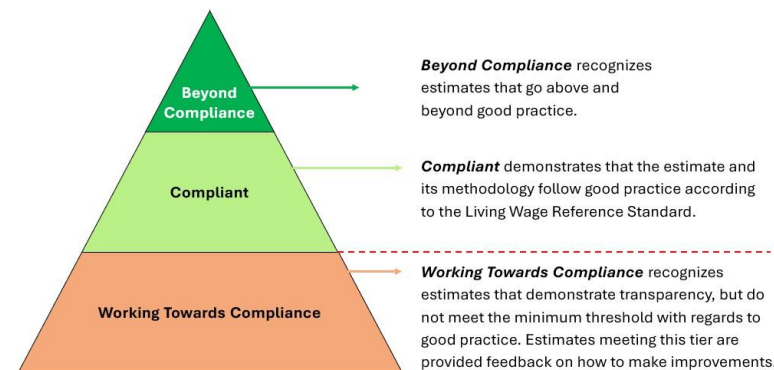
Compliant Requirements

Is data collection variability documented across estimates?

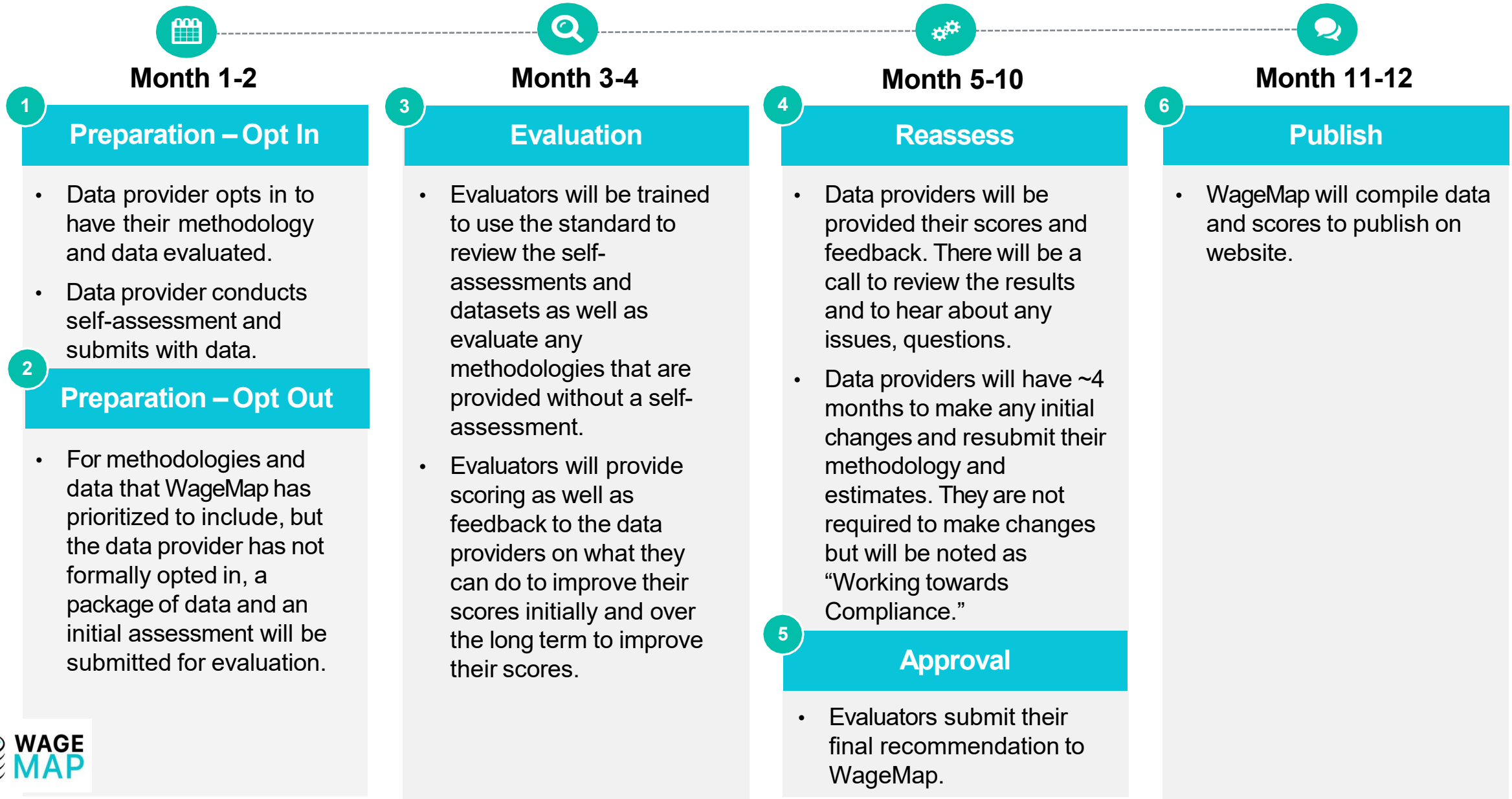
Are differences in methods (e.g., skipped fieldwork, varying sample sizes) clearly documented across different locations or studies?

Met
Not met
N/A

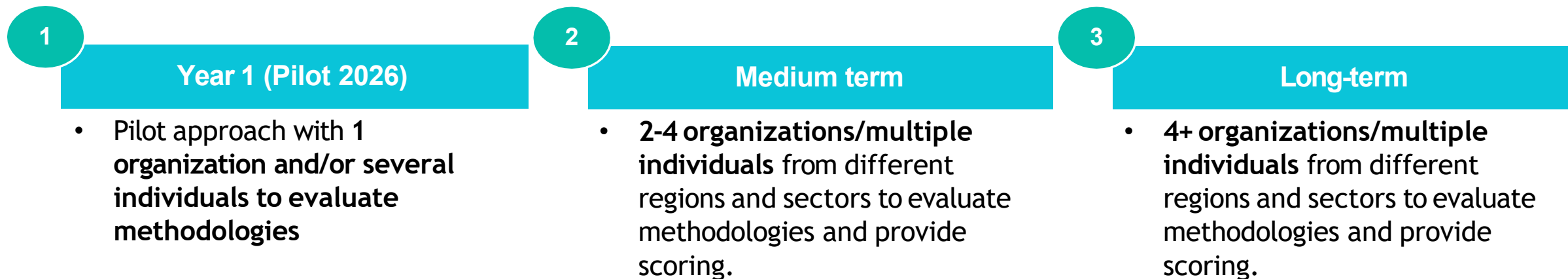
Example



Potential Evaluation Journey for Living Wage Estimates

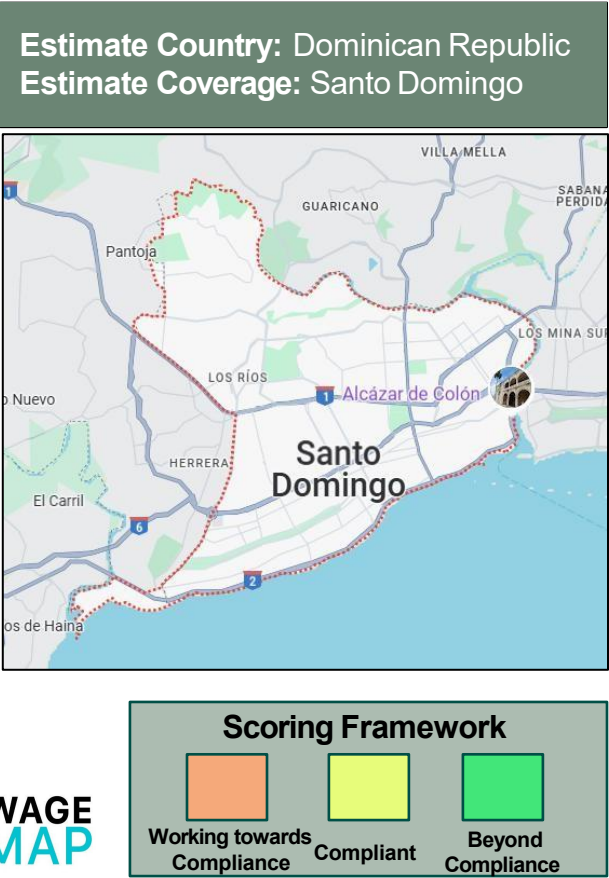


A Phased Implementation Approach for Evaluating Estimates*



Results of Assessments: WageMap Aggregated Data Map

The core output is a publicly available aggregated data map* of globally comparable, locally specific, living wage estimates. Estimates will be assessed at the regional estimate level, with each sub-national estimate evaluated independently. The example below shows how three different estimates could be visualized based on 1) how the data provider chooses to ‘opt-in’ to have their estimates disclosed and 2) how estimate’s methodology aligns with the standard.



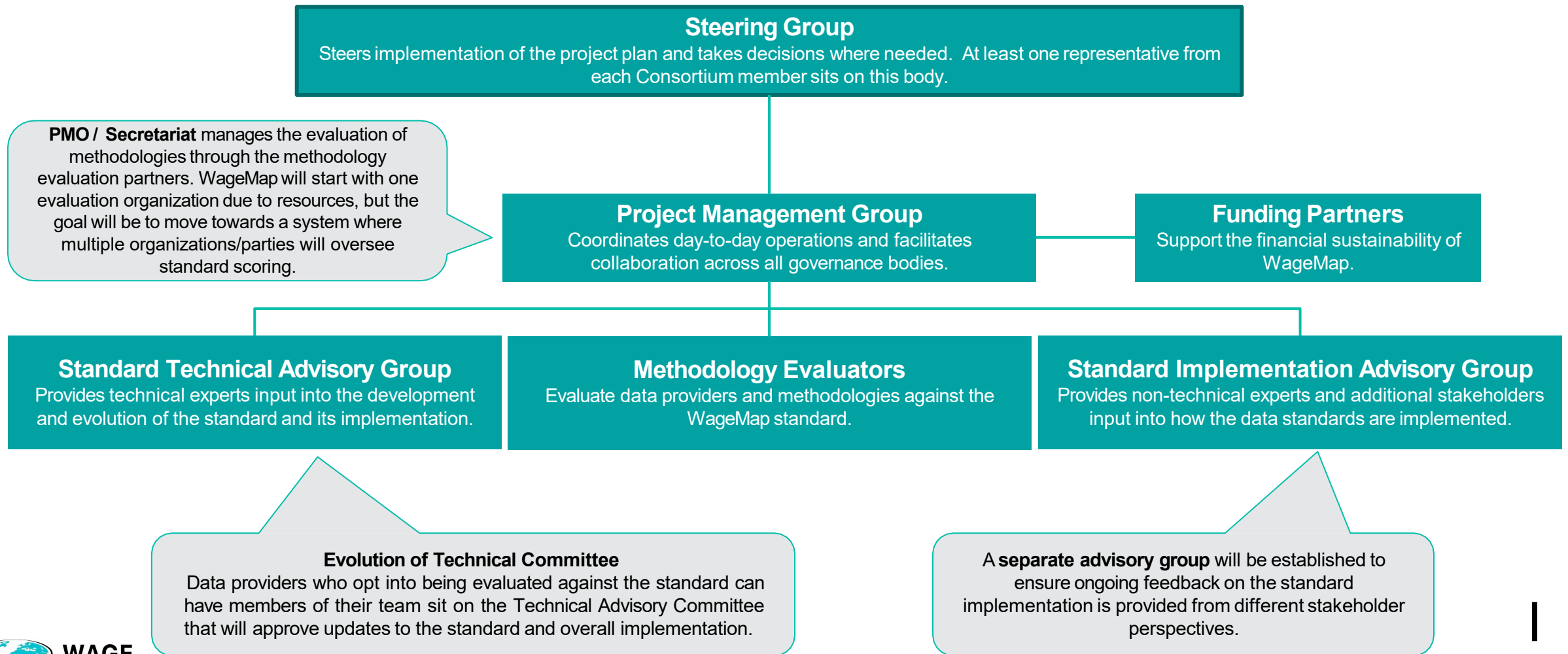
	Full Opt-in	Partial Opt-in	No Active Opt-in
<div><div>Living Wage Reference Standard Categories and Scoring</div><div>This standard is used as a point of comparison. The most aligned living wage estimation is provided along with the associated data below</div></div>	<div><div></div>Living Wage Methodology 1 Estimate: 15.35 DOP/hour Estimate Year: 2024 Evaluation: Link: Website</div>	<div><div></div>Living Wage Methodology 2 Estimate: See public site (link) Estimate Year: 2024 Evaluation: Link: Website</div>	<div><div></div>Living Wage Methodology 3 Estimate: See website Estimate Year: 2024 Evaluation: Link: Website</div>
<div>The scoring below is illustrative only, showing two of six subcategories within the first category. The final version would include scoring across all categories.</div>			
Data Collection and Transparency			
Data Collection and Sharing			
Academic Rigor – Survey-based Data			
Academic Rigor – Focus Groups			
Transparency			
Conflict of Interest			
Representative Data			
Geographic Scope and Timing			
Geographic Scope			

*WageMap continues to explore different ways to visualize their data map and welcomes feedback on the proposed concept.

6. How will WageMap operate in the long-term?

WageMap Proposed Governance (~2027 Onwards)

WageMap is preparing to evolve its governance and its stakeholder engagement approach after the first round of pilot data is launched. The following model is subject to change based on feedback.



A range of key stakeholder groups will interact with the Standard

WageMap is preparing to evolve its governance and its stakeholder engagement approach after the first round of pilot data is launched. The following model is subject to change based on feedback.

DATA PROVIDERS:

Organizations that generate or maintain living wage estimate data

DATA USERS:

Employers or other entities that use Living Wage data to inform their living wage efforts

METHODOLOGY EVALUATORS:

Individual organizations or collaborators trained to evaluate living wage estimates

KEY PARTNERS:

Non-profit organizations, unions, international organizations, governments

Living Wage Reference Standard

Methodology evaluators

Individual organizations or collaborators trained to evaluate living wage estimates

Use case

Methodology evaluators will review self-assessments and estimate methodologies against the Living Wage Reference Standard and provide scoring*.

Methodology evaluators will:

- be **separate organizations** from data providers themselves.
- **provide objectivity** in the evaluation of different methodologies.
- **operate independently** in evaluating and scoring methodologies and will report to the Project Management Office.

Engagement approach

WageMap is currently meeting with potential methodology evaluators and will be using the insights from the 2nd public consultation period to inform the overall engagement approach with potential partners.

Data Providers

Voluntary network of data providers who opt in to collaborate with WageMap

Use case

To fulfill its mission of advancing alignment and transparency across living wage estimate methodologies, WageMap aims to build a collaborative community of Data Providers – working together to strengthen the Living Wage Reference Standard and enhance its value for those contributing to and using the data.

Engagement approach

Data Providers can choose to share their living wage estimates (or just have a link to their website) and participate directly in WageMap's evaluation and engagement activities. Providers that choose to have their estimates evaluated will:

- **Receive recognition** as official contributors
- Nominate **representatives to participate in WageMap's Technical Advisory Board**
- Provide **feedback on methodology** alignment and scoring processes
- **Stay informed of developments**, revisions, and expectations around data validation and standard alignment.

Data users

Employers or other entities that use Living Wage data to inform their living wage efforts

Use case

WageMap was created to make it easier for Data Users to implement living wages. WageMap aims to offer solutions for employers, unions, civil society and even governments. WageMap will continue to strive to support data users through providing:

- **Transparent, easy-to-use, reliable** living wage data
- **Clarity and standardization** on how to evaluate and implement living wages

Engagement approach

As WageMap explores how to establish a sustainable model to maintain the ongoing evaluations of estimates and its platform, it will continue to engage Data Users so it can create offerings that meet their needs.

WageMap appreciates all employers who participated and provided feedback in the 1st Public Consultation in Oct/Nov 2024.

Key partners

Non-profit organizations, unions, international organizations, governments

Use case

- WageMap is built upon multiple attempts by different parties to find a solution to the living wage data problem. WageMap works with many of these stakeholders and engages with others to strengthen the approach and overall movement. WageMap stakeholders include:
 - Workers and Unions
 - Employers and Employer Organizations
 - Businesses and Investors
 - Governments
 - Platforms and Multi-stakeholder Initiatives

Engagement approach

WageMap is grateful to have received feedback and insights from numerous contributors as part of:

- Regular check-ins with key organizations
- Specialized focus groups during public consultation sessions
- Collaboration on evaluation and implementation

Long-term model must address costs of collecting data

WageMap recognizes that to be able to provide easily understandable living wage data, living wage Data Providers must be able to sustain their work. **WageMap aims to work iteratively on its 'publicly available aggregated data map' to drive progress while working collaboratively within the living wage movement to address this challenge.**

Data-users want:

Easily accessible,
understandable, transparent,
affordable living wage data

Data providers want:

To be able to *sustain the ongoing costs* of collecting and providing data

Key Challenge:

Understand and support
the costs of providing
Living Wage data

6. What is the consultation process?

Public Consultation Process

WageMap is dedicated to getting stakeholder input from across different regions, stakeholder groups and channels. It is hosting **two rounds of public consultation as well as a round of targeted feedback** to garner final insights before **launching in November 2025 at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights**.

1	Round 1 Public Stakeholder Consultation Nov – Dec 2024	2	Round 2 Public Stakeholder Engagement Consultation July – August 2025	3	Targeted Final Feedback Sept – Oct 2025
Engagement results: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6 webinars• 122 organizations• 36 countries• 150 individuals• 53 survey responses		Stakeholder groups consulted <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Methodology owners• Certification bodies• Civil society, NGOs, INGOs• Local living wage networks• Research institutes• Unions/Labour movement• Governments• Industry groups• Corporates• Funders		Consultation Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback on the draft Living Wage Reference Standard• Feedback on draft WageMap Background document• Share progress and feedback from Round 1	
		Planned engagements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online focus group series for 'underrepresented' groups (e.g. unions and local movements)• Online Survey, open to all• 1-2-1 interviews & conversations for key stakeholders		Planned engagements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online focus groups with key stakeholder groups• Follow up on specific issues that need greater expertise and further discussion• Address scoring and implementation guidance	

Decision making structure

You can find the WageMap Standard Development and Revision Procedure [in this link](#).

This document specifies the procedure to be followed by WageMap for the development of any new WageMap standards, such as the Living Wage Reference Standard, and when substantive changes to existing WageMap standards are required to be made.

Contact us

To follow up or for broader questions, please address communication to the Project Management Office:



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If you're familiar with any collaborating organizations and wish to discuss this project, please reach out to their designated lead contact for communication:



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