

Need More Help?

(Version October 1st, 2021)

Do you have questions while using the Salary Matrix? On this page you can find commonly asked questions. Don't see your question? Send an email with your question to LivingWageMatrix@idhtrade.org.

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Practical Tips

Overall:

- Every tab has a “save as draft” at the bottom of the page. If you want to check another tab while you are working on entering data, or you want to complete the tab at another moment, always use the “save as draft” button. If you leave the tab or switch tabs without saving, everything you entered on the tab will be deleted.
- You must press “save and next” to make the data entered on a tab final and input for the calculations in the Salary Matrix. Use this button when you are sure you finished the full task on the tab and are ready to proceed.
- In case of numerical entries with decimals, please use “.” (dot) instead of “,” (comma) in every case.
- If you encounter unexplained errors, we recommend first refreshing the tool by clicking the two-way arrows in the top right corner. If the problem continues, kindly send us an email (LivingWageMatrix@idhtrade.org) which includes any possible screen capture of the error, the language in which you are using the tool, and your browser. If you do not know your browser, you can visit WhatIsMyBrowser.com.

Tab 1 Basic information:

- Facility ID: please use the ID you have received from your buyer. If you didn’t receive an ID please ask your buyer or consult with IDH at LivingWageMatrix@idhtrade.org.
- GPS must be entered according to the format of this example: 34.233458,-42.322328 (and no spacing is allowed).
- Make sure you finished tab 1 (“save and next”) before proceeding to tab 2.

Tab 2 Product information:

- If you enter Fairtrade International (‘Fairtrade FloCert’) under certifications, an additional field will be created asking for the total amount per year that workers receive of the Fairtrade premium. If you don’t know this amount please fill in ‘0’ (zero). **Attention:** *you have to manually adjust the 0 that is automatically entered by the system.*
- In the “length of season” box, please indicate how many months or weeks in the season. Please include non-productive seasons as separate seasons *if 1 or more workers are employed during the non-productive time.*
- If a product or variety is not available in the product drop-down list, choose the selection that most closely matches your product, or is the most significant variety if you produce several varieties. In the “Description” box, you can enter the details of the product and additional varieties. **Attention:** *if you produce different varieties of a product, and a variety has a different workforce or worker payment structure, then you should complete a separate Salary Matrix for that variety. If the variety has the same workforce and payment structure, the same Salary Matrix should be used.*
- Use the “Description” box to describe your payroll systems in as much detail as possible within the 2000 characters allowable. Please follow the order as listed below. For example, this is the place to:
 - a) Mention if workers are listed individually instead of using job categories because, for example, they perform a variety of different tasks each with different payment structures.
 - b) Indicate if the Salary Matrix covers multiple facilities under one centralized management system, where conditions are exactly the same of all facilities.

- c) List the different types of working arrangements found at the facility – e.g., part-time, seasonal, full-time, casual workers (e.g., employed short-term to meet a certain need in the moment); or on-site workers employed by a service provider (e.g., cleaners, guards).
- d) Indicate whether overtime pay is provided, and at what hour overtime begins.
- e) Indicate if and what type of paid leave time is provided, and to which category of workers.

Tab 3 HR information:

- First thing you do in this tab: check the currency (top right). This will be automatically filled, based on your country. In case you would like to change the currency, you have to do it before you enter any values in the Salary Matrix, since it will not auto-convert the values.
- In this section, you will be asked to select work areas and identify job categories for your workforce. Each job category for the Salary Matrix should only include workers that more or less work the same number hours per week and days per year, receive the same rate of pay and bonuses, and have the same benefits available to them. If a job category can have more than one type of worker, then you should create a separate job category for each. For example, let's say that Facility X has a work area called 'Field', and in this work areas they hire fruit pickers. Facility X has year-round fruit pickers, but they also hire seasonal pickers for peak production months and for the most productive days will hire additional casual labour pickers from the surrounding community. In this scenario, Facility X would list each type of picker as a separate job category. For example, Job category 1 might be called 'full-time pickers'; job category 2 might be called 'seasonal pickers'; and job category 3 might be called 'casual pickers'.

Tab 4 Wages per season:

- In case a job category is not used/active in a specific season you have to enter in all boxes for that job category and season a '0' (zero)
- The Salary Matrix asks for "Average total hours/day" and "Average total hours/week". Please enter the actual, total documented hours worked, excluding paid overtime, rather than the standard or legal number of regular hours per workweek (e.g., 40, 45 or 48).
- The Salary Matrix asks for "Amount Paid Per Unit". Please enter the average base rate paid, excluding overtime pay and bonuses (bonuses will be entered later).

Tab 5 Bonuses:

- Bonuses here refer to both bonuses and allowances. If workers receive cash allowances in lieu of benefits, and the worker can use spend that allowance in any way they choose (even though it might be meant for a specific purpose), then the cash allowance should be added to this tab, under "other bonuses".
- Only Bonuses received during standard working hours can be counted toward a living wage. Therefore, please only enter the amounts earned or received during a standard workweek, and not during overtime periods. A standard workweek is the legal standard or 48 hours, whichever is lower.
- Deferred payments, such as pensions, college funds and severance pay are not valued toward a living wage. Neither are loans that must be repaid. This is based on the Living Wage Principle that workers should be able to earn a wage sufficient to meet a basic, decent standard of living within a calendar year without needing to take out loans. They should also be able to plan for the year. The one instance where pensions, severance and other similar payments may be counted is when employers contribute an amount beyond what is legally required AND workers can access to those funds every year, with no penalties, interest payments, or limitations

on how the money is spent. In these cases, the amount contributed by the employer beyond the legal requirement may be counted. Please see the General Questions section for more principles and rules related to bonuses.

Tab 6 In-kind benefit:

- When estimating the value of in-kind benefits, please use the cost to the employer for providing the benefit to workers and their nuclear families. If the in-kind benefit is used by other community members, then the cost to the employer should be divided by the number of total users and then multiplied by the number of workers that are benefiting. For example, if the employer maintains and operates a health clinic in the community. The total cost of the health clinic to the employer should be divided by the number of households that have access to the clinic, and then multiplied by the number of workers that benefit from the clinic.
- In order for in-kind benefits to be counted/valued toward a living wage, the benefit must be accepted and valued by workers. It must also adhere to the elements of a living wage, per the living wage definition – food and water, family housing, healthcare, education, transportation and clothing – and must cover a basic cost of living as identified in the living wage benchmark. Learn more about the eligibility requirements for different in-kind benefits in the 'General Questions' section below.

Tab 7 Job categories that receive in-kind benefits:

- In the preceding tab (in-kind benefits 1) you have entered the total number of workers that benefit from an in-kind benefit. In this tab that total number has to be split per job category. If the totals in both tabs do not match, the tool will give an alert. You cannot save the data in that case. In order to prevent you from losing any data entered in this tab, it is recommended to note down the totals of workers per in-kind benefit as entered on the preceding tab, so you can do the checks without having to switch back and forth (and risk losing the data you entered).

Tab 8 Create report:

- Please note that when you click on “Submit Salary Matrix”, it is no longer possible to make changes to the data. The data is sent to the server for calculation from that point and can no longer be adjusted.

General Questions

Where can I use the Salary Matrix?

The Salary Matrix has been tested in over a dozen countries and is ready to be used in any country. Most currencies can be used by selecting from the drop-down list.

Is the Salary Matrix suitable for my sector?

The Salary Matrix was tested in several sectors: tea, coffee, pineapples, avocados, bananas and flowers and most agricultural sectors can be easily included. Ongoing testing with manufacturing and production is being completed and further changes will make efforts to better reflect those sectors.

For what purposes can I use my Salary Matrix?

The Salary Matrix is a helpful managerial tool that can help you:

Calculate current remuneration including bonuses and in-kind benefits.

Compare against living wage benchmarks.

Unveil barriers and find solutions together with your buyers.

Track and trace yearly progress over time in your journey toward living wages.

Support your work with certification programs that are introducing requirements on living wages.

Help those that represent workers to discuss living wage gaps and possible solutions with employers.

Work with other facilities and supply chains to raise awareness in your entire sector.

Who developed this tool and when?

Read more about the history of the Salary Matrix [here](#).

How is this Salary Matrix version 1 different from this digital version 2?

Read more about the history of the Salary Matrix [here](#).

Who will be able to see the information that I will enter into this tool?

IDH will be the only organization with access to your data and we will keep this information under strict confidentiality as indicated in the disclaimer when you registered for the use of this tool. IDH is an international organization that seeks to improve and scale up sustainable production & trade to deliver large scale impact on the Sustainable Development Goals. The information entered in the online version of the Salary Matrix will help IDH plan activities to address living wage gaps with companies that produce, trade and purchase products in priority value chains. As a user of the Salary Matrix, all the information you provide will be anonymous (your name and the name of your company will not be tied to the answers) and will not be shared with anyone other than members of our living wage team at IDH. IDH will use aggregated information (not individual data) to analyze living wage gaps, trends and progress in a given region/country or supply chains/sectors but will never disclose any individual data associated with a given user. IDH will store your answers and location details for a maximum of 10 years in order to be able to follow up at a later stage.

Should statutory deductions from pay be included in the Salary Matrix?

No. Statutory deductions from pay are already accounted for in the living wage benchmark. When benchmarks are calculated, first the necessary take home value is measured, then this value is adjusted to consider taxes and deductions—what we call the gross living wage benchmark. Read more on our [website](#). Because taxes and statutory deductions are already accounted for in the gross living wage benchmark, there is no need to also consider it in the calculation of current wages, otherwise it would be counted twice.

Matrix Dashboard

Why aren't all of my Salary Matrices showing up in my dashboard?

In the Dashboard, you can select to view all Salary Matrices in progress or those that are completed. Most recently edited Salary Matrices are visible on the first page.

Basic Information

What is the Facility ID?

The facility ID is an automatically generated code specifically assigned to your facility to enable you to identify it more easily.

What is the GPS location and how can I find mine in the right format to enter it into the tool?

The GPS location refers to the specific GPS coordinates for your facility. The coordinates should be entered in DD (decimal degrees) format, as opposed to DMS (degrees, minutes, seconds). If you need to convert from DMS to DD, you can use one of many online converters, such as [this one](#).

Product Information

I produce multiple products at my facility. How can I select more than one product?

If you require a product-specific analysis, and have a multi-product facility, you will need to generate one Salary Matrix for each product. However, if you are interested in simply analyzing remuneration

and living wage gaps in your facility as a whole, select one of the products you produce from the drop-down menus. This will allow you to move forward with the data entry.

What does “Unit of Production” mean?

“Unit of Production” refers to the units that are used to measure total production. For example, this could be pounds, kilograms, items, etc.

Why do I get an additional field to indicate the portion of premium that workers receive if I choose Fairtrade as the type of certification my facility has? How do I get such value?

In the Fairtrade system, premiums are sometimes used for collective purposes and other times are distributed to individual workers. The Salary Matrix is concerned only with the amount that is directly provided to the workers. Only enter this information if you know it. It is important to make sure that this premium amount is not counted in the wage data section of the Salary Matrix. Fairtrade Premium is a meaningful instrument that provides added value to workers and their families as income supplement, particularly in cases where economic conditions have not allowed employers to close the gap with a living wage. Since Premium is not an official part of wages, nor an element in collective bargaining processes, it is not a permanent solution to make up for living wage gaps. However, it contributes to income improvements and as such is a valuable income supplement and adds value to livelihood needs of workers.

What does “Seasons” refer to and why is this relevant?

“Season” refers to different times of the year during which production increases or decreases. In some cases, there may be only one season, where production remains fairly constant. In other cases, there may be seasons of high production and low production, and/or seasons of *no* production. The number of seasons indicated in this section will determine the number of seasons for which wage information must be entered.

What does “Length of the Season” mean and why is this relevant?

This refers to the number of weeks or months in each production season. You will be asked to enter the month or week when each season begins, and then indicate the number of months or weeks that each season lasts (“Length of Season”). This is important for calculating the average monthly wage. Wages per season are weighted based on the length of the season. It is important to indicate each season, even “no production” seasons, *if* 1 or more employees are hired during that time period.

What do I need to do if we do not have different production seasons in my facility or sector?

Enter ‘1’ if your production does not vary throughout the year.

HR Information

How is the currency type generated and can I change it to another one different from the one automatically displayed?

The currency is automatically generated based on the country indicated in the ‘Basic Information’ section. If you prefer to use a different currency, you can change it using the ‘Select Currency’ drop-down menu in the ‘HR Information’ section.

What are “Work Areas”?

“Work Areas” are the places where different jobs take place, such as an agricultural field, a packaging area, and office, or a certain station within a factory. Each Salary Matrix can include up to 4 “Work Areas”; however, it is not necessary to have more than one.

What are “Job Categories”?

“Job Categories” consist of workers that do the same task, are paid the same rate per unit, are paid in the same manner, and receive the same in-kind benefits. New job categories should be created if workers are paid differently, if their average working hours or seasons are different, or if they receive different in-kind benefits, even if the task performed is the same. Be sure that all job categories have a unique name. For example, ‘packer1’ and ‘packer2’.

What do I need to do if I cannot find a work area that exist in my facility in the drop-down menu for work areas?

If you do not find a “Work Area” that is a good fit, simply select “other” from the drop-down menu.

Why do I need to separate men and women for each job category?

This allows for gender-specific analysis. Importantly, it helps identify any income gaps that may be unique to women or men.

I don’t use job categories but only have individual workers. How can I enter my data?

It is common to record wage data per person. Data collected per person can be easily included in the Salary Matrix by including each individual in the job category space. Simply indicate the correct gender by putting a 1 in either men or women category and continue as normal.

If I decide to enter all workers individually in the Salary Matrix, instead of job categories, do I need to list people by name?

No. Please do not list people by name. We recommend that you assign each worker an internal code (a unique number for example) beforehand and use those codes in this tool.

Bonuses

How do I know if a given bonus can or cannot be entered into the Salary Matrix? What characteristics must they have to be eligible?

In order for a bonus to be eligible, it must be a regularly provided bonus and must be additional to what is required by law. The bonus must be expected by the workers at the start of the season, and not be at the discretion of the employer. The worker must be able to anticipate the amount of the bonus that she/he is entitled to. The bonus must be paid in cash. Profit sharing is not allowed. Deferred payments are not allowed. The principles guiding the Salary Matrix are drawn from the Anker Methodology. More information on how the Anker Methodology approaches in-kind benefits can be found here:

<https://www.elgaronline.com/view/9781786431455/chapter15.xhtml>

Example of qualifying bonus that doesn’t change: Workers in Job Category A receive a holiday bonus every year. The bonus is always 10% of the workers annual wages.

Example of qualifying bonus that does change: Production, quality and attendance bonuses can vary from day to day. However, the rates and the conditions of the bonuses do not vary and are understood by workers ahead of time.

Example of a non-qualifying bonus: At the end of last year, the facility decided to give all workers a surprise bonus equal to 10% of their wages.

Example of partially-qualifying bonus: Workers are given productivity bonuses that vary depending on available resources, but are guaranteed to be no less than 5% of wages when productivity targets are met. Productivity targets are met every year, but were exceeded in this year. In this case, the qualifying bonus is 5% only.

Example of a non-eligible bonus (legal requirement): An employer provides a severance package for workers, but the workers are able to access the account at any time, and can spend the monies in any way they choose without interest or penalties. The severance package is a national legal requirement.

Example of a eligible bonus (addition to legal requirement): An employer provides a severance package for workers. The employer contributes 10% more than what is legally required AND the workers are able to access the account at any time, and can spend the monies in any way they choose without interest or penalties. The severance package is a national legal requirement. **In this case, as long as workers can access and spend the money freely, as described, the 10% contribution over the legal requirement can be included as a bonus in the Salary Matrix.**

How should I calculate bonuses?

Enter the actual average bonus amounts received per job category for a full reference year (and note the year in the Salary Matrix). Use the same year for wages, bonuses and in-kind benefits.

We provide low-interest loans which are a benefit to the workers. Can I include these?

No. Loans are not eligible. Workers need to be able to meet the costs of a basic but decent standard of living in a given year, and year on year, without needing to rely on loans.

Can we include vouchers as bonuses, and if so, how?

Vouchers can only be included as bonuses if the vouchers are essentially the same as cash and can be used to cover any cost that the worker chooses (e.g., housing, recreation, food, etc.). *(See in-kind benefits for further guidance on the use of vouchers)*

What are 13th and 14th month bonuses?

In some countries, the law dictates that employers must pay workers one additional month's salary, beyond the 12 calendar months, which is equal to their average monthly salary (the 13th month). In some countries, the law dictates that two additional month's salary be paid (13th and 14th month). These are counted as bonuses in the Salary Matrix for those countries.

I provide a 13th and 14th month bonus. How do I include both of these benefits?

All bonuses that meet the requirements may be included in the bonus category. In many cases, both 13th and 14th month bonuses are provided. If both bonuses are provided, the yearly amounts can be added together and included in the bonus column.

What are performance and quality bonuses?

Performance bonuses are bonus provided to workers for achieving certain performance targets. For example, a worker might receive a bonus for attendance, or for achieving certain productivity or sustainability targets. Quality bonuses are typically given to workers for achieving a certain product quality. For example, a worker might receive a quality bonus for delivering unblemished fruit.

What are holiday bonuses?

Holiday bonuses are bonuses that are provided annually during a specific holiday season.

Can Fairtrade Premiums that go directly to workers be included as a bonus?

No, Fairtrade Premiums should not be included as bonuses as these are dependent on maintaining certification and can vary by overall production of a facility. However, Fairtrade premiums will be able to be graphed in the Salary Matrix results to show how they contribute to workers compensation.

Wages per Season

What are wages per season?

This is the gross amount of regular pay – not including bonuses, premiums or in-kind benefits – that a worker receives during that production season. Please see, “Tab 3 HR Information” above for more information on how to enter data when the number of workers in a job category vary by season.

What are “Units”?

“Units” are what worker pay is based on. For example, a worker may be paid by the number of boxes they pack or the number of shirts that they iron. The units would then be “boxes” or “shirts” respectively. Other workers are paid by the hour or day. Others are paid based on a flat monthly or annual salary.

What does “amount paid per unit” mean?

This is the amount of money that a worker receives for the unit indicated. For example, if a worker is paid \$2 per box, enter \$2.

How do I proceed when the amount paid per unit varies per client or per season?

The amount paid per unit should reflect what the worker receives. If the amount paid to the worker per unit varies depending on the client, calculate a weighted average pay per unit. For example, if Client A typically buys 25% of boxes and pays \$3 per box and Client B typically buys 75% of boxes and pays \$2 a box, the weighted average pay per unit to the worker would be \$2,25.

How do I proceed in cases where workers are paid based on time (hour, day, month) worked instead of per finalized physical units?

Simply select the unit of time (e.g., hour, day, week or month).

How do I proceed in cases where workers perform multiple tasks during the day all paid against different units?

In this case, it is recommended to enter each worker individually into the Salary Matrix, instead of using grouped job categories.

How do I calculate the “average number of units completed per day” if I am using job categories that include multiple workers?

For each worker in the job category, divide the total number of units completed by the worker during the season by the total number of days that they worked during that season, excluding paid overtime. This gives you the average number of units per day completed by the worker. Next, add the average number of units per day completed by each worker during the season and then divide by the total number of workers in the job category.

How do I calculate the “average number of hours worked per day” and the “average number of hours worked per week” for a given job category that includes multiple workers?

For each worker in the job category, divide the total number of hours worked during the season (excluding paid overtime hours) by the number of days that they worked during the season. This gives you the average number of hours worked per day by the worker. Next, add the average number of hours per day completed by each worker during the season, and divide by the total number of workers in the job category. This gives you the average number of hours worked per day by workers in the job category. Take a similar approach to calculate the average number of hours worked per week.

How does the Salary Matrix calculate remuneration for part-time workers?

The digital Salary Matrix enables users to estimate what would be the total remuneration that a part-time worker would make if they were to work full time by prorating their remuneration to 48 hours

per week and 26 days per month, or whatever threshold the local legislation stipulates as the regular work schedule.

How do I calculate average hours worked for job categories that work longer days but with a period of time on followed by an equal period of time off (e.g., 12 hours a day for 4 days followed by 4 days off)?

A monthly average is acceptable to use in this case.

In-kind Benefits

How do I know if a given in-kind benefit can or cannot be entered into the Salary Matrix? What characteristics must they have to be eligible?

Only certain in-kind benefits are counted toward a living wage (see the following question for a list of qualifying benefits). To be eligible, these benefits must be available to all workers in the job category, be of decent quality, meet safety and quality standards, reduce basic costs of living for workers, and be additional to what is required by law. The principles guiding the Salary Matrix are drawn from the Anker Methodology. More information on how the Anker Methodology approaches in-kind benefits can be found here: <https://www.elgaronline.com/view/9781786431455/chapter15.xhtml>

What are typical in-kind benefits that are usually included and what requirements must they have?

Eligible in-kind benefits include:

Children's education: These are benefits which reduce workers costs for children's education, such as tuition or school supplies.

Child care: These are benefits which reduce workers childcare costs, such as free childcare or stipends for childcare services.

Food: These benefits include free or subsidized meals regularly taken by workers. Food benefits *do not* include snacks or on-site cafeterias where workers need to purchase their own food.

Transportation: These benefits replace or reduce the transportation costs that workers would otherwise pay for themselves. For example, transportation costs could include free transportation to work, free transportation for all needs in the town of residence, and transportation stipends.

Healthcare: These benefits reduce the cost to workers for their and/or their families' healthcare needs. Examples of qualifying healthcare benefits include free medical services that are not otherwise freely available through public systems, or stipends to cover the portion of workers' costs to access public healthcare systems. Qualifying healthcare benefits *do not include* provision of poorly managed clinics, or clinics that are only available to workers while they are at work; first aid services; or the employer's portion of legally-mandated national health insurance. Healthcare costs are not counted if the country provides free healthcare services which are widely regarded as decent in terms of quality and availability.

Housing: Housing benefits are only counted if **a.** the housing that is provided allows for workers to live with their families (single workers that do not have a spouse or children are considered a family of 1); **b.** the housing quarters are for one family only (dormitory-style housing would not count toward a living wage); and **c.** the housing meets quality requirements that are either detailed in the living wage benchmark or (when a benchmark does not specify) meets other international housing standards such as those detailed in applicable sustainability standards.

Do in-kind benefits need to be provided to all employees in order to be counted in the Salary Matrix?

No. In-kind benefits that are only offered to some employees can be included in the salary matrix. Workers who receive this in-kind benefit should be separate from workers who do not receive the in-kind benefit. Then, indicate which job categories or workers receive that in-kind benefit in the appropriate page of the salary matrix.

If in-kind benefits are provided from the Fairtrade premium, can they be included?

Yes. As long as the in-kind benefit meets the specific requirements—such as being expected in advance- it can be included. The source of the in-kind benefit is not important, although you are welcome to include this in information in the notes.

Can I include bicycles as transportation benefit?

The value of bicycles that are provided to workers as a form of transportation to and from work may be included in the salary matrix as long as they meet the requirements for in-kind benefits. Forms of transportation that are only available for use within the facility cannot be included.

Can I include personal protective equipment or uniforms as an in-kind benefit?

Equipment for work such as uniforms or PPE is not included as it does not directly reduce the cost of living for a worker and her or his family.

How is the value of in-kind benefits determined?

The Salary Matrix values in-kind benefits based on the total cost to the employer for providing the benefit to its workers. If the worker must pay a subsidy, this amount should be removed from the total. The remaining cost to the employer is divided by the number of workers in the job category. This calculation is done automatically in the “Job categories that receive in-kind benefits” section, rather than by the user. The value of each in-kind benefit should be the same for all workers. Please see “Tab 5 In-kind Benefit” above to learn more about how to calculate the cost when households other than workers’ households benefit from an in-kind benefit (e.g., employer-financed community school or public health center).

What is the in-kind benefit cost calculator and how does it work?

The in-kind benefit cost calculator is there to help the user of the Salary Matrix to itemize and add up costs to the employer for the provision of the benefit. It is not a requirement to complete the cost calculator.

What if there are several values of a certain in-kind benefit?

When workers receive varying values of in-kind benefits, the lowest value that meets all criteria should be entered in the tool. Currently, it is only possible to enter a single value per in-kind benefit in the tool, although this functionality may be improved in the future.

What can be included in the value of housing?

Cost of housing can consist of cost for repairs, maintenance, utilities and depreciation (repairs/upkeep, utilities, land taxes, security, and mortgage/loan repayments for any loans taken to build or purchase the housing.) If cost of providing housing per year is not consistent year to year, an average of at least 3 years should be used.

What does “workers choose to receive cash value” mean?

This means that workers have the option to receive a cash payment in lieu of the in-kind benefit. The amount of the cash payment must be equal to the value of in-kind benefit per worker.

What do I do if an in-kind benefit that complies with the requirements is offered in my facility, but I do not see it listed in the tool?

Please describe with as much detail as possible such benefit in the “Other” field that is provided. Such new potential benefits will be analyzed on a regular basis to determine their eligibility and adjust the tool accordingly if needed. To date, all eligible in-kind benefits are listed in the tool.

If in-kind benefits are not allowed to be added in the salary matrix, why should I provide them to my workers?

The Salary Matrix does not determine which benefits provided by facilities are of value to workers and the exclusion of some in-kind benefits from the salary matrix does not mean that workers do not value the benefit. Changing of in-kind benefits should be done with close alignment with workers and worker representatives.

Can Fairtrade Premiums that are used for in-kind benefits be added to the in-kind benefits section?

No, Fairtrade Premiums should not be included in in-kind benefits as these are dependent on maintaining certification and can vary by overall production of a facility.

Can vouchers be included as in-kind benefits?

Vouchers can be included as in-kind benefits if they fall into one of the in-kind benefit categories listed in the Salary Matrix and meet all the other requirements for in-kind benefits as detailed in this helpfile.

Can we include as an in-kind benefit protective equipment and hand-sanitizer provided during the COVID-19 pandemic?

No. While these are important provisions provided by the facility, they are variable and unforeseen costs that would not have been included in the Living Wage Benchmark, and therefore cannot be counted toward the basic costs of living that determine a living wage.

I have to allocate the benefit to either all or none in each labour category. However, while all have access to the benefit, only some people in each job category utilize it. How do I record this?

If the benefit is available and accessible to all workers, but only some use it, you can divide the total cost to the employer by the total number of workers that have access to it. However, if only some workers have access to the benefit, a separate job category should be created. For example, if seasonal workers have children living elsewhere, they do not in reality have access to a local school.

If an in-kind benefit is required by law, can I still include it in the Salary Matrix.

The value of in-kind benefits which is required by law would not be included in the Salary Matrix wage calculation. The reason for this is that the living wage benchmarks already takes these values into consideration when determining the cost of living. An exception to this could be made when a benefit exceeds what is required by law. For example, if the law requires transportation for workers to and from work, but the employer provides transportation for workers and their families outside of work-related or employer-driven activities, the additional transportation benefits could potentially be included.

Job categories that receive in-kind benefits

If an in-kind benefit is not given to workers in a given job category (or to a given worker in cases where the information is entered by individuals), how do I indicate that in the tool?

In order to be counted, a qualifying in-kind benefit must be available to all workers in the job category. If a benefit is not available to one or more workers in a job category, you will need to go back and create a new job category. For example, you might create one job category named “packers with benefits” and “packers without benefits”. If no workers in a job category receive the benefit, simply select “No” in the drop-down menu under “Do workers receive?”.

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Are taxes and statutory deductions included (like payroll taxes and mandatory deductions) when measuring the gap?

The user should not include them because they are already included in the Living Wage Benchmark. When benchmarks are calculated, first the necessary take home value is measured, then this value is adjusted to consider taxes and deductions—what we call the Gross Living Wage Benchmark. Read more on our website under “How Living Wage Benchmarks are calculated.” Because taxes and statutory deductions are already accounted for in the gross living wage benchmark, there is no need to also consider it in the calculation of current wages, otherwise it would be counted twice.

Which living wage benchmark should I choose?

Certain benchmarks are compatible with the Salary Matrix. Those include the GLWC Living Wage benchmarks and those recognized by IDH. The Salary Matrix Report Generator offers all available public Living Wage Benchmarks from the Global Living Wage Coalition. Other Living Wage Benchmarks will be available soon.

There is no Living Wage Benchmark for my region. What benchmark can I use?

IDH recommends the use of region-specific benchmarks. However, if for your region there is no living wage benchmark listed, please contact IDH at LivingWageMatrix@idhtrade.org . You could also, and only for the purpose of having an approximated report, either use a benchmark available for a similar region in your country or estimate a tentative value until a benchmark is developed.

How can I show other relevant benchmarks in the graph generated with my results?

You can select other relevant benchmarks available in the tool to be plotted in the diagramming of your results by selecting them in the corresponding dropdown menu provided. However, please note that the calculations of gaps will be done using the primary benchmark selected.