

NB: this letter is without the  
final list of investor signatories.  
Await the final version before  
sharing with companies

To: Executive Leadership of Multinational  
Enterprises

Date: 30-06-2026

Subject: Investor letter on Living Wages and Living Incomes in Global Supply Chains

Dear **CEO, members of the board,**

As global institutional investors committed to responsible business conduct<sup>1</sup>, we are writing to emphasize the strategic importance of advancing living wages and living incomes across operations and supply chains. We are engaging your company given its presence in sectors where wage levels often remain below a living wage, and substandard living conditions persist, creating potential exposure to operational, regulatory, reputational, and supply chain risks. Recent research by the World Benchmarking Alliance shows that fewer than 5% of the world's 2,000 most influential companies disclose a commitment to a living wage to their direct workforce, and only 3% report taking action to support living wages and living incomes within their supply chains<sup>2</sup>. With 2030 – the deadline to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals – fast approaching, the need for credible and measurable progress has become increasingly urgent.

We therefore call on your company to take three actions:

1) **Publicly commit** to advancing living wages and living incomes for your direct workforce and workers in your supply chain<sup>3</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> The Platform Living Wage Financials (PLWF) is an alliance of 24 financial institutions encouraging companies to enable living wages and incomes in their global supply chains. Together the signatories to this letter represent ... EUR of assets under management/ownership.

<sup>2</sup> [World Benchmarking Alliance 2026 data](https://www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org/corporate-inaction-wages-and-affordability-worsening-global-cost-living-crisis): <https://www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org/corporate-inaction-wages-and-affordability-worsening-global-cost-living-crisis>

<sup>3</sup> We recommend committing to the Living Wage target(s) of the [UN Global Compact Forward Faster](#), and to work with business platforms, initiatives or expert originations listed in the annex.

2) **Publish a time-bound roadmap** indicating how you will deliver on this commitment<sup>4</sup>;

3) **Create enabling conditions** for sustainable improvements in wages and incomes, including responsible purchasing practices and support for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining<sup>5</sup>.

### **Why Living Wages and Living Incomes Matter to Investors**

These expectations are grounded in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, both of which recognise that workers are entitled to conditions that enable a decent standard of living. Living wages and living incomes are therefore not only matters of rights and dignity; they are also closely linked to the prevention of child labour, forced labour and other severe human rights risks, as well as to broader sustainable development outcomes.

As investors, we assess these issues through the lenses of human rights due diligence, governance quality and long-term value creation. In our view, poverty-level wages and incomes may represent financially material risks for investee companies, with potential implications for business continuity, workforce stability, legal and regulatory exposure, and overall management effectiveness.

### **The Business Case**

Research from organisations such as the ILO, Shift, and the World Bank points to tangible financial and operational benefits associated with the payment of living wages<sup>6</sup>. Companies that make progress in this area often see improved productivity and workforce retention, lower turnover-related costs, enhanced operational resilience, and stronger preparedness for evolving regulatory requirements. These factors can translate directly into more stable cost structures and improved operating performance over time.

From an investor perspective, a robust approach to living wages and living incomes can support stronger long-term risk-adjusted returns by reducing operational and supply chain risks, limiting exposure to labour-related controversies, and strengthening a company's social license to operate.

### **Follow best practices and work in collaboration**

We recognize that living wage and living income gaps represent a systemic challenge that cannot be closed overnight. However, companies that make clear commitments and establish a credible, time-bound implementation roadmap, including coordinated changes in purchasing practices, planning, productivity support, and effective industrial relations, can make

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<sup>4</sup> Such roadmap should prioritise progress and credibility over speed and include: a) assessing living wage/living income gaps using credible benchmarks; b) embedding shared responsibility in purchasing practices and supplier relationships; c) time-bound milestones and KPI's to track progress, aligned with internationally recognised human rights due diligence expectations.

<sup>5</sup> Recognising that durable wage improvements depend on worker representation and functioning industrial relations.

<sup>6</sup> [www.ilo.org/resource/other/global-wage-report-series](http://www.ilo.org/resource/other/global-wage-report-series); [The Case for Living Wages: How Paying Living Wages Improves Business Performance and Tackles Poverty - Shift](#); World Bank Research paper: Global Job Quality Evidence from Wage Employment across Developing Countries; 2022

meaningful progress while demonstrating stronger operational discipline, sound governance, and a genuine ability to translate ambition into sustained long-term outcomes.

We encourage fair and collaborative pathways, and caution against approaches that shift the burden on suppliers alone or exclude suppliers that are willing to improve. From an investor perspective, collaborative, transparent and scalable approaches are more credible than short-term measures that simply transfer pressure through the value chain without addressing root causes. We therefore recommend engaging with the initiatives referenced in the footnote and annex.

We value transparency, collaboration and constructive engagement, and stand ready to discuss these expectations as your company advances toward more responsible and sustainable global value chains. We would welcome the opportunity to understand how management and the board are overseeing these issues, including the integration of living wage considerations into strategy, risk management, and capital allocation frameworks, and how progress will be measured and communicated to investors over time.

We would appreciate a written response to this letter by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Please send your response to the investor email address from the accompanying email message and cc. to the secretariat of the PLWF: [plwf@vbdo.nl](mailto:plwf@vbdo.nl).

Yours sincerely, on behalf of the Platform Living Wage Financials,

List of signatory investors

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## **Annex: Global Living Wage and Living Income Initiatives**

There are several credible expert networks, multistakeholder and sector initiatives providing frameworks and supporting companies with living wages and living incomes:

- Fair Labor Association
- IDH Roadmaps on Living Wages and Living Incomes
- Living Income Community of Practice
- UN Global Compact Forward Faster
- World Business Council for Sustainable Development
- Some examples of sector initiatives:
  - Sustainability Initiative Fruits and Vegetables
  - Aquaculture living wage measurement pilots
  - WARP program
  - Fair Wear Foundation
  - Action, Collaboration, Transformation ACT
  - The National Initiatives on Sustainable Cocoa in Europe

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