



ADVANCING LIVING WAGE IN NIGERIA  
Wednesday, 6 November, 2024 | 9 AM-12 PM |  
Venue: Four Points by Sheraton, Victoria Island, Lagos

## Summary

The roundtable convened by the United Nations Global Compact Nigeria focused on the essential need for living wages for all workers in Nigeria, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Held under Chatham House Rule, it gathered diverse business leaders from various sectors, development experts, public sector officials, and other key stakeholders. The roundtable concluded by explicitly acknowledging the complexity of implementing a living wage, discussing the barriers, and exploring collaborative solutions and best practices for achieving this goal by 2030.

## Background

Implementing living wages is crucial for poverty eradication and economic growth. Discussions centered on pathways to ensure all employees earn a living wage by 2030, focusing on collaborative action plans involving all stakeholders across value chains.

## Key Discussion Highlights

- 1. Understanding Living Wages:**  
Participants emphasized that living wages must meet basic needs, including housing, food, healthcare, and education. They acknowledged the need for clarity on what constitutes a living wage and the disparities in various sectors.
- 2. Barriers to Implementation:**  
Challenges identified included inflation, a lack of regulation in the informal economy (where 70% of the workforce is employed), and the necessity for corporate leaders to adopt ethical practices while managing wage increases.
- 3. Political and Economic Factors:**  
Participants called for annual minimum wage reviews to reflect economic changes, highlighting the need for greater leadership commitment toward improving living standards.
- 4. Corporate Responsibility and Ethical Practices:**  
Businesses were encouraged to adopt zero-tolerance policies towards corruption and ensure compliance with living wage standards across all levels, including outsourcing arrangements.
- 5. Public Sector and Corruption:**  
Discussions unveiled the connection between low public sector wages, corruption,



and the political manipulation of poverty. Reforming public sector compensation systems was identified as a crucial priority.

**6. Workplace Dynamics:**

The importance of communication and empathy in management practices was emphasized, fostering a workplace culture where employees feel valued and informed.

**Outcomes and Next Steps**

**1. Infrastructure Investment:**

Advocate for government investments in infrastructure to lower operational costs, enabling more feasible wage increases.

**2. Employee Well-Being Focus:**

When wage increases aren't feasible, companies will consider alternative benefits, such as flexible working conditions, to enhance employee welfare.

**3. Public Sector Pay Reform:**

Collaborate to promote reforms in public sector compensation to reduce corruption and stabilize public worker payments.

**4. Policy Advocacy:**

Push for policy reforms that ensure annual minimum wage reviews that align with inflation and regulate the informal sector.

**5. Promoting Ethical Business Practices:**

Companies will ensure compliance with living wage standards among all partners and vendors, emphasizing corporate social responsibility.

**6. Compliance Monitoring:**

Establish a system for monitoring living wage payments, promoting transparency and accountability through regular audits.

**Conclusion**

The discussions laid the groundwork for a strong collaborative effort towards implementing living wages in Nigeria by 2030. Ongoing engagement, resource allocation, and the commitment of all stakeholders are vital to achieving sustainable progress in improving the living standards of Nigerian workers.