

Workshop on living wage study for estate sector

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A Stakeholder Validation Workshop on Living Wage for the Estate sector organised by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC) and Fair Trade International (FTI) will be held on 24 August at the IPS Auditorium, Colombo 07 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:40 p.m.

The importance of living wage has been recognised for centuries. Since then, the emphasis on the topic continues to be relevant. It was more recently encapsulated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, despite of the historical interest in the topic, action toward implementation has rarely proven to be concrete. Fortunately, at the moment, there is a resurgence of interest in living wage. The Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC) emerged in 2013 to make the rhetoric of understanding and the moving toward living wage a global reality. The GLWC brings together seven sustainability standards systems, in partnership with the ISEAL Alliance and Richard and Martha Anker.

The GLWC pulled together these members and partners under the shared mission to see continuous improvements in workers' wages, in farms, factories, and supply chains, while participating in their respective certification systems and beyond. The long-term goal of the Coalition is for workers to be paid a living wage.

The IPS research study estimated a living wage for the estate workers in the tea plantation industry in Sri Lanka in December 2015, using the Anker methodology. The methodology estimated the per capita cost of a basic, but decent, quality life style, which includes food, housing, clothing and footwear, health and education, other essential costs and unforeseen contingencies. This benchmark was compared with the prevailing wages in the tea industry.

The main objective of this half-day workshop is to share the findings of the study with a wide range of stakeholders that include policy makers, plantation companies, trade unions, civil society, researchers and academia.

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