



Respecting the rights of informal waste sector workers: A human rights due diligence toolkit

Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis tool

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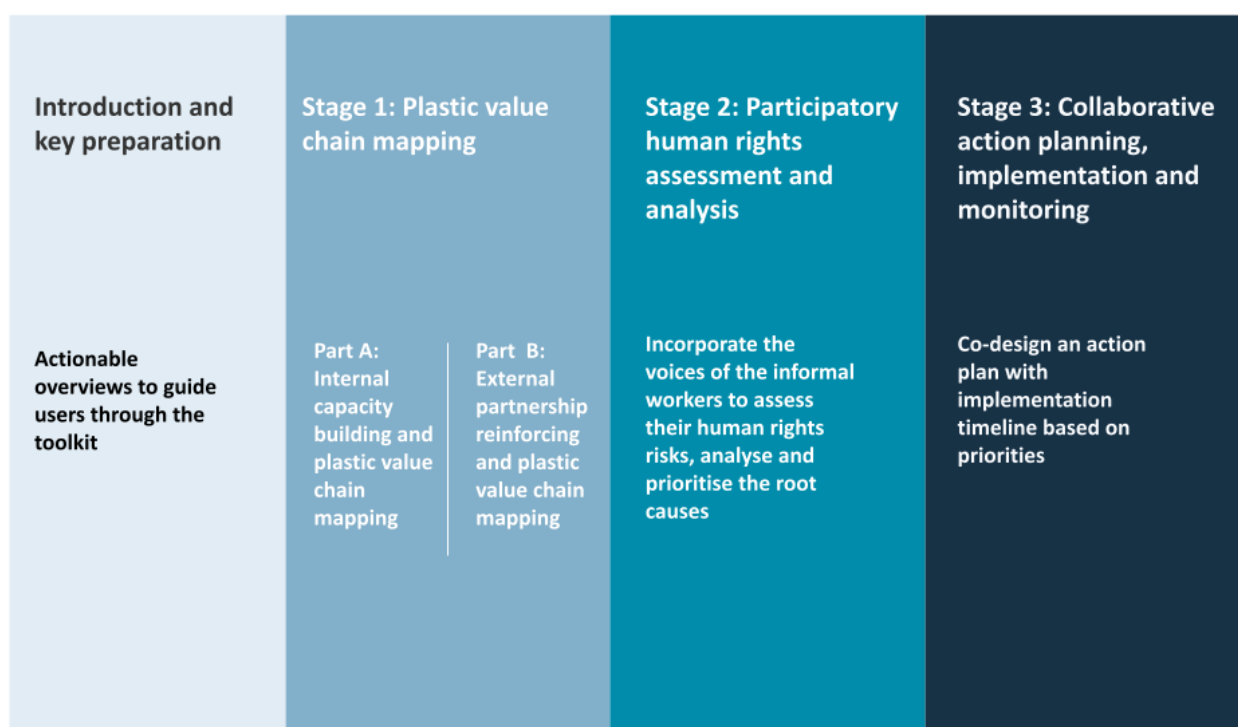
How to use the Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis tool

The *Participatory human rights assessment and analysis tool* serves as Stage 2 of our toolkit to support companies in implementing the [Fair Circularity Principles](#) into their plastics value chains. During Stage 1, users consulted their internal teams and external partners to map the formal waste flow segments of their company's selected value chain. This enabled them to create a profile of their tier 1 and tier 2 suppliers, to understand their level of traceability.

This Stage 2 tool is designed for users to build on their findings from Stage 1 by mapping their informal plastics value chains to source and address information gaps before conducting a human rights assessment and analysis.

Stage 2 is participatory and requires users to incorporate the voices of waste pickers from the plastics value chain. Users will then be able to:

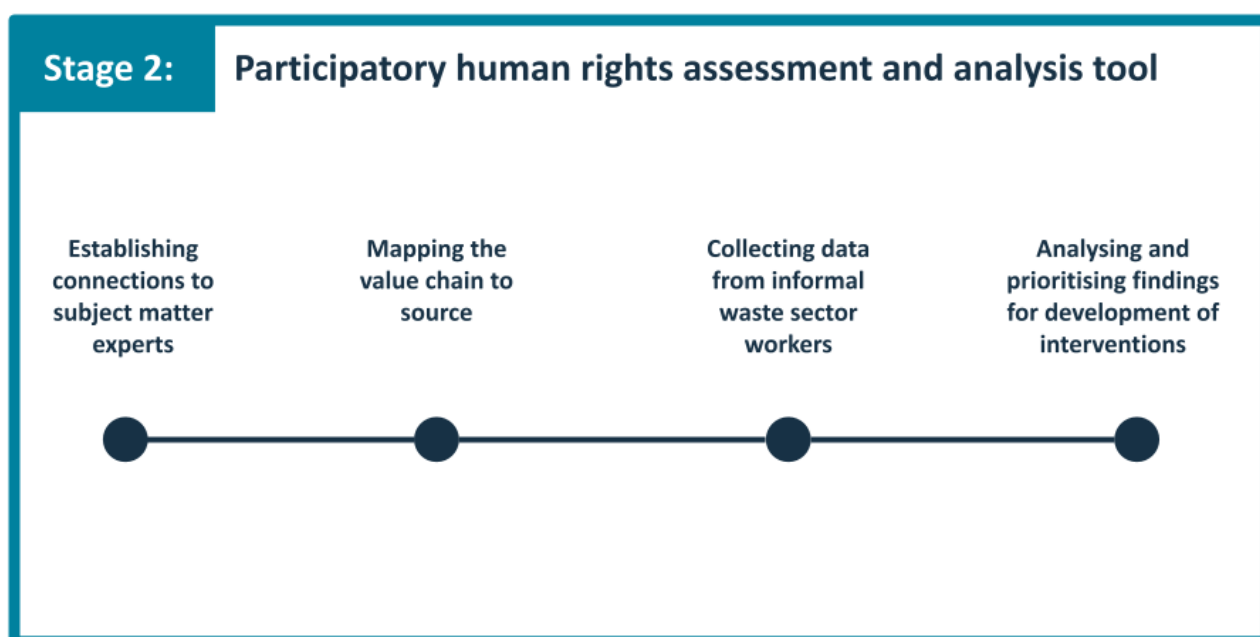
- assess human rights risks for waste pickers and analyse the root causes
- consider and prioritise solutions to prevent and mitigate these risks



Specifically, the Stage 2 tool provides users with resources and steps to:

1. establish connections to subject matter experts. This will help users learn about the work of waste pickers, the potential human rights impacts they face, as well as the root causes of these impacts
2. map the plastics value chain to the first mile, where waste pickers work
3. collect data from waste pickers to identify human rights impacts across a broad spectrum, analyse their root causes, and prioritise issues according to their needs
4. analyse and prioritise findings to develop interventions to prevent and mitigate identified human rights impacts

As with the *Stage 1: Plastic value chain mapping tool*, it's important to first reference the *Introduction and key preparation* document in the toolkit. See the *Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis tool* graphic below for an overview of the tool and its associated steps.



Assessment and analysis process

The Stage 2 tool guides users through mapping the informal tiers of the plastics value chain, and through the assessment and analysis of the human rights challenges within their selected plastic value chain. The human rights assessment involves conducting an evaluation of the operations, procedures, economics and physical space in each tier of the value chain – with a focus on the informal sector. This will help users better understand the conditions of informal work and their impacts on human rights.

Users of the Stage 2 tool will carry out in-person interviews and site visits with informal waste sector workers engaged in the plastics value chain. To prepare for the assessment, users can conduct virtual meetings with the company's formal suppliers first, to help organise the logistics and timing of in-person interviews and visits. Formal suppliers can help connect users to other downstream segments of the chain that may involve waste pickers. If they're unable to do so, they can contact external experts who work with the informal sector to support this effort. Users can refer to the local organisational body of waste pickers identified in the *Stage 1: Plastic value chain mapping tool*, or they can contact NGOs or national community based organisations (CBOs) who work with waste pickers in the country.

While gathering data, this step will require users to set up worker interviews with gender balance in mind and conduct the assessment with a gender-responsive lens. Users can refer to information about country-specific contexts to help them with this. They are also encouraged to review the information on ‘Applying a gender lens’ in the *Introduction and key preparation* document. This section provides an overview of the unique challenges and inequities experienced by women in informal waste collection that requires special attention during this step.

Users will then organise the information collected from the in-person assessment interviews to conduct an analysis of the present human rights risks and their root causes. This will help prioritise the challenges and ensure users respond in accordance with the [Fair Circularity Principles](#). When users have a clear understanding of the prioritised risks and needs, they can determine how to implement appropriate solutions throughout the plastics value chain. Upon completing Stage 2, users will have an organised set of prioritised risks and root causes. This will prepare them for *Stage 3: Collaborative action planning, implementation and monitoring tool*, where they will address the identified human rights issues according to priority.

Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis tool

1. Establishing connections to subject matter experts

A: Making introductions to identified stakeholders via established connections

At the end of Stage 1, users reviewed their findings using the *Stage 1: Mapping tool template* tab in the toolkit spreadsheet. They also identified the gaps in information that needed to be addressed, and prepared a preliminary set of interview questions. With the gaps identified, tool users should determine the prospective stakeholders who are likely to have information to fill these gaps. For example, if users have only had the opportunity to speak to a PCR supplier and recycler, but there are extensive information gaps regarding balers and aggregators, then users can anticipate that speaking with workers in those tiers directly will elicit the correct information. These identified workers should be a key priority as users organise the assessment and prepare to conduct interviews on the ground.

Users should make introductions to relevant stakeholders via the connections made in Stage 1B. These stakeholders may be able to fill existing gaps, or validate or expand companies' understanding of the plastic value chain for the assessment. In Stage 1B the company's formal suppliers and organisations or associations of waste pickers were spoken to. These stakeholders can now provide introductions to their informal suppliers or waste pickers in the plastics value chain. With these introductions, users can tap into the expertise of the relevant stakeholders to collect information during the informal waste sector mapping and human rights assessment.

It is important to note that users may encounter some challenges when trying to extend beyond the formal stages of the chain and into the informal segment. This is why leveraging existing connections with suppliers and their workers or waste picker associations is often necessary to gain access to waste pickers. Unlike the formal organisations that tool users may interact with virtually or through messaging platforms, gaining access to the waste pickers should be done through site visits and in-person meetings initiated by an established mutual connection to build trust in the relationship. As users establish connections with relevant stakeholders in the informal sector, continue to fill in gaps in information in the *Stage 1: Mapping tool template* in the toolkit spreadsheet.

B: Preparing to interview informal waste sector workers and conduct focus groups

When preparing to conduct the assessment, users should connect with the formal suppliers and organisations virtually ahead of time. They should discuss the purpose of the assessment, coordinate in-person visit dates, share a list of questions and requested materials, and request support in organising these in-person meetings. Through these conversations, users can build an itinerary for the human rights assessment, ensuring interviews and site visits take place for each tier of the value chain if possible, or to the tier that can be traced. During this time, users should also work to establish an understanding of the role and responsibility of the workers invited to be interviewed to best customise questions.

Waste pickers often represent a population with a high degree of vulnerability. When engaging each stakeholder in an assessment interview, users should be sensitive to their situation, and intentional about developing trust and building a positive rapport. To guide users in engaging stakeholders for a successful interview, the following table provides insights on ethical principles and best practices for conducting interviews in the field.

Fig. 1: Insights on ethical principles and best practice for interviews in the field

Best practice for interviews in the field	
<p>Respectful and meaningful engagement</p>	<p>When engaging with vulnerable populations, it is important to consider how to do so ethically given the differences in circumstances, and broader structural and cultural factors that may perpetuate unequal power dynamics. Before interacting with individuals, consider the following points to engage respectfully and prioritise the dignity and inclusion of relevant stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language barriers: If interviewers do not speak the local language, bring a translator or a trusted member of the community, such as a representative from a waste picker organisation, who speaks the same language as the stakeholders and understands the local sensitivities of the community. This can help interviewees feel more comfortable being open about their experiences and challenges, and can lead to more representative interviews. If questions are being translated, cross-check them with local bilingual staff or community members for cultural appropriateness. If interpreters are used, they should review the <i>Introduction and key preparation</i> guidance before they engage. • Dress code: When going in the field, it is best to be aware of what is perceived as acceptable and safe in the community, and dress in a way that is culturally sensitive and approachable. Considering how to dress can be an expression of respect for the communities users are not a part of. • Time and compensation: Plan to keep the interviews succinct to be respectful of stakeholders' time and needs. Only collect data that is going to be used to benefit stakeholders. Be mindful of planning data collection around reasonable hours: it may be difficult to find a time when respondents are available, so consider talking to workers while they are engaging in their work activities. Compensate workers appropriately for loss of earnings and other expenses and/or provide them with a meal in exchange for their time without being coercive or extractive. Being intentional and showing up on time to meetings shows consideration and respect for their work, making it more likely to build trust and a good rapport. • Gender territories/spaces: Plan meeting venues with already established places where men or women are likely to be found, feel safe and comfortable speaking.
<p>Mutual exchange of information</p>	<p>Each time tool users connect with a new individual, there must be a mutual exchange of information¹ to ensure it is an empowering experience for both the interviewee and interviewer.</p>

¹Oxfam

	<p>Informed consent: Before proceeding with interviews and assessments, it is standard ethical practice to obtain informed consent from those being interviewed. This process involves providing information to the stakeholder on the nature and purpose of the data being collected and obtaining consent, whether verbal or written, indicating their voluntary participation. Then, reassure the interviewee that they can choose not to respond to any question they do not feel comfortable addressing. Stakeholders must also understand that their consent can be removed at any point throughout the process if they feel uncomfortable proceeding. It is important to remain as transparent and open with stakeholders as possible in this initial step to ensure trust in the relationship.</p> <p>Positionality: This is about the interviewer’s relationship to the community. Consider how the interviewers’ interactions are influenced by their multiple subjectivities as an insider/outsider, knowledge holder/learner, supplier, and so on, when interacting with them. Consider the many factors that may contribute to unequal power dynamics and adjust the interview design accordingly to overcome these barriers and avoid reinforcing biases. Making sure the team of interviewers is diverse in both gender and age helps to minimise these factors. Being aware of how users may be perceived in the communities is crucial to achieving accurate data.</p> <p>Engagement versus exploitation: Interviews can be inherently exploitative due to the nature of sharing information. Instead of focusing solely on information gathering, users should develop a working rapport to establish a mutual exchange of information. This should include sharing who they are, their organisation/role, the goals and objectives of the assessment, and how the information will be used before proceeding with the interviews. Consider the ways in which vulnerable communities are most susceptible to exploitation and have been in the past (ie empty promises). Only engage if the information gathered has a clear purpose and will be used to benefit and empower the community. Having a pre-agreed statement to answer why this information is being collected can help ensure a common response from the team conducting interviews. At the end of the assessment interview, users should allow time for stakeholders to ask questions and add any additional information.</p> <p>Representation: How users choose to represent individuals and interpret the information given is important. Interviewers should explain to stakeholders how the information they share will be used and portrayed. Seek a two-way dialogue on how interviewees would like to be seen and treated so they have a say in how the data they share will be used and distributed. Relay any interpretations back to them to gather their thoughts on its accuracy and incorporate their feedback.</p> <p>For more information, refer to Doubly Engaged Ethnography: Opportunities and Challenges When Working With Vulnerable Communities² and Tearfund's Doing Research Ethically³.</p>
<p>Provide accessible engagement</p>	<p>For waste pickers: Offer to set up the interview at their work location to minimise disruption to their work day and cost, or let them suggest an alternative location. Find a space with shade and offer water. Ask them if an interview during a meal</p>

²[Doubly Engaged Ethnography: Opportunities and Challenges When Working With Vulnerable Communities](#)

³[Tearfund – Doing Research Ethically](#)

	<p>would be preferable given the natural down time and if so, provide a meal. Ensure there is a safe space for them to be open and honest with their responses.</p> <p>For workers of suppliers, eg aggregators, collection centres, waste banks: Connect with relevant stakeholders in a comfortable and quiet environment, make sure a safe space separate from their managers is accessible to encourage them to speak more openly.</p> <p>Small groups and/or one-on-one meetings are best for productive interviews for both groups. Keep the interviews conversational.</p>
<p>Gender equality and social inclusion</p>	<p>Organising meetings with women and marginalised and vulnerable groups will be crucial to ensuring that a variety of perspectives and feedback are accounted for and accurately represented. Ethical approaches require that marginalised communities (such as women and girls, LGBTQ+, and individuals with disabilities) are given the opportunity to feel safe participating in research activities. A gender lens can be applied in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider that mixed groups (in regards to age and gender) can be a barrier to women sharing their experiences. Conducting focus groups by gender and age might encourage more open participation by younger women who might otherwise stay silent. It will also allow women to feel more comfortable sharing their collective experiences on sensitive issues. Regardless of what focus groups users decide on, make sure the research as a whole includes a diverse, representative number of women workers of all ages and ethnicities. • Commit to understanding issues from a diverse set of perspectives, conditions and realities with an awareness of the power and politics dynamics at play in the given cultural context. • Consider how women’s roles and responsibilities might be disproportionately disrupted by taking part in interviews or focus groups compared to male-dominated roles in the community. For example, how childcare responsibilities, or having to receive permission from their partners, may be barriers for women to participate in the interviews. • Create safe spaces for women to identify and share their needs and concerns. Ensure women will not face increased risks of retaliation or stigma for sharing information due to their gender. For example, a woman may receive physical abuse at home for participating in the interviews if her husband disapproves.
<p>Preparation in the case of urgent needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When interviewing waste pickers, there is a possibility that they may be facing mental or physical health issues that require immediate support. This can be a result of a variety of situations, long-term neglect, poverty, lack of access to health care, abuse... etc. Users should work with their local waste pickers association, or an NGO that provides services to marginalised populations, to determine and prepare for any support and/or guidance that is appropriate to share in this situation.

2. Mapping the value chain to source

A final item to complete before beginning data collection with informal waste sector workers is to map the remaining part of your value chain. Refer back to the *Stage 1: Mapping tool template* in the toolkit spreadsheet, where you completed a waste flow exercise. As you work to set up interviews with informal waste sector workers, you should be able to inquire and understand where in the value chain they belong, and use that information to set up the rest of your value chain map. In your previous value chain map task, you mapped the value chain to tier 2. Below is the same template that includes tiers 3, 4, and 5 for you to fill in with relevant information. If your value chain extends beyond tier 5, add another column. It is imperative that you work to uncover the following information during this exercise:

- The number of tiers present in the supply chain and identify the formal suppliers and informal suppliers. Understanding what each supplier does, who they supply to and who supplies to them, helps to address this.
- The geographical scope of each tier of the supply chain. Where is the material for each supplier coming from? This can help draw a geographical boundary around the supplier and help to validate remaining tiers of suppliers.
- A chain of custody to the first collectors. Users might not have all of the information to trace to their first collectors yet but this exercise will help them uncover the gaps in information you need to address.
- Formal workers versus informal workers. The goal of the toolkit is to ensure that companies understand who their informal waste sector workers are so they can properly partner with and support them. While it is natural for companies to deal directly with formal suppliers, in order to begin engagement with the informal sector, this step supports the need to understand who they are and where they work.

Fig. 2: Sample waste flow – Stage 1: Mapping tool template

Background on key partners	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Key partner (include company name/individual)	Repurpose Plastics	XYZ Recycling Company	Ecoplastics	Andrew Mubiri	Kampala landfill waste pickers association
Role and responsibility within the chain	PCR supplier Processes rPET resins for manufacturer	Recycler Transforms baled PET into flakes and sells to PCR supplier	Aggregator Collates bales	Private baler Separates and bales plastics	Waste pickers Collects and sort waste materials
Work status (formal/informal)	Formal	Formal	Informal	Informal	Informal

Background on this demographic (what do they do for the value chain? Which tiers do they buy/sell from?)	Pelletizers purchase flakes from recyclers and transform the flakes into pellets. This PCR is then used by brands/manufacturers to be made into final products. Pelletizers operate within facilities and are easily audited and certified	Purchases material from aggregators and processes into flakes which are sold to the PCR supplier	Purchases baled materials from balers, further aggregates material to sell to recyclers	Purchases from waste pickers, further sorts materials and sells bales on to an aggregator	This association collects from the landfill to sell to private balers
Years of operation	10 years	8 years	5 years	5 years	5 years
Demographic of employees	55 employees (15 Part-time, 40 full-time), 80% men, 20% women, Average age = 34	30 employees (20 full-time, 10 part time 75% men, 25% women) Average age = 38	2 staff	Works independently	The workers work independently
Equipment	Baler, Extruder	Recycling	Truck	Baler, trolley	Bags, sacks, metal picks, trolleys
Type of materials	PET, HDPE, LDPE	PET, HDPE,	PET bottles	PET bottles	PET bottles
Volume collected or processed per month	200 tons PET, 300 tons HDPE, 50 tons LDPE	120 tons PET, 100 HDPE	30–40 tons	7.5–10 tons	300–600kg
Material procurement	Deliveries by recyclers across the country and material imported from other countries	Purchases from approx. 2 regional aggregators and 3 municipal EPR schemes	Purchases from approx. 4 regional balers	Purchases from approx. 25 local waste pickers	Collect from the landfill
List of working regulations and standards or available resources that exist	Labour regulations enforced by government – limited to 50 hours/week	Labour regulations enforced by government – limited to 50 hours/week	No applicable formal standards	No applicable formal standards	No applicable formal standards

3. Collecting data from informal waste sector workers

A: Collecting a representative sample

Before beginning to collect data through interviewing informal waste sector workers and facilitating focus groups, users should first ensure the data they are collecting represents an accurate sample of the given population for each tier or role within the informal sector. This should include waste pickers, aggregators and their employees, and any other relevant informal actors, such as agents.

- As a recommendation, begin the assessment by reaching as far down into the supply chain as possible. This will support an understanding of the number of tiers and an estimated number of formal and informal workers in the plastics value chain. Aim to speak to waste pickers working in all possible locations and roles (eg dumpsites, streets, recycling facilities etc) if possible to reveal different perspectives and paint a full picture.
- In the event that there's a lack of traceability and users are unsure of the total size of the plastics value chain, begin with informal waste sector workers who are accessible. As relationships with workers in the chain are built, users should aim to establish traceability, size and scope of the value chain, and aim to achieve a sample size.
- Aim to represent both genders equally with a deliberate focus on representing marginalised and vulnerable groups as they will play a leading role in this process.

B: Meeting relevant stakeholders to collect qualitative and quantitative data

With the assessment planned, it is time to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Users should organise the interviews and focus groups to fill in the identified gaps in the *Stage 1: Mapping tool template* in the toolkit spreadsheet. They can then validate their collected data directly with workers to ensure accuracy, and refine their understanding of informal waste sector workers in the plastics value chain. Similar to the waste flow profiles provided in the *Stage 1: Mapping tool template* in the toolkit spreadsheet, the following *Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis profile* in the spreadsheet focuses specifically on the challenges and human rights risks experienced by waste pickers due to the nature of their work.

To get started, users can use the following list of sample questions developed in accordance with the [Fair Circularity Principles Annex A](#)⁴ in interviews to get closer to uncovering potential human rights challenges and their root causes. Given the below questions cover a broad range of issues, the questions start with less sensitive topics first to give the interviewer time to build rapport with workers before asking about more sensitive topics. Users might not necessarily need all of the questions listed, and as noted in Section 1B, some planning will be required to understand the interviewees to customise questions. If respondents appear uncomfortable with any of the questions listed below, they can be marked optional. Users are encouraged to adjust the order and provide their own follow-up questions as needed.

⁴[Fair Circularity Principles Annex A](#)

Fig. 3: Sample Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis profile

Common human rights challenges experienced by waste pickers	Questions
Lack of respect for freedom of association/collective bargaining	<p>Do you belong to a waste picker organisation or association? If so, please describe it.</p> <p>If not, why not? Is this something you would find beneficial?</p> <p>Assess differences in participation for men versus women.</p>
Impacts on other conditions of decent work	<p>How many hours and days per week do you work?</p> <p>What are your hours of collection?</p> <p>Assess differences in hours for men versus women</p>
Child labour and child accompaniment	<p>Do you have school-age children?</p> <p>Do your children accompany you to work?</p> <p>Are they able to attend school?</p> <p>If not, what barriers exist?</p> <p>Assess differences for men versus women.</p>
Impacts on workplace health and safety	<p>Do you feel your health and safety is protected at work?</p> <p>Have you experienced any workplace injuries or health and safety concerns? If so, what are they?</p> <p>Do you have access to safe sanitation facilities at work?</p> <p>Do you have access to PPE (eg boots, gloves, glasses)?</p> <p>What equipment do you need? Or, what would be helpful in making you feel more safe at work?</p> <p>Assess differences for men versus women.</p>
Marginalisation/discrimination	<p>Are you ever denied access to collecting waste material?</p> <p>If so, where and why does this typically happen (eg parallel collection systems, waste sector privatisation, exclusion from public and private procurement value chains)? NB the interviewees may not know the ‘why’ here.</p> <p>Assess differences in discrimination between men versus women.</p> <p>Gender focus: Are there certain times or days where more material is available but it is not as easy for women to be working (linked to hours of darkness, family mealtimes etc)?</p> <p>Are certain locations more accessible based on gender?</p> <p>Are there certain jobs or roles you are prohibited from having because of your gender?</p>
Inadequate grievance mechanisms	<p>If you had an issue or complaint at work, who do you report it to?</p> <p>If you have a place to report issues or complaints, do you feel comfortable reporting it?</p> <p>Assess differences for men versus women.</p>

<p>Inadequate income</p>	<p>What prices do you get paid for the materials you collect? Are you paid a collection fee in addition to what you receive when you sell the recyclables? How much income do you earn per day/week? Assess differences in income for men versus women.</p> <p>What needs does your income cover (food, shelter, security, providing for family)? Is it enough to cover basic needs? If not, what needs are still remaining? What do you need, or what would be helpful, for increasing your income? Assess differences in living income for men versus women.</p>
<p>Lack of bargaining power in price setting</p>	<p>Do you know where to find the latest prices for the materials you've collected? Are you ever able to negotiate the price you are paid for your collected recyclables? Assess differences for men versus women.</p>
<p>Lack of inclusion</p>	<p>Have you ever been asked for your views or been included in decision-making processes in matters relating to your work? Assess differences for men versus women.</p>
<p>Lack of recognition and social stigma</p>	<p>How do you feel your work as a waste picker is viewed by family, the government, companies and other citizens? Have you ever been treated positively or negatively because of your work? If so, how? Assess differences for men versus women.</p>
<p>Exclusion from social and financial services</p>	<p>What types of social or financial services are you not able to access that you need? Do you have access to health services? If not, why not? Do barriers exist to accessing them? Do you have access to a bank account? If not, why not? If barriers exist, what are they and why do you think they exist? Do you own any form of identification? If not, why not? If barriers exist, what are they and why do you think they exist? Assess differences for men versus women.</p>
<p>Observations and photographs</p>	<p>Ask for permission to have a tour around collection points and for photographs to be taken for future reference. Share the purpose of this task. Below is a sample script: 'Can we please take a look around the collection site to make a few notes for ourselves? Is it okay for us to take a few photos for future references? No photos will be shared publicly without your permission.'</p>

C: Organising the collected data

The *Stage 2: Participatory human rights assessment and analysis template* in the toolkit spreadsheet can help users organise the collected assessment data and prepare the information for analysis. The spreadsheet includes the collection of baseline demographic data for each respondent such as name, sex, age, role, location and collection method, data recorded, and consent provided. It also provides answers to the questions on common human rights challenges experienced by waste pickers listed above. Whether users decide to use the provided template in the toolkit or create their own, it is important to keep all data housed in one location so that it can easily be shared among other members of the assessment team.

4. Analysing and prioritising findings for development of interventions

A: Conducting the root cause analysis

Tool users have now done the necessary work to better understand the complexities of the company's selected plastics value chain. At this point, users have defined the roles, responsibilities, volumes, economics, and challenges associated with the informal tier of the plastics value chain. However, to effectively target and prioritise the mitigation of the identified risks and challenges, users must conduct an analysis of these issues to identify the root causes. Uncovering the root causes of these human rights issues will not only empower the assessment team to develop more effective interventions with results, it will also develop long-term solutions so the impacts do not resurface. Below are the key steps to consider in conducting a root cause analysis:

- Using the data collected in this stage, aggregate and analyse the data by compiling the percentages of respondents with the respective responses to each question. The goal is to be able to identify common issues shared through the assessment interviews and site visits and collect all the data and information related to each issue, paying special attention to gender-related issues and each issue's given context. For example, tool users may have learned during the interviews with waste pickers that a majority of workers lack access to healthcare, formal bank accounts, and any form of identification. Below is an example of how this data from respondents would be aggregated and analysed.

Fig. 4: Example of data aggregation for analysis

Example : Exclusion from social and financial services		
Do you have access to health services? If not, what barriers exist to accessing them? Assess differences for men vs. women	Do you have access to a bank account? If not, what barriers do you face in accessing one? Assess differences for men vs. women	Do you own any form of identification? If not, what barriers do you face in obtaining identification (eg registration fees)? Assess differences for men vs. women
Y transportation	Y	N
Y unable to afford	N	N
Y transportation	N	N
Y	N	
Y	N	
Y = 40%	Y = 20%	Y = 0%
N = 60%	N = 80%	N = 100%
Transportation = 67%		
Unable to afford = 33%		

Separate the findings and data by gender to assess the differences across common human rights challenges and see how women and men may be affected differently by each. For example, users may analyse the proportion of women versus men across their varying roles to assess the influence gender plays in the division of labour. In the example below, it can be seen that men appear to dominate higher-income roles such as truck driver and centre owner, compared to women who appear to primarily occupy roles of waste picker and sorter.

Fig. 5: Sample gender/role analysis

Responded name (waste picker)	Gender	Age	Role
Insert name	Male/female/non-binary/ transgender	##	Eg waste picker
Worker A	Male	33	Truck driver
Worker B	Female	31	Waste picker
Worker C	Male	25	Aggregator
Worker D	Female	35	Waste picker

- Next, work to understand what the cause of this issue is from the perspective of the workers experiencing it and categorise the possible causes. To do this, users should define the patterns that are caused by these issues and existing structures that lead to this recurrence of events. They can do this by asking workers follow-up questions and combining them with information shared in the *Introduction and key preparation* document and additional research.
- Then, use these missing structures to determine the root causes that require development or change to address the issue at hand.
- Lastly, begin to consider potential solutions to the missing structures that would help prevent and mitigate the human rights risk. Note that users will directly involve waste pickers in the *Stage 3: Collaborative action planning, implementation and monitoring* process later to co-design an action plan grounded in meaningful participation of waste pickers. But having an initial idea of possible solutions that could be implemented will be a good place to start.

An example of this process is included in the *Sample root cause analysis template* in Fig. 6 and is also included in the *Stage 2: Root cause analysis template* in the toolkit spreadsheet.

While there are many tools and methods available for conducting a root cause analysis, there is no right answer or one-size-fits-all approach. It is important for users to try multiple approaches to find the best method for their team and to become familiar with different root cause analysis strategies. A few recommended methods are listed in Fig.7 to get users started, along with the benefits and resources for each.

Fig. 6: Sample root cause analysis – Stage 2: Root cause analysis template

What: human rights issue	
No access to healthcare	
How: causes of the human rights issue	
What patterns exist that result in these issues?	What are the missing structures?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited transportation No access to medical insurance or healthcare plans No financial flexibility to pay out of pocket for medical care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste pickers are unable to make a living income to afford health insurance and/or access to healthcare plans Waste pickers are unaware of government programmes to provide health insurance
Potential solutions: structure to develop, change or solve the human rights issue	
<p>Develop waste picker awareness of government fund health insurance and support enrollment for waste pickers to gain access.</p> <p>Payment of a collection fee for waste pickers in addition to the price received for plastic sold to boost incomes.</p>	

Fig 7: Possible methods for root cause analysis

Root cause analysis	About the method	Why use it
Fishbone diagram⁵ (Ishikawa/cause and effect)	Starts with a problem (or the effect) written at the mouth of the ‘fish’. A straight line is drawn from this problem with branches coming off it. The branches list the major categories of causes of the problem. Each category then has its own branches of sub-causes to answer, ‘Why does this happen?’	A visual way to help brainstorm possible causes of a problem and organise them into respective categories. A more logical, structured approach that helps to identify causes for a problem that may not otherwise be considered by looking at each category and coming up with potential causes.
Five Whys⁶	Drill down to ask ‘Why?’ or ‘What caused this problem?’ five times or more until a root cause has been identified. Each answer prompts another ‘Why?’ to uncover the layers of a problem.	A basic problem-solving technique that helps get to the root cause of a problem quickly and is easy to learn and apply.

⁵[Six Sigma Fishbone Diagram](#)

⁶[5-Whys-Analysis-Tool](#)

B: Prioritising a set of risks to address

After reviewing and analysing the root causes, users should have a good understanding of the most pressing issues impacting each tier of their plastics value chains, specifically the informal sector. It will be unlikely that users can realistically address all the identified issues at once, therefore, users must decide how to take these findings forward and prioritise which identified human rights issues need to be addressed first. Users may find that many of the issues surfaced are related to the same root cause, or that addressing one issue may in effect address another issue in the process. Before prioritising the set of risks, users must review the root causes and understand how they may be linked or connected, and assess their internal capabilities and resources to address these issues. Users can begin by asking the questions in Fig. 8 below to consider the following factors for prioritisation: building trust, the severity of impacts, internal capabilities, and their companies' spheres of influence.

Fig. 8: Example questions when prioritising

Prioritisation factors	Guiding questions
Building trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which issues, if addressed, would support the company in building and establishing trust with informal waste sector workers for a productive collaboration going forward?
Severity of impacts⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the most severe impacts on waste pickers identified by the interview findings? How serious and widespread is the harm? If not addressed, what is the likelihood for it to evolve into a more serious issue and what are the consequences? Which issues can be addressed short term, medium term, and long term and what is the time frame for each?
Internal capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will the necessary human and/or financial resources needed to address these issues and drive solutions forward be accessed? Does the team have the adequate internal knowledge and expertise to successfully address these issues and implement remediation efforts? If not, what local organisations can offer their support and partnership?
Spheres of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which issues does the company have a direct influence on and most leverage in solving? Which issues are systemic and may be best addressed with partnerships or more complex multi-stakeholder collaboration?

⁷UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Conclusion

We hope that during this stage of the work, your team has gained valuable insights and perspectives from workers directly, and that you can take this information to begin to draft an action plan to address the identified human rights issues.

Not only are your interactions with the informal waste sector and key actors of the plastic value chain integral to this stage of the human rights due diligence process, but also they are an important part of longer-term collaboration. What follows in Stage 3 is critical. Now you can amalgamate all of the creative solutions from your interactions into a collaborative action plan. This plan will help your company prevent and address the human rights impacts of informal waste sector workers within the value chains it has mapped and analysed.

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