Promoting Effective Labor Monitoring Standards

A Verité and CREA Initiative

October 2010

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Introduction

Today's global economy is focusing increased attention on social accountability, good corporate citizenship and ethical sourcing. Consumers in the US and Europe now demand higher social standards from corporations and their brands. A wide range of businesses actively use social auditors to ensure their suppliers follow international labor norms.

"Social audits" provide the original base-line information used by companies to engage with supply chain partners on labor, environmental, and other social concerns. Social audits can also serve an important information gathering and verification role as companies seek to embed social compliance into daily business strategy and performance and also manage risk.

Yet while companies increasingly use monitoring as a core function to meet demands for corporate accountability, monitors and monitoring organizations face deep and worrisome challenges in terms of credibility, standardization and reliability. Corporate CSR efforts have been undermined by fundamental weaknesses in the staffing, process and outputs of many social audits conducted by the increasing number of monitoring companies entering the field.

Some monitor training programs exist, but they are often specific to and oriented around separate Codes rather than fundamental, broadly applicable skills. This limits their usefulness in meeting the challenges faced by the broader social monitoring industry. In the face of civil society challenges to the credibility of social monitoring, there remains a need and increasingly strong demand for a broadly accepted program by which the universal qualifications, skills and knowledge needed for effective monitoring, across industries and audit models, are standardized, trained to, assessed and verified.

Many groups worldwide have a direct interest and stake in social auditing as the foundation of social compliance efforts. In the past ten years, a wide range of actors from the private and not-for-profit sectors have expressed interest in bringing long-deserved, credible standards of recognition for the fast-growing and vital profession of social auditing.

Based on input from brands and monitoring organizations, the US Depart of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility launched a Request for Proposal for the Promote Effective Labor Monitoring Standards Project in 2006. Verité and the Center for Reflection, Education and Action (CREA) won the bid. The original project dates were November 6, 2007 to November 30, 2009. However, the project was extended to June 30, 2010.

Program Goal
The short-term and long terms goals of this project included:

- Broad promulgation -- and acceptance among private sector and civil society organizations -- of a robust, universal Body of Standards against which the knowledge and skills of social monitors across industries can be evaluated;

- Pilot testing and promulgation of a plan for mandatory and elective training courses by which individual monitors will be certified to the emergent Body of Standards; and

- Establishment of a process by which the Standards will be vetted and updated on a regular basis, embedded in an independent institution that markets and manages the training and certification system.

The project included three phases, based on the goals above:

Phase I: Objective I - Build buy-in among key brands, global NGO monitors and for-profit monitoring firms and introduce process to broad group of stakeholders, including overseas stakeholders
Objective II - Initiation of standards portal to facilitate communication about standards and receive feedback

Phase II: Pilot testing and promulgation of a plan for mandatory and elective training courses by which individual monitors will be certified to the emergent Body of Standards.

Phase III: Establishment of a process by which the Standards will be vetted and updated on a regular basis embedded in an independent institution that markets and manages the training and certification system.

The process was open to all interested participants, regardless of their participation in other multi-brand or multi-stakeholder initiatives.

Methodology

Verité and CREA compiled the results of previous discussions on social auditing standards to inform and shape the Project. The Project developed a list of six key categories to explore and discuss, corresponding to the topics that provoked the most discussion at previous social auditor stakeholder meetings:

At the same time, the Project compared and contrasted existing auditing standards such as BEAC, EICC, IRCA, ISEAL, and SA 8000 to inform project activities in terms of auditor levels, training requirements, auditor categories, and certification requirements.

Project Summary by Phase

The following section provides a summary of Project accomplishments and activities by phase and objective. A chronological list of activities is found in Annex V.

Phase I, Objective I: Stakeholder Consultations and Dialogue

As discussed in the methodology section above, the first two Project activities were an analysis of existing social auditing activities to determine the main monitoring issues and key concerns, and an analysis of existing social auditing standards to spot similarities among the different standards and areas of non-alignment. This desk research coincided with extensive stakeholder meetings with brands, NGOs, unions, multistakeholder groups, and monitoring organizations, including the following groups:

> **Objective I: Activities Overview**
> - Consultations with stakeholders
> - Review existing auditing standards
> - Issues Identification
> - Develop survey instrument
> - Pre-test of survey
> - Launch survey
> - Survey analysis
> - Dissemination of results

- practitioners (monitoring groups), including:
  - large, for-profit global monitoring companies such as Intertek Testing Services, Specialized Technology Resources- Responsible Sourcing (STR-RS), Bureau Veritas Certification, and Global Social Compliance who were part (with Verité) of an earlier informal Monitoring Standards Project
  - the growing group of small compliance monitoring and consulting firms which are increasing their share of the auditing market
  - NGO monitoring organizations operating at the global level
  - NGOs involved in monitoring at the country level
- direct users (e.g. brands and licensees such as American Eagle Outfitters, Adidas-Reebok, Disney, and The Gap)
- Code-based initiatives such as Fair Labor Association, Fair Wear Foundation, Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Electronic Industry Code of Conduct, Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP), Social Accountability International, The International Council of Toy Industries (ICTI), and Global Social Compliance Program, a compliance cooperation effort by and for the world's major retailers (Wal-Mart, Tesco, Carrefour, etc.)
- Certification groups such as Board of Environmental, Health and Safety Auditor Certifications (BEAC), IRCA, and ISEAL (International Social, Environmental and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling) Alliance.

A list of the major stakeholders consulted is found in Annex VI.

In stakeholder conferences, the Project sensed confusion, chiefly among monitoring groups, about the purpose and goals of the Project. Significant outreach was required to win over social monitoring groups who perceived the Project as a threat to continuation of their business model. The Project took pains to emphasize that activities are not about code harmonization, standards for audit methodology or remediation, standards for how audit groups/firms should be evaluated or accredited as institution, creation of single training methodology or course provider, or about establishing an accreditation institution.

As part of the survey phase, the Project also reviewed survey formats and collected a large list (3400+) of possible survey participants and media outlets.

Survey

After extensive analysis, the Project broke all social auditing issues into the categories of auditor knowledge, skills & competencies, ethical issues, post audit issues, structural issues, and experience & credentials. While there was certainly overlap between knowledge standards and skills and competencies, in previous stakeholder discussions there was enough differentiation that these two issues were separated in the survey using the definitions at right. To ensure maximum participation, an online SurveyMonkey program was used to enable participants to rate issues within these categories on a scale from one to five, with opportunities to write comments for each question and the option of a follow-up meeting if desired. A copy of the survey analysis and key findings is included in Annex I.

Key Definitions
Knowledge Objectives: Identify and describe the nature of social auditing training standards.
Skill Objectives: Demonstrate skill and competency training standards necessary for social auditors.

The Project promoted and administered the survey to collect information and viewpoints on the multiple, complex issues related to social auditor training standards creation. Throughout the survey period, we did extensive outreach to individuals, companies, NGOs, and other institutions to seek their input. We conducted outreach from the US, Europe, Asia, and Latin America, using a variety of project staff to reach out depending on their relationships and connections. The survey announcement and survey itself were available in four languages: English, French, Spanish, and Chinese.

As it became clear that some individuals and institutions needed more time to complete the survey, we extended the deadline to the start of December 2008.

Apart from the helpful input received via the survey process, we found that this mechanism provided a solid, thorough way by which stakeholders could better understand the nature of our Project. That is, generally, people tend to have vague notions about what standards creation means and how the process might work; but when they engaged with our survey, they were able to see in very specific terms what issues and concepts and debates are involved. Hence, the survey served to bring the discussion of standards creation from a place of vague interest and commitment to one that involves direct grappling with issues and taking stands on multiple, complicated matters.

Survey Results

Participants from the Social Auditor Survey included representatives from 43 countries, with the following major categories: US (45%), UK (11%), China (10%), Canada (5%), and India (3%). In the survey, most questions involved a rating scale, with survey participants asked to rate an issue from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). Here is a sample question from the knowledge section.

How important are the following to a baseline social auditor standard?

	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important
A. Knowledge of ILO core labor standards					
B. Knowledge of the UN Declaration of Human Rights					
C. Basic knowledge of ISO standards					

The survey revealed a higher level of consensus than expected on the majority of core issues, including views on child labor, forced labor, health and safety, freedom of association and collective bargaining, discrimination, disciplinary practices, working hours, and compensation and benefits.

Survey participants agreed that ethics was the most important issue in social auditing. Within knowledge standards, the survey participants had the most consensus on employment-related knowledge such as health and safety regulations, and zero tolerance for issues such as child labor and payroll related knowledge. The survey revealed there is much less consensus among stakeholders regarding previous experience and credentials. The issues of acceptance of other types of certification programs, types of experience that should count, minimum years of work experience and education were not clear cut. Post audit issues and structural considerations had the least consensus and thus indicated a need for the most dialogue. (Structural issues include which workplaces should have a distinct credential, and whether there should be differentiation and specialization in auditor certification by function.) Survey participants clearly felt strongly about the topic of auditor standards, as evidenced by the sixty one pages of comments and suggestions.

Communication and Outreach

From the beginning of this project, input was solicited and discussion fostered among the core and wider stakeholder groups by e-mail, via a Standards Portal -- an on-line wiki – and through periodic conference calls and meetings. The Project relied on extensive lists of stakeholders compiled through years of work in social auditing that contained CSR and business media outlets, academic/research institutions, brands, social auditors, government agencies, investment firms, non-governmental organizations (NGOs),trade unions, and industry associations. The project used Constant Contact to send press releases to stakeholders and media, SurveyMonkey for the two surveys conducted, and MediaWiki as the social auditing wiki platform. The table below summarizes the Project announcements by date and number of stakeholders receiving the email or press release.

Title	Date	# Sent
Social Auditor Standards Survey: Make Your Voice Count	10/8/2008	3,200
Invitation to Participate in the Monitoring Standards Online Discussion	2/10/2009	3,570
Give Your Input on the Draft Social Auditor Standards!	5/18/2009	3,428
Social Auditor Invitation to Participate in China Meeting	6/25/2009	3,290
Last chance to provide input for Social Auditor Standards!	7/1/2009	3,451
Social Auditor Standards Launch	10/16/2009	2,769
Social Auditor Standards Survey: Your Input Counts!	3/4/2010	3,173

The Project contract required four outreach meetings/workshops to gain greater stakeholder participation. We conducted five workshops or meetings with assemblies of stakeholders to disseminate survey results and gain insight into stakeholder views of social auditing issues according to the following schedule:

Location /Date	Presenter
Los Angeles, CA **December 16, 2008**	Dan Viederman (Executive Director, Verité) and Ruth Rosenbaum (Executive Director, CREA)
Delhi, India **February 2009**	Dan Viederman
New York, NY **March 26, 2009**	Ruth Rosenbaum
Amsterdam **April 6, 2009**	Patrick Neyts (Verité consultant)
Verité Office **Shenzhen, China** **July 8, 2009**	Dan Viederman

In addition to the above official workshops, a CREA team member used a travel opportunity to Central America on another matter to gain input and participation from the several NGO monitors in that region, including Grupo de Monitoreo Independiente de El Salvador (GMIES), the Honduran Independent Monitoring Team (EMIH), Center for Research for Feminine Action (CIPAF), and Asociación Servicios de Promoción Laboral (ASEPROLA).

Verité also solicited input from social auditors themselves during RAISE monitor training sessions. For instance, during a RAISE training in China, participants discussed their vision of how auditor certification levels should be organized in the future and how best to learn skills and knowledge needed in social compliance.

Other outreach activities included meetings with the newly created organization, Global Monitoring Institute (GMI) in California. The GMI represents several auditing firms that seek to collaborate on issues common to this nascent profession, including training standards.
In both Europe and the US, the Project also engaged with multilateral development banks that are now rapidly expanding their social compliance efforts, such as the World Bank's IFC, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, and the African Development Bank, as well as development lending and investment arms of national governments, such as the Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO) and the German Development Bank (KfW).

Two important outcomes of the workshops concerned the scope of the standard and the expert committee. Meeting participants suggested it would be most useful to separate out standards according to different levels of expertise. That is, rather than focus (as some proposed in the past) on creating a standard that would encompass all roles and types of social auditors, instead it is more fitting to develop basic, introductory level auditor standards first. Later, a process can be created for differentiation and specialization for higher-level, lead auditors and specialists by business sector and code area. The fact that the social audit field has largely been based heretofore on the assumption that any auditor could do all things and in all sectors has led directly to the state of dissatisfaction with auditors that led to the creation of this Project. For this reason the Project decided to focus on a baseline social auditor standard.

The other important outcome of the meetings and consultations was a message to "get on with the standards" and not use an expert committee to develop standards that some could see as not representing all stakeholders.

Phase I, Objective II: Initiation of Standards Portal
Social Auditor Standards Wiki

The proliferation of platforms for collecting and facilitating input online is extensive and sorting through them to choose the best one for this sensitive project was challenging. Not only were there price considerations, but more importantly, participants are very concerned about privacy, confidentiality, and security issues.

Verité chose to seek dialogue on social monitoring via a wiki for several reasons, including:

> **Objective 2 Overview**
> - Research Wiki formats and determine best type
> - Develop Project wiki at www.wiki.socialauditor.org
> - Communicate wiki creation to stakeholders
> - Launch Standards
> - First public comment period
> - Second public comment period
> - Disseminate findings of wiki

- Foster dialogue toward consensus on training standards
- Delve deeper into topics and in a more public/ accountable way
- Serve as a public bulletin board on social auditing

Below is an example of a page of the wiki during the first comment period, which shows how survey participants ranked different background knowledge issues. Green means survey participants felt these issues were essential to include in a baseline standard, yellow means less consensus but still include in a standard, and red means survey participants felt the issue is not essential for the baseline social auditor standard. Stakeholders were invited to comment on whether they feel this represents a true picture of what a baseline social auditor training credential should include.

Background Knowledge: Which of the items below are essential and which are not essential to a draft training standard?

Green	Yellow	Red
•Basic knowledge of common compliance issues existing in a range of industries commonly audited.	•Differences between announced and unannounced audits and how to behave/react to them. •Typical client requirements regarding social audit implementation. •Differences between generic auditing and social auditing goals, processes, and competencies. •Knowledge of ILO core labor standards •Knowledge of the UN Declaration of Human Rights	•History, content, and purposes of codes of conduct. •Types of social code audits, e.g. first, second, and third-party audits. •Common, recurring compliance issues in specific geographic regions. •Basic knowledge of ISO standards

Throughout the standards setting process, the Project followed the ISEAL code of good practice for standards setting, which not only sets standards for the process of soliciting input, but also calls for documenting how input is processed. The Project documented how all input from the wiki and stakeholder meetings was incorporated into the final standards document and this is attached in the Annex IV.

The Project conducted two public comment periods via wiki, press release, email, and stakeholder meetings to guide the development of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors. The first public input period, from August to October 2008, focused on gaining insights into what should be included in a social auditor standard by using a survey instrument and open-ended questions.

Based on the survey responses and wiki comments, the Social Auditor Standards Project developed a draft version of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors. The second public comment period, from May to August 2009, used press releases, directly mailing the Standards to interested parties, meetings, and stakeholder feedback at www.wiki.socialauditor.org, to solicit recommendations for how to improve the Standards and make them best respond to stakeholder needs.

The final version of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors was launched on October 16, 2009 on the wiki, via press release, and by direct email to 3,500 stakeholders. Although not required by the original project proposal, the draft and final standards were translated into the most important global languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, and French. There was a mechanism on the wiki by which speakers of those languages could access and comment upon the standards in their own language.

Generally, the Project found (as have other groups seeking input via wiki) that while many people read the wiki, most are hesitant to write on it. Some feel a natural reticence about putting opinions out in "cyberspace." Others do not feel completely comfortable giving an opinion that could be misinterpreted or seen as representative of a larger group or company. Nonetheless, we received a good amount of input that has helped to clarify people's positions, interests, and ideas about standards. In terms of site traffic, as of July 30, 2010 the main page had been accessed 12,842 times, the draft standards page 5,980 times, and the discussion page for the draft standards page had been accessed 9,820 times. The following is a screen shot of the Social Auditor Standards wiki as of September 7, 2010. Although the project has ended, Verité and CREA have chosen to keep the wiki available for informational purposes.
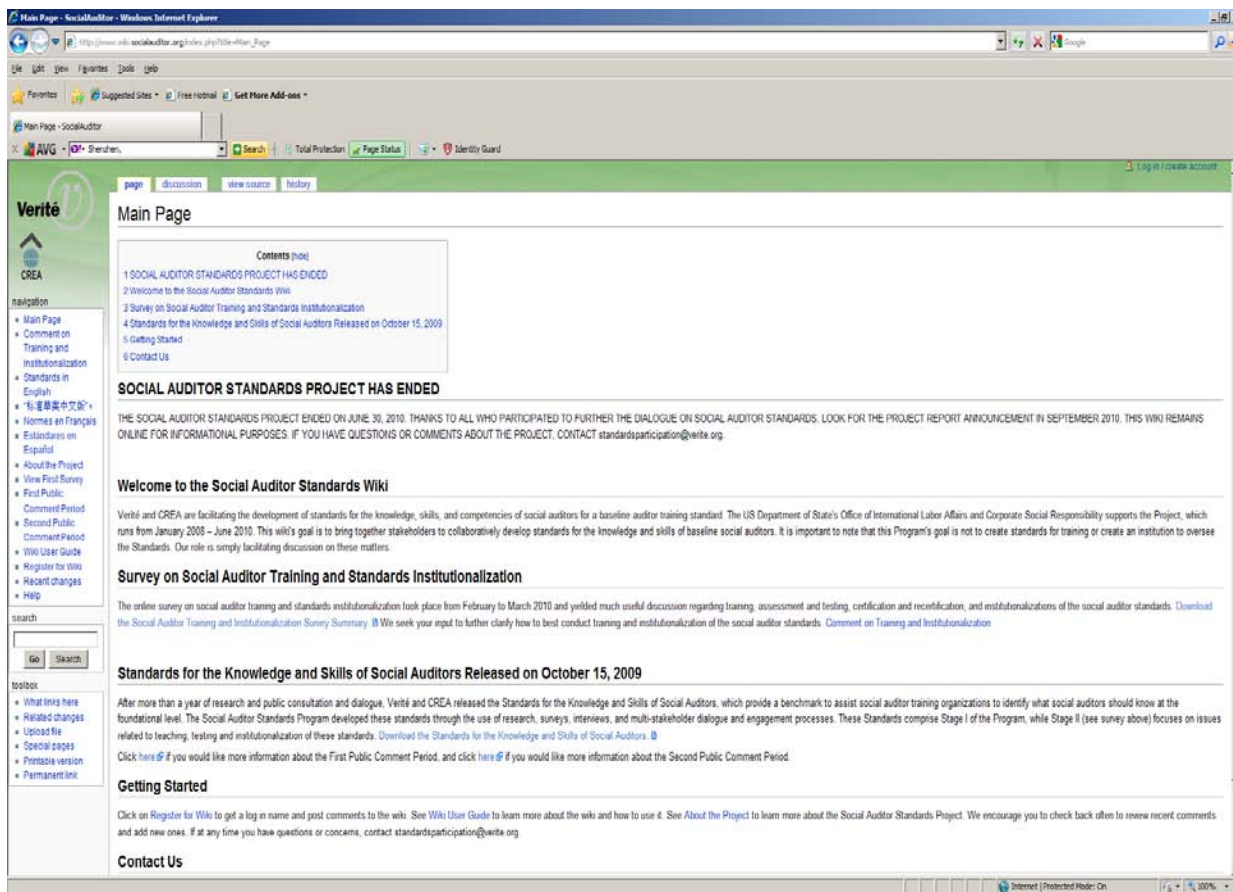
Expert Committee

The Project anticipated forming an expert committee to oversee development of the standards. After initial discussions with stakeholders, the Project tentatively suggested an eight-person expert committee of individuals from a variety of stakeholder groups engaged in social auditing, as shown in the graphic below. Committee tasks were to include: 1) Developing the draft training standards with information from the wiki and stakeholder meetings, and 2) Facilitating discussion of the draft training standards 3) Provide recommendations throughout project.

However, input from stakeholders in the US, Asia and Europe was very clear and strong: namely, that it would be more productive for the Project to post a draft standard to which others can reply, rather than gather issue-based information and rely on an expert committee to draft the standards. Stakeholders felt strongly that there would be too much contention over who would be on the expert committee.

Standards were developed during five meetings of the Verité-CREA Standards Committee, composed of staff from both Verité and CREA. Annex VI shows key project staff.

Standards Launch
In addition to stakeholder feedback through various methods, the Project examined and used existing accreditation schemes where appropriate, recognizing that significant work has already been done to bring consistency to the field of social auditing. The Standards were informed by:

- AA1000 Assurance Standard 2008
- Board of Environmental, Health & Safety Auditor Certifications (BEAC), Standards for the Professional Practice of EHS Auditing
- GRI, Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, 2006
- Global Supply Chain Programme (GSCP) documents
- ILO publications on labor inspection and Core Conventions
- IRCA Certification as a Social Systems Auditor: Criteria for Certification as a Social Systems Auditor, 2008
- ISEAL Code of Good Practice and Guidance for Setting Social and Environmental Standards, Draft Version, July 2009
- Practice of Environmental, Health and Safety Auditing, 1999
- Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) Guide to Social Systems Auditor Competencies
- Social Accountability International standards and publications
- Social Accountability Accreditation Services standards and publications

Based on desk research, survey responses, stakeholder consultations, wiki comments, and comments by the Project Standards committee, the standards were developed and launched on October 16, 2009. Standards were grouped into the following categories:

- **Essential Knowledge Standards (EK)**
  Essential knowledge for social auditors refers to knowledge applicable in the field that is relevant to the task at hand including:
  1. Labor Standards, Laws, and Regulations
  2. Health and Safety Standards
  3. Essential Auditing Knowledge

- **Essential Auditing Skills Standards (ES)**
  Essential auditing skills for social auditors refers to skills required for a foundational social auditor course including auditing skills, communication and inter-personal relation skills, and personal standards.   The skills section includes essential communication and inter-personal relation skills (ECS) and personal standards (EPS).

- **Desirable But Not Essential Knowledge and Skills**
  Social auditor attributes considered desirable not essential by stakeholder feedback on the wiki, survey and stakeholder meetings were grouped under the heading Desirable but Not Essential Knowledge and Skills. These knowledge and skills were considered desirable by stakeholders and should also be considered as important components of a foundational social auditor certification course.

Due to stakeholder feedback we included new sections of the Standards on discrimination, gender and how to scope and plan an audit. For instance, a group involved in workplace health programs, Extending Service Delivery (ESD), suggested that auditors needed to learn about legal and other standards for protecting and promoting worker health, including reproductive health.

The Standards are found in Annex II.

Phase II: Pilot Testing and Promulgation of a Training Plan

As originally conceived, in Phase II the Project would evaluate approaches to testing the knowledge and skills of social monitors, and make recommendations regarding on-line knowledge tests, protocols and criteria for field based observation auditing, protocols for face-to-face practicum, protocols for re-testing, and protocols for intermediate qualification.

PHASE II Overview
Research teaching approaches
Consultations with stakeholders at workshops and via wiki
Develop survey on testing and institutionalization
Launch survey
Survey analysis
Survey results launched via press release and wiki

RAISE, the social auditing training partnership of Verité and CREA, was to develop the training criteria and pilot test the approaches. However, social auditing groups felt RAISE may have a vested interest in the training component and would become the de facto standards organization. In the workshops and in face to face meetings the Project team found some stakeholders unwilling to collaborate.   At meetings and consultations, we actively reminded stakeholders that the Project is not designed to create one sort of training course or dictate curricula for social auditors, but rather to facilitate discussion and practical experimentation on what sorts of training activities will best equip social auditors with the skills and knowledge embodied in the standards created.

For this reason the Project changed course and developed a survey instrument for stakeholders. Also, RAISE was discontinued. In February 2010, the Social Auditor Survey on Training and Institutionalization was sent to over 3,000 stakeholders including social auditing organizations, brands, trade unions, multistakeholder initiatives, NGOs, investors, and suppliers. The Survey remained open until March 26, 2010. The Survey focused on four key areas of the Social Auditor Standards: 1) training, 2) assessment and testing, 3) certification and recertification, and 4) institutionalization. The survey included a range of issues about best approaches to training, such as: which training elements should be mandatory or voluntary; how courses should be structured and how trainees should be tested. As we learned in the earlier standards-creation process, the survey-then-wiki process enabled people from around the world to give input in a convenient way and then learn (and respond to) what others think.   Major findings of the survey by topic include:

Training
- A variety of different training mediums should be used, without relying exclusively on online, face to face meetings or field activities.
- Hands-on practical experience could be gained through on the job training, shadow audits, role playing, and partnering with a third party monitor.
- A baseline social auditor training program should include field observation by senior auditors.
- Training components should be broken up into modules with testing between modules.
- Mentoring and internships could help students integrate the baseline social auditor training program into the student's work schedule.
- There should be a maximum time limit between the time a student begins and completes a baseline social auditor course. (82% replied "Yes")
- There was no consensus on the length of time for a baseline social auditor course, with suggestions

ranging from two to three days to three months.

Assessment and Testing
- Oral exercises, written quizzes, written exams, and written evaluations by supervisors are useful ways to gauge a student's progress in a baseline social auditor training course.
- Shadow auditing was very important in order to verify a baseline social auditor certification (67%)
- Evaluations by course supervisors are very important to determine the student's ability to implement what was learned in the training course.

Certification and Recertification
- The social auditor certification should be valid for one to three years (68%)
- There should be a process for testing out of the baseline social auditor training (59%)
- Years of experience, number of audits and a certificate from an existing, validated course are all valid criteria for testing out.
- There was no consensus on the mandatory requirements for social auditor recertification. Suggestions included refresher training, completion of a benchmark such as witness audit, a yearly brush-up exam, and online testing. Responses were also mixed regarding the prerequisites for the baseline social auditor training course.

Institutionalization:
- There should be one social auditor standards organization.
- The social auditor standards organization should have many roles, including maintaining standards, accrediting training institutions, offering certificates, and maintaining a registry of certified individuals.
- There should be a process by which training institutions recognize the baseline certification of an auditor when s/he seeks a more advanced course from another provider (93%)
- There should be a mechanism by which an individual's baseline social auditor certification can be revoked, particularly for corruption, integrity issues, and incompetence.
- An independent complaints mechanism should be used for lodging and verifying complaints.
- Survey participants felt mixed about the structure of the body(ies) that manage the Standards and accredit training organizations. They also had mixed responses about how the certification could be financed, with some feeling it should be financed by individuals taking the course, and others feeling it is the responsibility of the audit company.

Results of the survey were broadcast to media and stakeholders via press releases, direct emails, and via the wiki. A copy of the survey and the survey analysis is found in Annex III.

Phase III: Establish Process for Updating the Standards

PHASE III Overview
- Review institutionalization methods of other standards
- Develop stakeholder survey on institutionalization
- Launch survey via press release, direct mail, and wiki
- Survey analysis

<table>
<tr><td>• Disseminate survey findings via press release, direct mail, and wiki</td></tr>
</table>

In the project proposal, Verité and CREA spoke of facilitating the creation of a Stewardship Advisory Council whose responsibility is the periodic review of the standards. The idea was to form a council with representation for all relevant stakeholder groups: business, NGO, labor, union, multistakeholder groups, academia, and government. including representatives from the US and other countries whenever possible. The Stewardship Advisory Council was to provide advice regarding course review, skills development models and other components of the certification system. The Stewardship Advisory Council was to be an established structural component of RAISE. However, as with the expert committee and training curriculum, stakeholders felt a more neutral, organic approach to institutionalization would be better. To this end, issues related to methods to "institutionalize" the standards were also included in the survey and wiki process described above. This included questions regarding how an accreditation-type body should be structured and governed and how long certificates should be valid. This project was *not* structured to institutionalize the standards in the form of a training or accreditation body, but we pulled together the opinions and ideas of participants to produce a report with recommendations and potential pathways to institutionalization, found in Annex VI.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There has been a critical gap in social auditor monitoring that has resulted in incomplete, piecemeal and non-aligned certification offerings. The issue has been contentious for several years. This project served to bring together stakeholders in a neutral environment to discuss auditor standards, accreditation, continuing education and other auditing issues.

The following are major recommendations gleaned from stakeholder meetings and individual expert conferences, and through findings from the surveys, wiki, and standards development process.

Brands are eager partners in standard setting activities
Brands are eager to develop a unified social auditor standard and were receptive to discussions with project personnel. Brands provided in-kind support for the project by hosting and advertising meetings with different stakeholders at their facilities.

Success can be achieved in different ways
Recognizing the lack of a unified standard, several other social auditor projects are currently developing their own standards, including ISEAL, BEAC, and EICC. Coordinating with these projects, which were at different stages of development, proved difficult. In addition, each standards project had a slightly different focus. A compelling model to use for future standards activities is when EICC decided to incorporate the Project's standards into their own standards-setting activities for the electronics industry.

Wiki doesn't replace face to face contact
The wiki is not as effective as face to face meetings and direct mailings to gain insight into stakeholder viewpoints. The Project found that while stakeholders would visit the wiki to view documents, they were reluctant to upload their thoughts, thus negating the interactive nature of the wiki.

Flexibility was needed to circumvent conflict

The project did not continue as originally planned due to the perceived threat social auditing organizations felt with the idea of Verité and CREA developing and implementing the training and serving in an institutionalization capacity.

Institutionalization and continuing education remain contentious issues

Institutionalization and continuing education were such contentious issues that no consensus has yet emerged from the dialogue on these two subjects.

Ambivalence regarding standard-bearer

Social auditing organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders are ambivalent about which organization should carry on the standards, and reacted quite territorially about institutionalizing the standards. Given this ambivalence, and the reluctance to endorse competitors, it is best to encourage different social auditor organizations to incorporate the standards into their own programs without naming one agency as the standard-bearer. Perhaps a better long term solution is to institutionalize training and training standards in academic institutions. Social auditors could emulate the systems used by other professionals, such as accountants and medical professionals who seek training in accredited colleges and universities.

More work still needed on synchronizing training programs

The project did not resolve all conflicts regarding synchronizing training programs among different social auditor organizations. Additional effort is needed to increase awareness of the need for uniformity in training and accreditation programs.

Results and Analysis of the Social Auditor Standards Survey

December 2008

About Verité

Verité is an independent, not-for-profit social auditing, research, and training organization based in Amherst, Massachusetts, USA. Verité's mission is to ensure that people worldwide work under safe, fair and legal conditions. Since 1995, Verité has conducted over 1,500 comprehensive factory evaluations for multinational corporations and local suppliers in 60 countries; numerous factory-based management training and worker education programs in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East; and research for socially concerned investors worldwide.

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About CREA

CREA is a social economic research and education not-for-profit institution with over a decade of CSR experience in monitoring and education. Starting with the foundational work of the Independent Monitoring Working Group (IMWG) with Gap in Central America, CREA has been involved in social compliance monitoring including the development of codes, compliance systems and trainings. More recently CREA has been instrumental in such initiatives as Project Kaleidoscope in China with Disney and McDonald's. CREA operates through an internal network of partner NGOs. All of CREA's projects require collaborative standard setting, facilitation, education of multi-stakeholder constituencies as well as the creation of education and management tools for on-going use.

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About this report

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I. INTRODUCTION

Verité and CREA are facilitating a process to further the development of standards for the knowledge, skills, and competencies of social auditors with the financial support of the US Department of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility. The project runs from January 2008 to December 2009, and promotes dialogue among stakeholders on social auditor standards through surveys, a wiki, conferences and meetings with the goal of developing a comprehensive set of training standards for the knowledge and skills of social auditors.

The Project has several steps, including identifying the essential components of a draft standard through a stakeholder survey, dialogue on those standards via a wiki and face to face meetings, development of draft standards and pilot testing of training standards with training institutions, and dialogue and recommendations for institutionalization of the standards. These steps are show below.

Identify essentials of draft standard with survey → Dialogue on standards via wiki and face to face meetings → Draft Standards and pilot test with training institutions → Dialogue and recommendations for institutionalization of standards

Goal: comprehensive set of training standards for the knowledge and skills of social auditors
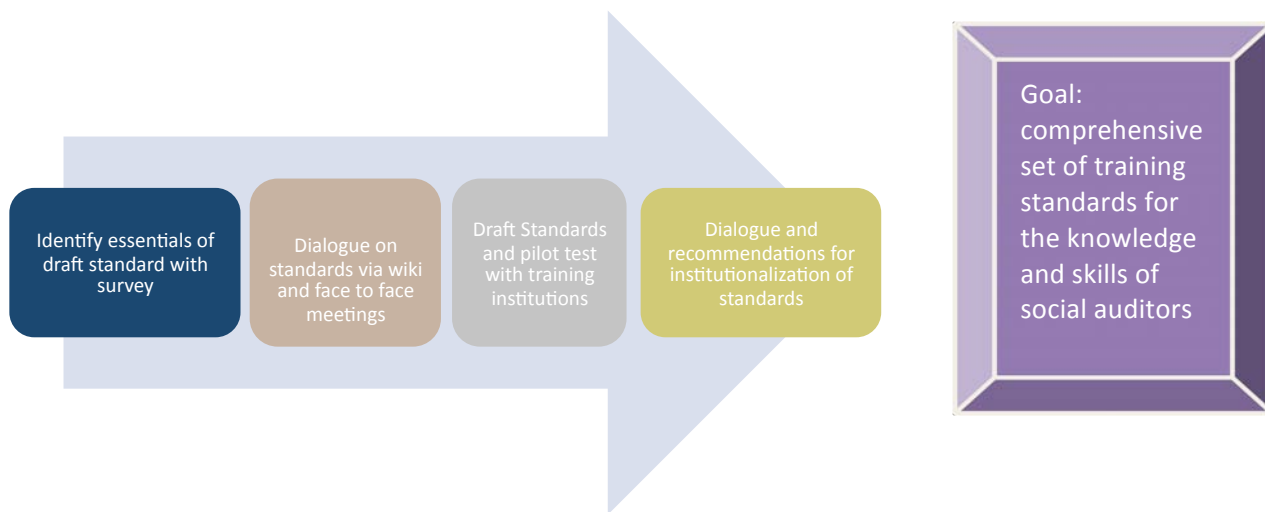
The Project focuses on facilitating the development of standards for social auditors, and is not concerned with code harmonization, standards for audit methodology, standards for remediation, standards for how audit groups/firms should be evaluated or accredited as institutions, creation of a single training methodology or course provider, or establishing an accreditation institution. The Project timeline is shown below. The project is currently in the Consensus Building and Forums stage.

Timeline

Phase	Activity	Dates
1	Outreach to major stakeholders; Research & compile input on items for survey consideration; Dialogue with stakeholders to determine methodology and survey design	January-August 2008
2	Survey and Survey Analysis	August-December 2008
3	Consensus Building & Forums	December 2008-June 2009
4	Expert Review Committee on Standards	Summer 2009

| 5 | Pilot-testing of training approaches | July-October 2009 |
| 6 | Dialogue/consensus building around institutionalizing draft standards; forums | November-December 2009 |

Survey Design

After extensive research and stakeholder outreach, Verité and CREA launched the Social Auditor Standards Survey in August, 2008 in English, French, Spanish and Chinese. The survey was based on findings from stakeholder meetings held over the past several years with a goal of determining those issues which stakeholders found most essential to a baseline social auditor standard, and those issues where more dialogue was necessary to reach consensus. The Survey is grouped under the following categories, which correspond to the topics that provoked the most discussion at previous social auditor stakeholder meetings:

While there is certainly overlap between knowledge standards and skills and competencies, in previous stakeholder discussions there was enough differentiation that these two issues are separated here.

In the survey, most questions involved a rating scale, with survey participants asked to rate an issue from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). Here is a sample question from the knowledge section.

How important are the following to a baseline social auditor standard?

	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important
A. Knowledge of ILO core labor standards					
B. Knowledge of the UN Declaration of Human Rights					
C. Basic knowledge of ISO standards					

Survey responses, which were collected until December 1, 2008, were extremely positive, with 87% of the survey rated above a "3". Since survey responses were so positive, CREA and Verité wanted to be sensitive to where there were hints of differences. Since "4" also shows the issue is very important, for this survey analysis, 4 +5 were added together to insure all those who found the topic important are represented.

The stoplight approach was used for survey analysis so viewers can easily determine how survey participants felt about each issue. Responses are categorized as essential to a baseline standard if over 90% of respondents rate the issue a 4 or 5, important and worthy of further clarification if 75%-90% rate the issue a 4 or 5, and ambivalent and requiring further discussion/clarification if 50%-75% rated the issue a 4 or 5. Thus in the detailed analysis section below, all responses display the following color coding:

🟩	*ESSENTIAL: >90% when 4 and 5 added together*
🟨	*VERY IMPORTANT: 75%-90% rated the issue a 4 or 5*
🟥	*NEEDS ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION: 50%-75% rated the issue a 4 or 5*

The survey results are posted on a wiki at http://www.wiki.socialauditor.org/ and stakeholders are invited to comment on the findings and clarify their position on issues of consensus and non-alignment. The survey and wiki are mechanisms for fostering dialogue toward consensus. They are used to hone the discussion and point toward a clear picture of what the broader community wants for the standard.

This survey analysis is grouped into three sections: Section 1 provides an introduction to the survey, Section II has a summary of key findings, and Section III includes a detailed survey analysis by question. Readers are urged to Ctrl + Click on the "Comments" button after each question to link to all comments for that particular question, which are found in the Annex. This document is available on the www.socialauditor.org website and the wiki at http://www.wiki.socialauditor.org/.

II. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

CREA and Verité are grateful to all the survey participants who took the time to rate the social auditing issues and share their thoughts. Their input is gratefully appreciated, and will inform the next stage of the Social Auditor Standards Project.

Survey Responses by Country of Origin in Percent

India 3%
Canada 5%
China 10%
UK 11%
US 45%

0% 20% 40% 60%
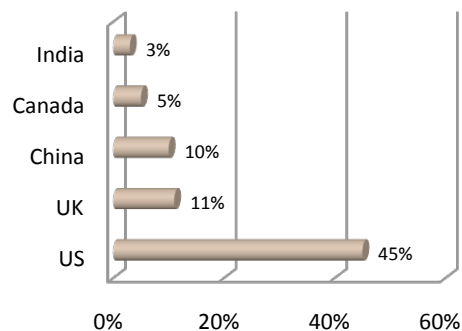
The survey's reach was truly global, and representatives from 43 countries participated, with a total of 282 survey responses. As the chart shows, 45% of survey participants are from the US, 11% are from the UK, 10% from China, 5% from Canada, and 3% from India.

Survey Responses by Employer in Percent
The survey had broad participation from academic/ research institutions, brands, social auditors, government agencies, investment firms, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and trade/industry associations. As the chart illustrates, the largest stakeholder group represented in the survey was brands (42%), followed by NGOs (26%), social auditing firms (17%), and academic/research institutions (5%).
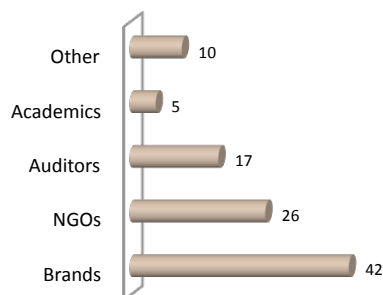
Other 10
Academics 5
Auditors 17
NGOs 26
Brands 42

Not surprisingly, there is much consensus around many of the issues, since stakeholders at various meetings have been talking about the importance of these issues for a very long time. In fact 87% of the survey was rated above a "3". Using the stoplight scale shown above, 51% of the survey questions were rated essential, 36% were deemed very important, and 13% need further discussion because they were not rated highly.

Percent of Survey Issues Rated Essential, Very Important, and Needs Additional Discussion

13%

51%

36%

- ■ Essential
- ■ Very important
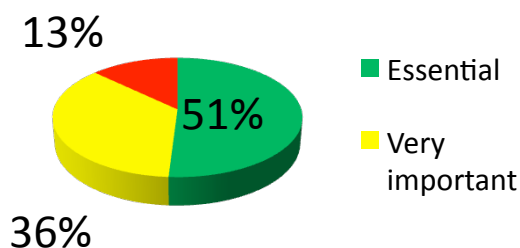
For this survey analysis, topics have been grouped into areas of consensus, areas of mixed consensus, and areas of non-alignment. Areas of consensus are those in which the majority of topics were rated essential. Areas of mixed consensus are those topics in which survey respondents rated most issues at the 75%-90% level. Finally, areas of non-alignment are those in which, using the stoplight scale above, many survey respondents felt some issues within a category should NOT be included in a baseline standard.

Areas of Consensus

Ethics

100%
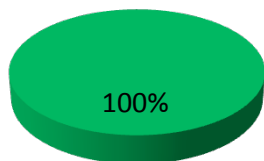
 Survey participants had greatest consensus regarding ethics issues. In fact, 100% of the ethics questions were considered essential by participants, which highlights its importance to social auditing. Respondents rated all ethical considerations, including conflict of interest, worker protection, audit-related reprisals, bribery, post-audit issues and zero tolerance issues essential with combined responses of 4 +5 at 94% to 98%. **For a detailed look at ethics issues, Ctrl + Click here.**

Skills and Competencies

2%

28%

70%
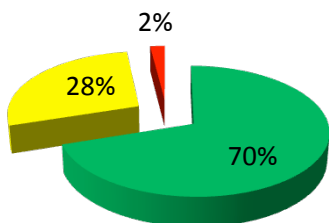
Survey participants also rated skills and competencies highly, with 70% of the issues rated essential, 28% important, and just 2% needing additional discussion/clarification, as the pie chart shows. **For a detailed look at skills and competencies, Ctrl + Click here.**

Areas of Mixed Consensus

Other areas of the survey were not as clear cut, and indicate where the wiki and face-to-face meetings need to focus to reach consensus.

Knowledge Standards

13%

42%

45%
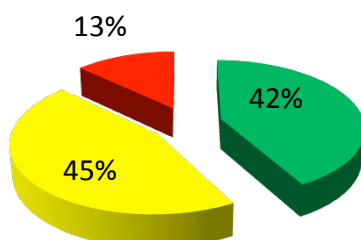
For knowledge standards, 42% of the items listed were considered essential, 45% important, and 13% needing further discussion. Within knowledge standards, there appears to be the most consensus about employment-related knowledge such as health and safety regulations, zero tolerance issues such as child labor, and payroll related knowledge. **For a detailed look at knowledge standards, Ctrl + Click here.**

Previous Experience and Credentials

14%

43%

43%
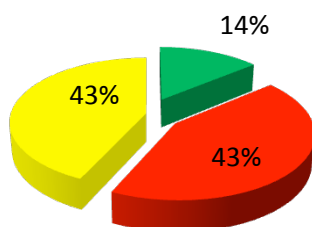
Previous experience and credentials was more divisive, with only 14% of the issues considered essential. The issues of acceptance of other certification programs, types of experience that should count, minimum years of work experience and education were not clear cut, which indicates further dialogue is needed. Additional dialogue will help determine which of these issues is essential and which are beyond the scope of a baseline social auditor standard. **For a detailed look at previous experience and credentials, Ctrl + Click here.**

Areas of Non-Alignment

There were also areas of non-alignment, in which survey participants felt most of the issues within a category should NOT be included in a baseline standard according to the stoplight scale.

Post Audit Issues

30%

70%
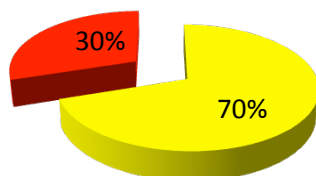
For Post Audit topics, no issues were considered essential, and 84% of survey participants felt it was important at the 75%-90% level for an auditor to meet standards related to post-audit activities. There was less consensus about which types of Post-Audit topics were important. **For a detailed look at Post-Audit issues, Ctrl + Click here.**

Structural Considerations

14%

86%
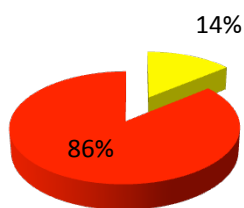
For Structural Considerations, there was no clear consensus for which workplaces should have a distinct credential (electronics factory, apparel factory, farm/plantation, toy factory, other), and only 37% of survey participants felt there should be differentiation and specialization in auditor certification by function. Given the lack of consensus of these issues, it is important to determine whether any of these topics should be included in a baseline standard through dialogue on the wiki and other forms of outreach and discussion. **For a detailed look at Structural Considerations, Ctrl + Click here.**

Differences by Constituency

When the survey was filtered by constituency, we found, not surprisingly, that social auditors focus more on skills and competencies, NGOs focus more on employee issues, and brands are concerned with insuring their suppliers are following the rules. The table below indicates the issues where each of the three major constituent groups (brands, NGOs and social auditors) rate higher than the survey average.

Brands	NGOs	Social Auditors
-Freedom of movement -Abuse issues -Minimum level of education required -Types of experience that should count	-Importance of standards -wages, benefits and hours -FOA -Behavior traits -Audit preparation skills -Professional behavior skills -Language requirements -Post audit activities -Acceptance of other certification programs	-Management systems -Document review & visual inspection -Child & forced labor -Behavior traits -Audit preparation and planning -Physical inspection skills -Worker interviews -Resourcefulness -Ethical considerations -Post-audit activities& topics -Differentiation/specialization

III. DETAILED FINDINGS BY SECTION

For the following survey, responses are categorized as essential to a baseline standard if over 90% of respondents rate the issue a 4 or 5, important if 75%-90% rate the issue a 4 or 5, and needing more dialogue if 75% or less rate the issue a 4 or 5.

To jump to a specific section, Ctrl + Click on it in the Table of Contents or the list below. To view the comments for each question, Ctrl + Click on the comment button following the question.

SURVEY OVERVIEW SECTION

1. Representatives of 43 countries took the Social Auditor Standards Survey.[1] Forty-five percent are from the US, 11% are from the UK, 10% from China, 5% from Canada, and 3% from India.

2.   Just under half of survey participants (42%) work for a brand, followed by NGOs (26%), social auditing firms (17%), and academic/research institutions (5%). However, there were 42 respondents who wrote another category, the largest being "independent consultant".

I work for a:	Response Percent
Academic/research institution	4.9%
Company (such as a brand) that employs and/or contracts with Social auditors	**42.0%**
Company that does social auditing for others	16.9%
Government agency	2.5%
Investment firm or fund	4.9%
Non-governmental organization (NGO)	25.9%
Trade/industry association	2.9%

KNOWLEDGE STANDARDS

1. Survey participants rated the following background knowledge categories as important or very important to a basic standard, with common compliance issues in a range of industries and in specific geographic regions as essential:

Basic knowledge of common compliance issues existing in a range of industries commonly audited: 91%
Typical client requirements regarding social audit implementation: 80%
Differences between generic auditing and social auditing goals, processes, and competencies: 82%
Differences between announced and unannounced audits and how to behave/react to them: 78%

History and content of codes of conduct, types of social audits, and common, recurring compliance issues in specific geographic regions was rated not important.

1. Please rate the following areas of background knowledge for the baseline social auditor standard.

---

[1] Survey participants came from the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Haiti, India, Ireland, Italy, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, US, and Vietnam.

1. Please rate the following areas of background knowledge for the baseline social auditor standard.						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. History, content, and purposes of codes of conduct.	0.5%	6.8%	23.7%	26.9%	**42.0%**	69%
B. Types of social code audits, e.g. first, second, and third-party audits.	1.4%	7.8%	27.6%	**32.3%**	30.9%	63%
C. Differences between announced and unannounced audits and how to behave/react to them.	0.9%	5.0%	16.1%	31.2%	**46.8%**	78%
D. Typical client requirements regarding social audit implementation.	1.4%	2.8%	15.6%	34.9%	**45.4%**	80%
E. Differences between generic auditing and social auditing goals, processes, and competencies.	0.5%	2.3%	15.1%	38.1%	**44.0%**	82%
F. Basic knowledge of common compliance issues existing in a range of industries commonly audited.	0.0%	0.9%	7.8%	33.0%	**58.3%**	91%
G. Common, recurring compliance issues in specific geographic regions.	0.0%	2.3%	7.3%	32.6%	**57.8%**	69%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

2. The majority of survey participants felt that background knowledge of ILO and UN are important to a baseline auditor standard, but only 62% also felt ISO standards were important.

2. How important are the following to a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. Knowledge of ILO core labor standards	0.5%	1.8%	12.4%	26.3%	**59.0%**	85%
B. Knowledge of the UN Declaration of Human Rights	0.5%	2.8%	18.9%	36.9%	**41.0%**	78%
C. Basic knowledge of ISO standards	1.9%	7.9%	28.4%	**38.1%**	23.7%	62%

| Comment |

Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

3. When numbers 4 + 5 below are added together, it shows 95% of participants felt auditors should know the legal standards in-country.

3. How important is it for a baseline social auditor to have knowledge of the legal standards in the country(ies) where audits are being done?	
	Response Percent
1: Not important	0.0%
2	0.5%
3	4.7%
4	16.3%
5: Very important	**78.6%**
4+5	**95%**

Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

| Comment |

4. Survey participants felt all health and safety knowledge listed was very important to a baseline auditor standard except ergonomic standards (70%) and health and safety regulations regarding employee transportation (69%). Standards related to fire safety, emergency evacuation, chemical safety, and personal protection all scored above 90%.

4. Which of these types of health and safety knowledge are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5: Very important**	**4 + 5**
A. Fire safety, emergency and evacuation laws and policies.	0.5%	0.0%	7.9%	23.8%	**67.8%**	92%
B. Standards related to ventilation, lighting, and noise.	0.0%	0.0%	12.6%	40.7%	**46.7%**	87%

4. Which of these types of health and safety knowledge are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?						
C. Standards related to chemical safety.	0.0%	0.5%	8.0%	25.8%	**65.7%**	92%
D. Standards related to machine and equipment safety.	0.0%	0.0%	10.4%	28.9%	**60.7%**	90%
E. Ergonomic standards for seating, machinery, etc.	0.9%	2.8%	26.3%	**43.7%**	26.3%	70%
F. Standards related to personal protection equipment types, usage, common practices.	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%	29.0%	**61.7%**	91%
G. Standards regarding hygiene of facilities, such as toilets/washrooms.	0.0%	1.4%	13.6%	41.6%	**43.5%**	85%
H. Standards regarding provision and safety of drinking water.	0.0%	1.4%	9.0%	31.6%	**58.0%**	90%
I. Sanitation and other standards related to on-site canteens or other eating facilities.	0.0%	1.4%	17.1%	34.6%	**46.9%**	82%
J. Standards related to sanitation, safety, and security of dormitories.	0.0%	2.4%	13.7%	36.3%	**47.6%**	84%
K. Applicable health/safety standards relating to employer-provided transportation.	1.4%	2.4%	27.0%	**37.4%**	31.8%	69%
L. Pregnancy, maternity leave, menstrual, and breastfeeding leave and benefits.	0.5%	0.9%	13.3%	32.7%	**52.6%**	85%
M. On-site health care provision laws and regulations.	0.0%	0.9%	15.2%	33.2%	**50.7%**	84%

Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

[Comment]

5. Survey respondents felt baseline social auditors should have a strong knowledge of laws and regulations regarding employment, wages, benefits and hours of work. The highest-rated option was "Legal and code standards on minimum, regular, and overtime wages" with 93%.

5. Which of these types of knowledge related to employment, wages, benefits and hours of work are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?					
	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5

5. Which of these types of knowledge related to employment, wages, benefits and hours of work are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?

A. Laws and regulations related to nondiscrimination at the worksite.	0.0%	0.5%	8.5%	28.0%	**63.0%**	91%
B. Typical payroll and timekeeping systems.	0.5%	0.9%	8.0%	27.4%	**63.2%**	91%
C. Legal and code standards on minimum, regular, and overtime wages.	0.5%	0.5%	5.7%	20.9%	**72.5%**	93%
D. Legal and code standards on benefits, deductions, and bonuses.	0.5%	0.5%	10.0%	21.8%	**67.3%**	89%
E. Typical seniority, leave, and holiday calculations.	0.5%	1.4%	17.1%	33.6%	**47.4%**	81%
F. Productivity incentives and attendance bonuses.	0.9%	1.9%	19.9%	36.0%	**41.2%**	77%
G. Laws, regulations, and/or conventional practices regarding notice, resignation, and termination.	0.5%	1.0%	10.0%	24.3%	**64.3%**	89%

[Comment] Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

6. Knowledge related to brand sourcing practices, production processes and management systems were rated lower by participants than other types of business practice knowledge.

6. Which of these types of knowledge related to management systems and business processes/practices are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?

	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. Management systems (productivity, environmental, quality, etc.)	0.0%	1.4%	20.2%	37.6%	**40.8%**	78%
B. Compliance management systems.	0.0%	0.9%	14.0%	35.5%	**49.5%**	85%

6. Which of these types of knowledge related to management systems and business processes/practices are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?

C. Human resources requirements, systems, and practices.	0.0%	0.9%	9.4%	40.4%	**49.3%**	90%	
D. Factory operations and systems as they impact the audit process.	0.0%	1.4%	14.0%	**47.2%**	37.4%	85%	
E. Production processes.	0.0%	3.3%	26.8%	**46.0%**	23.9%	70%	
F. Authorized and unauthorized subcontracting and home-work practices.	0.0%	1.4%	12.7%	29.6%	**56.3%**	86%	
G. Brand sourcing practices.	1.4%	6.1%	23.9%	**43.7%**	24.9%	69%	
H. Socio-cultural differences in compliance approaches.	0.5%	0.9%	18.5%	**40.8%**	39.3%	80%	

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

7. Participants felt knowledge related to document review and visual inspection was essential to a baseline social auditor standard, with the highest percentage, 97%, for knowledge of typical records that need to be reviewed during a social audit.

7. Which of these types of knowledge related to documents review and visual inspection are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?

	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. The purpose and processes of visual inspection.	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	25.1%	**67.8%**	93%
B. Typical records that need to be reviewed during a social audit, including payroll and time records.	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	20.4%	**76.3%**	97%
C. Common methods of document manipulation.	0.0%	0.9%	4.7%	19.8%	**74.5%**	94%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

8. Participants felt it is essential that baseline social auditors know laws and regulations related to child labor, forced labor and harassment/abuse.

8. Which of these types of knowledge related to child, forced labor, and harassment/abuse are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. Laws and regulations on minimum hiring age and work restrictions for juvenile workers.	0.0%	0.5%	5.2%	13.2%	81.1%	94%
B. Common practices (including best practices) in age verification and documentation.	0.0%	0.9%	7.5%	23.6%	67.9%	92%
C. Laws and regulations regarding harassment and abuse.	0.0%	0.5%	7.5%	22.2%	69.8%	92%
D. Standards and practices related to discipline.	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	32.4%	60.5%	93%
E. Standards and practices related to freedom of movement.	0.0%	0.5%	7.6%	28.1%	63.8%	92%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

9. 91% of survey participants felt freedom of association and collective bargaining laws and typical ways in which freedom of association is restricted were essential. The only category that did not receive 75% of survey responses was employer and industrial associations and how they work.

9. Which of the following types of knowledge related to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining should be included in a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. Freedom of association and collective bargaining laws and regulations at the national/regional level.	0.0%	1.9%	7.6%	23.7%	66.8%	91%

9. Which of the following types of knowledge related to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining should be included in a baseline social auditor standard?						
B. Knowledge of typical ways in which freedom of association is restricted.	0.0%	1.4%	9.1%	23.9%	**65.6%**	90%
C. Unions, their structures, and how they operate.	0.5%	3.8%	20.5%	**45.2%**	30.0%	75%
D. Collective bargaining processes and agreements.	0.0%	1.9%	15.8%	**41.1%**	**41.1%**	82%
E. Non-union forms of worker organizations.	0.0%	2.9%	15.8%	**42.1%**	39.2%	81%
F. Employer and industrial associations and how they operate.	1.0%	3.3%	23.0%	**45.5%**	27.3%	73%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

10. Survey respondents felt all knowledge listed related to worker interviews was essential to a baseline standard, including sampling, cultural issues, off-site interviewing issues, dynamics of worker communities, and grievance mechanisms, with sampling receiving the highest score of 95%.

10. How important are the following types of knowledge related to worker interviews for a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. Appropriate ways to choose a representative sample of workers for interviewing and other purposes, including vulnerable groups of workers.	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	18.4%	**76.9%**	95%
B. Strengths, weaknesses, and proper cultural circumstances related to individual or group interviews.	0.0%	0.5%	6.6%	25.6%	**67.3%**	93%
C. Strengths, weaknesses, safety, confidentiality, and proper cultural circumstances related to off-site interviews.	0.0%	0.5%	6.2%	26.7%	**66.7%**	93%
D. Appropriate venues for worker interviews.	0.5%	0.5%	5.7%	29.4%	**64.0%**	93%

10. How important are the following types of knowledge related to worker interviews for a baseline social auditor standard?						
E. Familiarity with typical social, economic and cultural dynamics of workers' communities.	0.0%	0.5%	12.3%	31.3%	**55.9%**	87%
F. Methods of worker coaching and intimidation.	0.0%	0.9%	6.2%	30.3%	**62.6%**	93%
G. Typical grievance mechanisms.	0.5%	0.5%	11.4%	29.9%	**57.8%**	88%

[Comment] Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

11. Are there other categories of knowledge that you believe are essential for the baseline auditor standard? If so, what are they?

[Comment] Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

12. Additional comments:

[Comment] Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

1. Survey respondents felt objectivity, open-mindedness, perceptiveness, empathy, and discretion were all essential to a baseline social auditor standard.

1. How important are the following behavior traits in a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Objective: able to make impartial assessment of a situation or issue.	0.0%	0.5%	2.2%	14.8%	**82.5%**	97%
B. Open-minded: able to withhold judgment and seek new perspectives, opinions, and explanations.	0.5%	0.5%	3.3%	20.3%	**75.3%**	96%

1. How important are the following behavior traits in a baseline social auditor standard?						
C. Perceptive: aware of and able to understand complex situations and hidden causes of problems.	0.5%	0.5%	1.6%	17.0%	**80.2%**	97%
D. Empathetic: possess ability to understand perspectives and perceptions of all people encountered in a social audit.	0.5%	0.5%	4.9%	30.6%	**63.4%**	94%
E. Discreet: able and committed to maintain the confidence of all sources and parties and keep findings, business information, documents, and other data totally confidential.	0.5%	0.5%	1.6%	17.0%	**80.2%**	97%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

2. Survey respondents felt strong investigative skills, analytical skills, and problem-solving skills were essential to a social auditor standard, with responses at 93% and above.

2. How important are the following professional skills for the baseline auditor standard?						
	1: Not important	2	3	4	5: Very important	4 + 5
A. Strong investigative skills: enable a social auditor to identify non-compliance and management systems issues.	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	24.9%	**73.5%**	98%
B. Strong analytical skills, including ability to triangulate information from different sources for accuracy and credibility.	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	16.7%	**80.0%**	97%
C. Problem solving skills, including ability to know when and how to conduct a focused investigation.	0.6%	0.6%	5.6%	22.8%	**70.6%**	93%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

3. Survey respondents felt audit preparation skills were very important except for coordinating travel with team members.

3. How important are the following audit preparation and planning skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Prioritize requests for people, documents, and information.	0.6%	1.1%	11.0%	37.0%	**50.3%**	87%
B. Plan for and adjust to differing skill sets of the team members.	1.1%	2.2%	12.7%	41.4%	**42.5%**	84%
C. Plan for and adjust to different audit requirements of diverse clients.	2.2%	3.3%	15.6%	36.1%	**42.8%**	79%
D. Awareness of manufacturing environment and corresponding processes and systems.	0.6%	1.1%	17.7%	**43.6%**	37.0%	81%
E. Effectively coordinate travel with team members.	1.7%	8.9%	30.0%	**36.1%**	23.3%	59%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

4. Survey respondents found all communication and inter-personal relations skills and competencies very important, with working well with management, effective listening skills, probing, and maintaining a professional demeanor all receiving 96%.

4. How important are the following communication and inter-personal relations skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Demonstrate strong interpersonal skills, including ability to interact equally well with workers and management.	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	22.3%	**73.2%**	96%
B. Manage emotions and stress appropriately.	0.0%	1.1%	6.7%	29.6%	**62.6%**	92%
C. Demonstrate effective listening skills and non-verbal communication skills.	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	23.5%	**72.1%**	96%
D. Manage discussions with confidence and authority.	0.0%	0.6%	7.3%	26.8%	**65.4%**	92%

4. How important are the following communication and inter-personal relations skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?						
E. Manage or resolve conflicts as they arise.	0.0%	0.6%	4.5%	27.9%	**67.0%**	95%
F. Probe, knowing when to explore issues further.	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	27.0%	**69.1%**	96%
G. Communicate effectively verbally or in writing with factory, social audit group headquarters, and client on unusual, zero tolerance or sensitive issues.	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	25.7%	**68.7%**	94%
H. Ask for assistance from support personnel or supervisors if necessary.	0.0%	1.7%	15.7%	37.1%	**45.5%**	83%
I. Make good judgments on suspicions to discern risk.	0.0%	0.6%	6.7%	25.7%	**67.0%**	93%
J. Maintain professional demeanor when re-interviewing management and employees regarding sensitive findings.	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	23.6%	**72.5%**	96%
K. Adapt communication to situation (e.g. written, oral, group, one-on-one interactions or workers vs. management, etc.)	0.0%	1.1%	7.3%	28.7%	**62.9%**	92%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

5. Survey respondents felt remaining calm, directive, and independent from special interests were most essential (95%), while appropriate dress received the lowest score of the group (80%).

5. How important are the following professional behavior skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Maintain independence from special interests.	0.0%	0.6%	4.4%	16.7%	**78.3%**	95%
B. Can remain calm and directive.	0.6%	0.6%	3.3%	31.7%	**63.9%**	96%
C. Take a leadership role in problematic and/or unanticipated situations.	0.6%	0.0%	5.6%	31.7%	**62.2%**	94%

5. How important are the following professional behavior skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?						
D. Be punctual and able to keep on schedule.	0.6%	0.0%	9.4%	37.8%	**52.2%**	90%
E. Dress appropriately.	1.7%	3.9%	14.4%	**43.3%**	36.7%	80%
F. Move about the workplace without drawing excessive attention or slowing down business processes.	0.6%	2.2%	13.3%	38.9%	**45.0%**	84%
G. Maintain composure and politeness during potential confrontation.	0.6%	0.6%	6.1%	27.8%	**65.0%**	93%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

6. Survey respondents felt team work skills and competencies were very important to a baseline social auditor standard, with scores averaging 88%-93%.

6. How important are the following team work skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5: Very Important**	**4 + 5**
A. Know when to elevate issues to higher levels.	0.6%	0.0%	6.1%	26.7%	**66.7%**	93%
B. Synthesize perspectives with other team members as appropriate.	0.6%	0.0%	11.2%	38.0%	**50.3%**	88%
C. Self-reliant (acts and functions independently) yet interacts effectively with others.	0.6%	0.0%	7.8%	37.8%	**53.9%**	92%
D. Work with team members to share data collected and arrive at mutual conclusions.	0.6%	0.0%	8.9%	29.1%	**61.5%**	91%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

7. Survey respondents felt document review skills and understanding how documents can be falsified are very important, while gathering information from NGOs and government bodies and officials was not essential to a baseline standard.

7. How important are the following information gathering skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Conduct a thorough documents review with personnel and production records.	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	30.2%	**65.4%**	96%
B. Understanding of appropriate sampling techniques.	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	35.8%	**58.7%**	95%
C. Understanding of common ways of falsifying documents.	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	27.4%	**69.8%**	97%
D. Deduce and piece together information.	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	31.8%	**62.0%**	94%
E. Gather information from local unions.	1.1%	3.4%	23.0%	**40.4%**	32.0%	72%
F. Access, and use information from local, national, regional, and global NGOs.	0.0%	4.5%	23.7%	35.6%	**36.2%**	72%
G. Gather information from government bodies and officials.	2.2%	2.2%	23.0%	**46.1%**	26.4%	73%
H. Mathematical ability sufficient to analyze compensation and production records.	0.0%	1.1%	12.3%	38.0%	**48.6%**	87%

| Comment | Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

8. Most participants felt physical inspection was essential to include in a baseline social auditor standard, but using instruments to test conditions was not.

8. How important are the following physical inspection skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?						
	1. Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Conduct physical inspection of all production facilities and grounds.	0.0%	1.1%	8.4%	24.0%	**66.5%**	91%
B. Use instruments to test conditions such	2.2%	4.5%	28.1%	**43.8%**	21.3%	65%

8. How important are the following physical inspection skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?						
as decibel levels.						

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

9. Survey respondents rated all worker interviewing skills highly, with ability to put workers at ease during the interview and confidentiality as most important, at 97% each.

9. How important are the following worker interviewing skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Validate information gathered from workers without compromising the safety and confidentiality of the source.	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	15.6%	**81.0%**	97%
B. Manage worker expectations during interview.	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%	36.9%	**55.3%**	92%
C. Put into practice gender, cultural, and other sensitivities.	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%	30.7%	**61.5%**	92%
D. Deal with problem of workers coached by management for interviews.	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	27.4%	**65.4%**	93%
E. Ability to put workers at ease in interview situation.	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	20.2%	**76.4%**	97%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

10. From 89% to 94% of respondents felt management relations skills and competencies were very important, with securing management buy-in and cooperation receiving the highest percentage.

10. How important are the following management relations skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5

10. How important are the following management relations skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?						
A. Secure management buy-in and cooperation for audit process.	0.0%	0.0%	6.2%	39.3%	**54.5%**	94%
B. Speak with senior executives in appropriate language/dialect and with confidence.	0.0%	0.6%	8.4%	33.5%	**57.5%**	91%
C. Communicate process and next steps to management.	0.0%	0.6%	8.4%	31.8%	**59.2%**	91%
D. Communicate needs (for records, interviews, etc.) to management.	0.0%	0.6%	6.7%	31.5%	**61.2%**	93%
E. Communicate preliminary findings.	0.6%	1.7%	10.6%	35.8%	**51.4%**	87%
F. During closing meeting, provide clarification and acknowledge management's concerns about findings.	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	23.0%	**69.7%**	93%
G. Secure management buy-in to next steps, as/when required.	0.6%	1.1%	11.2%	35.8%	**51.4%**	87%
H. Articulate and demonstrate the benefits and expected outcomes of remediation if required by client.	1.1%	2.2%	8.4%	36.5%	**51.7%**	88%
I. Identify when not to disclose violations in the closing meeting.	0.6%	1.1%	8.4%	29.1%	**60.9%**	90%
J. Confront management when faced with inconsistent findings.	2.2%	1.7%	7.3%	32.6%	**56.2%**	89%

[Comment] Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

11. Survey respondents indicated resourcefulness skills such as accomplishing tasks despite constraints, managing time well and finding creative solutions are very important to a baseline social auditor standard.

11. How important are the following resourcefulness skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Accomplish all auditing tasks despite	1.1%	1.7%	12.4%	39.3%	**45.5%**	85%

11. How important are the following resourcefulness skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?

constraints and resistance.						
B. Manage one's time despite numerous demands and unpredictable events.	0.6%	1.1%	7.9%	37.6%	**52.8%**	90%
C. Find creative solutions to practical problems, such as finding and corroborating evidence.	0.6%	1.1%	8.4%	28.7%	**61.2%**	90%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

12. Over 90% of survey participants rated all skills involved in information analysis and validation/ corroboration as essential.

12. How important are the following information analysis and validation/corroboration skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?

	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Discern credibility of information and detect contradictory or falsified statements.	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	23.6%	**73.6%**	97%
B. Determine whether factory is adhering to policies and procedures.	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	31.5%	**61.8%**	93%
C. Validate and verify allegations derived from other sources.	0.0%	0.6%	6.8%	36.7%	**55.9%**	93%
D. Coordinate with other members of the audit team to review, integrate, and confirm findings.	0.0%	0.6%	5.6%	37.6%	**56.2%**	94%
E. Make a solid assessment of risk to report in the closing meeting.	0.6%	0.0%	9.0%	37.9%	**52.5%**	90%
F. Corroborate evidence using multiple types of evidence.	0.0%	0.6%	4.5%	33.5%	**61.4%**	95%
G. Evaluate credibility of worker and management information and allegations.	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	32.6%	**60.1%**	93%
H. Identify non-compliance issues and how they link to management systems.	0.0%	0.0%	10.1%	33.7%	**56.2%**	90%

12. How important are the following information analysis and validation/corroboration skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?

I. Accept and incorporate diverse views and opinions.	0.0%	1.7%	8.5%	40.7%	**49.2%**	90%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

13. Survey respondents indicated all documentation and report writing skills are very important to essential except providing preliminary guidance/technical assistance in the development of a draft factory performance improvement plan if required.

13. How important are the following documentation and report writing skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?

	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Articulate findings in direct relation to legal and code standards.	0.0%	0.6%	3.4%	27.5%	**68.5%**	96%
B. Use common social audit reporting formats and technologies.	0.6%	1.7%	18.5%	37.1%	**42.1%**	79%
C. Explain and substantiate findings in a report or verbally with appropriate nuance and complexity.	0.0%	0.6%	6.7%	31.5%	**61.2%**	93%
D. Provide preliminary guidance/technical assistance in the development of a draft factory performance improvement plan if required.	6.7%	1.7%	17.4%	36.5%	**37.6%**	74%
E. Write at least some sections of a complex reporting tool and a full version of a simple tool.	4.0%	3.4%	17.1%	**41.1%**	34.3%	75%
F. Use varying violation and grading matrices correctly according to client specifications.	1.1%	3.4%	16.1%	**41.4%**	37.9%	79%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

14. 84% of survey respondents felt standards for social auditor training credentials should include the means for assessing language knowledge and skills.

14. Should standards for social auditor training credentials include the means for assessing language knowledge and skills?	Response Percent
Yes	**84.2%**
No	15.8%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

15. Please provide any additional thoughts/comments about skills and competencies here.

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

ETHICS

1. Over 94% of survey respondents rated all ethical considerations including conflict of interest, worker protection, audit-related reprisals, bribery, post-audit issues and zero tolerance issues essential with combined responses of 4 +5 at 94% to 98%.

1. Please rate the importance of these ethical considerations.						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Knowledge of conflicts of interest and how to avoid them.	0.0%	0.6%	2.9%	26.9%	**69.7%**	97%
B. Ethics related to social auditor role in protecting workers from harm and/or retribution.	0.0%	0.6%	4.5%	14.2%	**80.7%**	95%
C. Knowledge of when and how to encourage workers to contact you or other officials in case of audit-related reprisals.	0.0%	0.6%	4.0%	29.3%	**66.1%**	95%
D. Ethics and expectations regarding gifts, bribery, meal-taking, etc.	0.0%	0.6%	3.4%	20.6%	**75.4%**	96%
E. Ethics related to on-going responsibilities post-audit.	0.0%	1.1%	4.6%	33.7%	**60.6%**	94%
F. Ethics and responsibilities related to	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	11.0%	**87.3%**	98%

1. Please rate the importance of these ethical considerations.						
severe zero tolerance issues, such as child labor, forced labor, etc.						

Comment	Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

2. Please provide any additional thoughts/comments about ethics here.

Comment	Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

POST-AUDIT ISSUES

1. Less than half of respondents gave "meeting standards for post-audit activities" a 5, but when combined with 4, a total of 84% felt it was important. This issue shows division among survey participants.

1. How important is it for an auditor to meet standards related to post-audit activities?	**Response Percent**
1: Not important	2.5%
2	3.1%
3	10.7%
4	37.7%
5: Very important	**45.9%**
4+5	**84%**

Comment	Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

2. Survey participants rated all post-audit topics below as important, except: Knowledge of local resources for remediation, ability to offer suggestions which balance business operations with code/legal requirements if required by client, and ability to provide "on the spot" remediation advising.

2. Please rate the importance of these post-audit topics.

2. Please rate the importance of these post-audit topics.						
	1: Not Important	2	3	4	5: Very Important	4 + 5
A. Knowledge of the meaning of correction, corrective action and preventive action.	1.2%	1.2%	9.2%	26.6%	**61.8%**	88%
B. Knowledge of local resources available for remediation.	2.9%	4.1%	22.7%	34.3%	**36.0%**	70%
C. Knowledge of client corrective action timeframes.	1.7%	4.0%	16.2%	32.4%	**45.7%**	78%
D. Knowledge of the types of objective evidence required to demonstrate effective implementation of corrective and preventive action.	0.6%	1.2%	9.8%	27.2%	**61.3%**	89%
E. Understanding the roles and responsibilities for taking and verifying corrective action.	0.6%	2.3%	13.9%	32.4%	**50.9%**	83%
F. Ability to offer suggestions which balance business operations with code/legal requirements if required by client.	3.5%	1.2%	25.3%	30.0%	**40.0%**	70%
G. Be able to provide "on the spot" remediation advising.	5.3%	4.7%	18.1%	**38.6%**	33.3%	72%
H. Ability to articulate and demonstrate the benefits and expected outcomes of remediation.	1.8%	2.4%	11.2%	38.8%	**45.9%**	85%
I. Knowledge of root cause analysis and other analytical processes.	1.7%	0.6%	12.7%	37.0%	**48.0%**	85%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

3. Please provide any additional thoughts/comments you have about post-audit issues here.

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. 87% of survey respondents felt there should be distinct levels of credentials.

1. Should distinct levels of credentials reflecting (for example) different skill sets, qualifications or roles/responsibilities be developed and promulgated?	Response Percent
Yes	**86.7%**
No	13.3%

Comment Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

2. Farm/plantation received the most votes for a distinct credential (73%), followed by electronics factory (65%), apparel factory (57%), and toy factory (54%).

2. Which of the following workplaces should have a distinct credential?		
	Yes	**No**
1. Electronics factory	**64.9%**	35.1%
2. Apparel factory	**57.4%**	42.6%
3. Farm/plantation	**73.4%**	26.6%
4. Toy factory	**53.8%**	46.2%
5. Other (please specify below)	**52.9%**	47.1%

Additional workplaces proposed for this question include: Mining and extractive industries, food processing, financial services, utilities, social services, pharmaceutical factories, ceramics factory, smallholders and home workers, automotive industry, shipbuilding, and plastics.

Comment Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

3. The majority (63%) of those responding to this question felt there should NOT be differentiation and specialization in audit certification by function, but the issue requires further dialogue.

3. Should there be differentiation and specialization in auditor certification by function (e.g. records review, visual inspection, worker interviews, etc.)	Response Percent

Yes	37.1%
No	**62.9%**

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

4. Please provide any additional thoughts/comments you have about structural considerations here.

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND CREDENTIALS

1. Over 90% of survey participants felt the credentials system for social auditors should have a process for recognizing accumulated social auditing experience.

1. Should a credentials system for social auditors have a process for recognizing accumulated social auditing experience?	**Response Percent**
yes	**91.9%**
no	8.1%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

2. Of those responding to this question, 64% felt components from other certification programs could be accepted as components for the social auditor standard.

2. Are there components from other certification programs that could be accepted as components for the social auditor standard?	**Response Percent**
yes	**64.1%**
no	35.9%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

3. Fewer survey respondents rated number of years of auditing experience (75%) as important as the minimum number of audits completed (86%).

3. What kinds of experience should count? (check all that apply)	
	Response Percent
Number of years of auditing experience	74.7%
Minimum number of audits completed	**85.4%**

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

4. Seventy-nine percent of respondents felt credentials already earned should be counted in an emerging credential system.

4. Should credentials already earned (e.g. auditor training certificates, certain types of higher education degrees) be counted in any emerging credential system?		Response Percent
yes		**79.0%**
no		21.0%

Comment   Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

5. Seventy-one percent of respondents felt there should be a minimum level of formal education completed prior to seeking a social auditor credential. Thirty-eight of the 82 comments for this question felt a B.S. or B.A. is required. Other responses were high school degree and/or experience in the field is more important.

5. Should there be a minimum level of formal education completed before someone can seek a social auditor credential?	Response Percent
yes	**71.1%**

no	28.9%

Comment Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

6.   Slightly over 60% of respondents felt there should be a minimum number of years of work experience (regardless of type of work) required before seeking a social auditor credential.

6. Should there be a minimum number of years of work experience (regardless of type of work) required before someone seeks a social auditor credential?	Response Percent
yes	**62.1%**
no	37.9%

Comment Ctrl + Click on Comments Button to view survey participant comments.

ANNEX
Responses by Question

Social Auditor Standards Survey
Responses and Comments by Question

Overview

This Annex is a companion document to the Results and Analysis of the Social Auditor Standards Survey document conducted by CREA and Verité from August to December 2008. This document provides all participant comments to each survey question, with Knowledge Standards in Section 1, Skills and Competencies in Section 2, Ethics in Section 3, Post-Audit Considerations in Section 4, Structural Considerations in Section 5, and Previous Experience and Credentials in Section 6.

We are thankful to participants who took the time to add comments, clarify issues, make suggestions and ask questions. Comments remain unedited to insure each participant's comments are their own words and meaning. These comments will help inform the wiki discussion at www.socialauditor.org.

KNOWLEDGE STANDARDS

1. Please rate the following areas of background knowledge for the baseline social auditor standard.

Please define "generic" auditing, as I am not sure what differences you are trying to get at if I do not know your definition of generic.
I'm not sure I understood what you were asking in questions B and E, but I answered them anyway.
Content of codes of conduct are important, the purpose less so, and the history barely. Third party audits are a lot more objective than first party.
A basic understanding of business, either gained through business studies, or some related experience. A basic academic qualification, which taught research, analysis and reporting skills.
C. The factory where I had been implementing a system was informed that to be recertified, factory will receive an unannounced audit. For the Directors it was difficult to bear as all the personnel working on production was in the expectative and some of them could not even work properly being perturbed as they did not know when the auditors would come and what would be the outcome of the audit. It is stressing for all the workers as well as for the consultant who everyday wait for the auditors to come. They stop all their work and wait for the auditors. Psychologically is not good for all concerned.
D. It is very important to have the client's requirements regarding social audit implementation as sometimes we have seen it in Mauritius the client's requirements are not the same as the system being implemented and this can cause a lot of misunderstanding and sometimes even lost of orders.
F. Basic knowledge of common compliance issues existing in a range of industries commonly audited might be important but what is most important for an auditor is to know the Laws and Remuneration Orders of the country where he is auditing as well as the laws and remuneration orders governing the specific sector being audited to be able to counter verify and benchmark what the factory is putting forward in terms of evidence to solve compliance issues.
G. Health and Safety issues not well looked after. The Health & Safety Officers have not been trained in social compliance with the result that many compliance issues are not dealt with. The local labor law is not used properly thus penalizing workers. Lack of training given to supervisors with the result that being wrongly trained to organize themselves they cannot bear the pressure of work and tend to be rude or harass workers verbally when there is an overload of work. Factories prepare themselves to be audited and once the audit is over there is no follow-up of compliance with the result that factories are up to a very good standard at time of audit and then production takes over and compliance issues are not dealt with at all. No monitoring of overtime with the result that many expatriates perform too many hours of overtime. The workers do not know the local laws and are not aware of their rights with the results that they cannot even check whether they are being paid properly. Sometimes cases of racial, religious or ethnic discrimination may be discovered at time of auditing. Sometimes management is reluctant to give time to the workers to carry out their workers council. No proper caring of environmental issues noted sometimes at time of auditing.
maturity of the auditor is important as well as their personality
Real practical examples and issues faced by auditors daily. These may include threats, abuse, bribery and general trickery

being employed by factories to fake results.
A LOCAL AUDITOR WHO IS BASED IN COUNTRY WITH PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF THE COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE FACTORIES SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE CRITERIA TO CHOOSE SUITABLE AUDITORS
I don't think that statistics are the only real analysis - there are a lot of intangibles and I think consumer attitudes and opinions are in many ways the best judgment of any company over a period of time
Much of the above depends on the role of the auditor and the type of audits to be undertaken. Where auditors are auditing for a specific single code or customer base they may not need to know how this varies from other audits!
Familiar with quality improvement processes as well as related certifications in health and safety and env. areas.
There should be training to understand how the codes are implemented, which cannot be understood by simply reading it.
Good knowledge of local law and context, Health & Safety regulations, environmental regulations
The vast majority of auditors in the social field possess very little underpinning competence in this area, many are quality auditors who are fast tracked in social training to fulfill the certification/audit bodies commercial needs & meet financial pressures placed on them by the buying companies who are driving the prices down of social audits which impacts on the quality of auditor available with the necessary skills.
The standard must clearly delineate the differences between typical management systems auditing (e.g. Quality, EMS) and social auditing. Not only are the content/knowledge areas different, but the personal skills and competencies are vastly different. Simply because someone can audit a quality management system does not mean that they have the temperament or interpersonal skills to be an effective social auditor.
Appropriate behavior according to the target audience. Knowledge of local customs, culture and ability to relate to others.
knowledge of the likely root causes of noncompliance that are symptoms of a broader problem
I skipped a couple of areas where I was not sure of what exactly was being asked.
legislation requirements
Understanding of differences between local law vs. standard.
Excellent communication skill is a must.
The majority of our work is in the US. As such the FLSA and the various State Labor codes are paramount. We adjust to the client companies and their clients various codes of conduct. We do serve Mexico and Central America. Their individual Labor Codes are used when applicable. We apply general Health and Safety guidelines whenever there is a lack of local laws.
the problem of many auditors today is they are not able to benchmark
Very important to understand the objectives of the audits to generate changes and improve compliance. should not be just a "core sample"
Although sometimes experience may be how one learns "typical client requirements" or "common, recurring compliance issues," they are all very important.
contextualized knowledge
Everything is important. I would also include a good comprehension of the labor movement
Anything which can put their current situation in context will make the auditor better at what they are doing.
It is important to place social issues in the broader sustainability and business context. This should not be limited to business processes but should include an understanding of how social issues relate to the way in which the business creates value (social as well as financial value)
Success of any audit in my opinion is based on the clear understanding of the objectives, goals, expectations of the audit and what will be done to address those issues positive and negative that might be identified. As a contractor knowing and understanding client requirements and expectations is extremely important. Second to that is the importance of having in country expertise knowing the local and regional issues, history, expectations, level of maturity, and sensitivities.
C "react to" them does not make sense; E is not clear
All such knowledge is important, particularly in the design of a social audit program
Auditing is per definition done towards a pre-defined set of public (legal or regulatory) criteria (qualitative, or quantitative), assessing the compliance of an activity against these. Assessments against a Code of Conduct or other voluntary instruments are thus not Auditing but consultancy. As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
It requires solid knowledge of verification procedures for social and labor standards, differentiated by type of industry as a function of the client requirements within the framework of the effective international norms in the country.
I think the most important thing in every case is to know the specific objective of the audit being done and the special

conditions that are presented therein.
A Baseline Standard should be applicable for all practitioners thus there must be a provision made for the distinction between individuals with varied levels of experience and responsibilities. The expectations – and requirements – related to each of the noted dimensions in most elements of the survey would logically be different for different levels of experience/responsibility – e.g. lead auditor versus entry level practitioner. Certain elements – e.g. report writing – may not be critical to an entry level practitioner to the extent this element of the performance of the audit is not consistent with the individuals "standard" responsibilities. Q1, B Rated 2 rather than 1 because it dictates the approach of the audit and whether corrective actions / coaching could be given or not. Q1A & C: The differences in codes of conduct and the client requirements may be time consuming in terms of training and ensuring the auditors understands the distinction, but in practice at the factory level, most CoC and client requirements do not significantly impact the factory. Too much time is spent on these. Some variations in CoC that are critical are client requirements for work hours, minimum wage and specific environmental requirements (e.g. recycling requirements or specific chemical product usage). Q1C: The variation among client requirements for social audit implementation is excessive and causes more auditor quality and burn out issues. Limitations (maximum and minimum) on client requirements need to be established for what can be included in a reasonable 8 hour man day audit (e.g. number of interviews, payroll review, etc). Limitations of the audit day and client requirements should be incorporated into any Baseline Standard to ensure that auditors understand their role in maintaining quality. Q1E: The nature and intent – with the reference to "generic auditing" (e.g. does this mean one day audit, a specific industry, social/labor focused versus environmentally focused) –is not entirely clear. On that basis, responses to this question may not provide the information sought.
The audit on these variables requires knowledge, but if we go to economic reasons (time, resources, spaces, etc.) I believe that in this way can develop the audit, but without contradiction opt for the letters A, F and G using the same economic criteria.

2. How important are the following to a baseline social auditor standard?

Need knowledge of the ILO standards, and more importantly which have been ratified by the country in which the entity operates
ISO is important as it relates to the environment and management systems, but I'm not sure it's that important for a very basic social/labor audit.
Understanding of management practices is key to verifying implementation. Core labor standards are seen more as ideals.
Knowledge of other common or prevalent Codes or standards, e.g., SA8000, FLA, ETI, Wal-Mart Code, etc.
All auditors should know what is the source of the Principles, Codes or Standards being implemented in a factory or company. Basic knowledge of ISO is not so important but could help when writing the procedures and policies and also when preparing a Policy and Procedure Manual.
ISO9000/14000 standards are more related to best practices of internal control instead of primary compliance, it is something nice to have instead of must to have.
ISO knowledge not that relevant as there are no ISO standards relevant to SC auditing. ILO core standards are built within most COC programs
These are important theoretical foundations but must be balanced by sufficient time spent on practical guidelines.
A PASSION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE STANDARDS AND FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE - more an awareness of issues that affect worker welfare
First two are not specific auditable standards!!!!!
Should also include SA8000 knowledge
ILO core labor standards are only advisor until adopted into country law.
Equally important would be a knowledge of the specific code of conduct to which they are auditing. Many codes do not quote either the ILO or UN Declaration verbatim, so although that is good baseline knowledge, a thorough knowledge of the applicable code of conduct is essential.
OHSAS 18000 should be part of C
ILO and UN labor standards are not very important unless every brands use the common labor standards; but regular trainings are need for refreshment like auditors need to finish the online test every year to ensure their awareness in harassment, abuse, discrimination issues.
knowledge of SA8000

See above comments.
Most important is understanding of trade unionism
Standards are largely insufficient. Goal is behavior change where needed. Description of objective is necessary but not sufficient.
Profound knowledge of every social regulation is key!   Important: don't forget profound knowledge of local laws and multigovernmental regulations!
Equally important to have a knowledge of anti-corruption codes, social responsibility codes, core standards related to transparency (e.g. reporting and assurance), and stakeholder engagement standards
Is seems to me that ISO standards would be adequately covered by other auditing functions.
I can't provide a totally unbiased answer as an ISO 14001, 18000..etc. Lead auditor for many years I tend to lean towards the ISO standards. However, you must keep well read and in touch with all such standards, requirements, as well as those implemented by specific industries and special interest groups.
the option a) and b) depends of client code of conduct
Depends upon the context; sometimes more significant than others
These instruments form the basis of all public criteria (legal & regulatory) in the labor domain and a basic understanding of these is thus necessary. In terms of "social" auditing these are obviously incomplete.   As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
Knowledge of ISO conventions and standards does not have to be abstract, on the contrary it must be referenced in the audit instrument, to be able to as much as possible to identify violations.
Q2A: The noted standards provide background and context for the current supply chain social auditing effort. While many of the standards provide the foundation for the standards upon which existing audit efforts are generally based, these standards are not the actual standards upon which audit programs are executed.   Q2B: The challenge with the UN conventions is that they are for governments and not for employers. Much of the language is directed specifically at how governments should consider and implement these standards. This makes it difficult to directly apply the language of these conventions at the employer level during an audit. Therefore, while there is some value for social auditors to be familiar with these conventions, they serve to provide context for higher standards rather than directly bearing on the audit activity itself and therefore is less important than knowing local legal standards, for example.   Q2C: The main value ISO standards provide to an auditor is an understanding of what management systems the facility may have in place. As an auditor/consultant becomes more advanced/experienced to provide remediation/root cause analysis, understanding and experience in management systems is more important. As a baseline though, basic understanding is necessary and systems understanding is accumulated over time and in more advanced training. (Or is this a reference to ISO 26000 (which hasn't been released yet)?
The documents generated at the international levels should be cited or verified in the companies in the signatory countries. The knowledge of standards like the ISO has tended to involve employees in its implementation but not in its definition. Anyway know the basics about them and about other competitiveness plans are important to see how these are targeted promotions.

3. **Comments for "How important is it for a baseline social auditor to have knowledge of the legal standards in the country(ies) where audits are being done?"**

Legal standards are low in many places. Industry best practices are more important to understand in an effort to push continual improvement.
Greater focus on Quarterly trainings for auditors on relevant legal changes could be of huge benefit to China social auditor skills.
Localization of social audit is very important, local auditors with strong knowledge of local laws and regulations.
Critical and nobody should audit without this knowledge
This should not necessarily require an auditor to be a native of that country. Often it is best for an auditor to come from outside the culture (although with a strong understanding) but to use local native speakers and suitable documentation to give him the local grounding.
Often brands that do not have internal staff rely heavily on 3rd party auditors having local knowledge. So this is very important
If the auditor does not have this knowledge and it is kept up to date the auditor can be detrimental to the employees. i.e. not knowing the up to date wage rates for the country may mean workers being paid below min wage.

It is also important that they know how they are to be applied and how they interact with local laws and which take precedence
Since most codes specify legal compliance as a baseline requirement, knowledge of local legal requirements is absolutely essential.
Auditor also must not rely solely on the baseline legal standards; our goal for auditors is to audit against our code of conduct
Auditor should have written summary of local laws applicable to the assessment for use at the assessment
Basic knowledge, yes -- the fine print can be checked by those writing up the audits.
Auditor(s) could better manage the audit process if they had more knowledge of legal standards, we can release this information (legal laws) to factory management while explaining the violations.
Again, legal standards can be very different from actual enforcement even in developed countries.
If a core part of the code is to comply with law, knowledge of the country/local law is essential. But furthermore, common 'failures' is also important to know so they can work with the supplier to correct them.
This outlines the practice and the difference between countries
The COC they audit to is loosely based off all local legal standards. This is basic information.
A regulatory basis, citation, and justification are always required for all findings, issues of potential non-compliance. Numerous other best practices, lessons learned, recommendations, suggestions can and should be captured and shared but a legal basis is always a necessity for having a professional, creditable, and supported report at the conclusion of the audit.
auditor must apply the must stronger for the employee
it is important knowledge about the labor law
Country's cultural values
Again, depends on context: legal might not be ethical
Social audits are generally conducted relative to an absolute standard rather than relative to local law. An awareness of local law is very important if it has bearing on the company's own social goals. It is very important that auditors know what a living wage is in the local areas they audit.
See question 1; Audits are done against legal and regulatory standards and a person not having knowledge of those is - per definition - not an auditor but a consultant. As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
Auditor should be able to identify legal standards, client standards or suggestion for best practice.
It is important to have legal knowledge to be able to interpret the laws correctly.
Just as with other conventions and ISO standards, the audit instrument must reference the legal standards.
In both audits are designed on the basis of international standards, it is necessary that the Auditor reference known national labor laws particularly when situations are presented dubiously (which may or may not be a default) or breaches that concern national legislation.
As most social audit systems are based on compliance with applicable local laws and regulations, knowledge of the related laws and regulations is an important competency. Knowing how to utilize appropriate resources (and having access to those resources) to find the information is equivalent to knowledge of the law and is very important in the audit process. This requirement could therefore be based on general understanding of laws and regulations, knowledge of and ability to utilize appropriate resources, and relative access to that information/resources – e.g. legal reference materials – to identify specific details and requirements.
Well, I think I have to admit that the phrase was not heard until the course in Mexico, so I apologize for my ignorance because you want to force my interpretation or socio-economic studies of communities or in the companies that allow us to have a particular diagnosis, but continued as we did not find it as such.

4. **Which of these types of health and safety knowledge are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?**

All of the information is relevant, but may not be applicable to a "baseline" or what I am thinking of as a fairly new auditor. However, a "baseline" auditor should be paired with a more experienced auditor, who should have more experience and knowledge of all of the above noted items
Some of these depend on context and risk.
These are all basic requirements.
An auditor should have a knowledge of all the laws and acts relating to all the above health and safety issues which are of great importance for an healthy and safely work environment.

Health and safety issues are very wide, a good auditor need t be trained on basic requirements and skill of hazard identification. But auditors must have sufficient skills in risk assessment to prioritize high risk issues, otherwise they will list of a lot minor issues.
Some basic environmental knowledge is also important as well as internal policies on subcontracting to ensure visibility
appear to be missing awareness of proper disposal methods and processes for waste (e.g., trash, water, chemicals)
it depends on the size of the establishment
These need to be further defined by industry as the requirements will vary. In particular for the agricultural sector the requirements relating to agrochemicals, pesticides etc.. need to be understood and the auditors will need to have a knowledge of good agricultural practice
If it's a legal standard, it's essential.
These are all very 'checklist' I think they are important but I think it would be better to prioritize in comparison e.g. PPE is more important than ergonomic standards. I also this question doesn't allow for the more serious question of health & safety element of the social audit vs. the more hidden issues.
This is a silly question. All of these standards are important, and auditors need at least passing familiarity with all of them. The distinction that the question misses is that the auditor often will not be able to do a thorough inspection in all of these areas. He or she must know enough to recognize likely problems so that full, issue-specific testing by trained professionals can be recommended in cases where a full analysis is not possible within the scope of the audit. For example, the auditor will not do a complete evaluation of noise levels and required remediation in a factory, so he or she does not have to be an expert in noise abatement. He or she should know enough about the issue, however, to be able to spot possible problems and recommend professional testing where needed. Auditors should be somewhat familiar with all of the standards outlined above, but the inability of anyone to be thoroughly versed in everything, as well as time constraints on the audit, dictate that, in some areas, the auditor will be unable to do more than identify areas that need further evaluation. To imply that some level of knowledge in any of the categories listed is unimportant would be irresponsible.
C. Including agrochemicals. When it is a greenhouse industry (e.g. cut flowers) they should also know about re-entry times.
It may be unreasonable to expect a social auditor to have detailed knowledge of both labor regulations and practices and occupational health and safety. Consideration should be given to establishing different categories of social auditors. For example: labor specialist, ehs specialist, etc.
some conditions must be examined in country context, e.g. it is not customary to have soap and towels in bathrooms in all countries, and this is an important filter through which to evaluate compliance with health and safety
I don't understand the question. These are all elements of any typical factory audit, including the OSHA type elements. Without knowledge of these, how is the auditor to judge compliance?
All of these are important.
Actually all the above areas should be very important in China.
Most of our clients do not use factories with dormitories.
There is far too much reliance on personal protective equipment; audits often reinforce poor health and safety conditions, where the onus for a healthy and safe workplace is off-loaded to the worker. Auditors should have good understanding of control at source through local extraction or substitution of hazardous products and machinery guarding.
The water issue in China is dramatic. It should be investigated.
I think the questions are somewhat 'no brainers '
this list can go on and should link to legal requirements
In my opinion a social auditor would need to audit things other than that covered under a typical safety/health or environmental audit program the "3s" on the list above are all typically covered under and ESH or ISO ESH program.
I don't know that this is a fully "fair" question. It depends on many factors what knowledge and skills your baseline social auditor will need. I have never had a single auditor with A-M expertise. An audit team must combine specialists in labor, industrial hygiene, safety, health, risk assessment, environmental compliance, etc. in order to cover all the subjects you have listed. I have been auditing for 20 years and I would only say I am a generalist knowledgeable in the basics of these listed subjects but by no means an expert. The other key factors are what is the scope of your audit, individual facilities, operations, multiple assets, companies, co-v's? Are you conducting such an audit of a well develop, mature operation with a long standing familiarity of management systems, SHE&S audits, compliance assessments, audited by agencies and third parties regularly or are you in an undeveloped country on a greenfield site with little local, regional or national laws and regulations to govern such health and safety requirements, public health systems, ...etc. All of the above could be very important or only marginally.
all are essentials - depends of the company activity

What is most important is for monitors to understand how this criteria is fulfilled in a series of living, breathing health and safety policies and management systems. This is when it is more import to talk to people rather to the papers as 'proof' of what really happens in terms of risk management.
Again, highly contextual. Most of these seem to refer to manufacturing and workers conditions. What of e.g. agriculture?
Of course, all of the above are important. However, I've added emphasis on the points where I felt that the standards were not clearly defined and too much was left to interpretation. That lack of clarity allows for more vulnerability and greater risk of noncompliance, illness or injury.
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
depends very much on the audit setting
An auditor must have a strong general knowledge to be able to determine the health of factory workers.
It varies in importance by type of industry
I don't have the background knowledge to respond usefully to this question.
Presumably, the question relates to both understanding of requirements – which for most current programs are aligned with applicable local laws and regulations – and appropriate techniques for the assessment of compliance. See response to Question 3 above related to knowledge and understanding of applicable local laws and regulations.   Q4E: Most programs we engage with do not look at ergonomic standards for seating and machinery – this is likely because it is not an immediate risk to workers and since so much of compliance at this point relates to failure to meet basic legal minimums, an issue like ergonomics seems more of a luxury consideration.
Records indicate that companies without social responsibility have caused costs to the countries arising from the lack of oversight, control and justice in this area.

5. **Which of these types of knowledge related to employment, wages, benefits and hours of work are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?**

Some of these depend on context and risk.
Again, laws and regulations may be of low level. Actual practices, best practices are important in meeting the SA8000 standard/CoC and in achieving continual improvement.
5. All the above issues are important as the auditor has to deal with the situation of an employee and his/her well being in a factory/company.
understanding productivity and the impacts on wages, hours, etc.   Industrial engineering background skills seem appropriate.
Recording systems, ways to cross-check information and the ability to see past the records and assess their veracity.   Legal minimum v living wages and the attitude of brands to this
If it's a legal standard, it's essential.
Knowledge of common wage manipulation/fraud practices is also important. Non-discrimination knowledge needs to include Code requirements and western standards, not just laws & regulations. Many practices are seen as discriminatory to westerners but are considered normal/acceptable in other parts of the world.
Often factories have different ways of doing their calculations and good auditors may not know all the details, but are savvy and understanding how the factory is doing its wage calculations.
As with the question above, to imply that any one of these areas is unimportant is ridiculous. The issue is not whether auditors need to know about these areas, but rather how deep their knowledge must be in the context of a baseline social audit. A social audit is not a full financial audit, but auditors must know enough to determine whether workers are receiving the compensation they are due. If, within the constraints of the audit, it is determined that workers are probably not being paid according to law, then auditors need to be able to recommend fuller investigation. Again, the issue is not whether auditors need to know this stuff, but rather how much they need to know about it within the scope of the social audit. By asking what can be dropped out entirely, the question goes after the wrong information.
A. Should include discrimination based on union membership as well as gender and other.   C. Also living wages.
Freely Chosen Employment should be added to the list as a "very important" knowledge area.
Same comment as above. Add typical and new methods of concealing true payroll and hours and wages records, and ways of detecting fraud, double and triple bookkeeping, etc.
All of this is important.
Since all the questions are knowledge based, it is difficult to separate them. They are all equally essential in an auditor. The only possible way to differentiate is by seriousness of issue. Can we assume if the violation is less critical that the knowledge

of the auditor is less important? In any case the level of importance will vary from client to client.
I have ranked these less because in my experience such areas are most often audited by human resources and financial auditors; internal auditors on a more frequent basis and the scope of social audits I normally have performed are focused heavily on Safety, Health, Industrial Hygiene and Security. Not employment and labor relations...etc. This isn't to say they are less important just not something I have commonly integrated into the audits, assessments and due diligence performed traditionally as part of SHE&S audits.
Wages are critically important because they impact the worker's livelihood and because they are easier than some other issues to disguise by factory management
all are essentials - depends of the company activity
Again, depends on context so not always relevant to every auditor. Something broad about employment but not necessarily the detail: the design of the audit, the requirements of the commissioning body, etc, all play into what is relevant or merely 'nice to have'
Very, very important Living Wages (if the wages is sound regarding the country price index)
I found that auditors typically where very knowledgeable about the obvious laws on wages, benefits and hours. I believe there's an opportunity to gain more knowledge of the supplemental bonuses and incentives that should be understood for legitimate perks versus smoke in mirrors.
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
All of these issues are important for a social auditor.
I don't have the background knowledge to respond usefully to this question.
See response to Question 4 above. All of these topics are relevant to the audit scope and therefore there is value for the baseline auditor to have knowledge of them. Issues that are more commonly cited as violations are more critical to have a good baseline prior to entering the field (e.g. H&S issues, Min/Reg/OT issues, benefits, etc). Q5B: Knowledge of the legal requirement is most important; familiarity with typical systems is helpful as a baseline but not requisite-this is gathered with experience.
In addition to this point 5 to be related to section 4 on the grounds that the Systems of production and materials that are used are degrading the natural human condition to a lesser or greater dimension, so it's important to take that into account to also set the salary and length of working life.

6. **Which of these types of knowledge related to management systems and business processes/practices are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?**

Part of the process of determining auditor standards is the creation of a career path. Not all of the skillset needed for these items would, in my expectation, belong to a "baseline" auditor, they will need to learn the items chosen as "4" with on the job experience and continuous education.
d. would be more important to me if the question was how factory operations and systems impact compliance or adherence to codes. g. brand sourcing practices I would say is very important for internal auditors, but may only somewhat important for external...so I put it in the middle. a&b I think are very important but maybe not at a baseline level
Some of these depend on context and risk.
According to me all these items to a certain extent can be used by the auditor to assess a factory or company during audit process. It is also important to know the socio-cultural difference in compliance approaches in order to be fair. Whilst the auditor has to know the product manufactured in a factory or company he does not have to know all the technicalities of the product. However what he should ascertain is that the personnel producing the product are well cared for, he is working in an health and safe working environment.
being able to share best practice versus just identifying the problem areas.
Not clear on specifically what H. refers to so did not respond.
some of this is extremely hard to control without adequate payroll hours
Production processes and factory operations would be more important to us if that was an option. Since we are the only company in our industry doing audits, we don't have the luxury of requesting auditors with familiarity with our industry processes AND social auditing experience.
There is a need for auditors to start doing more management systems auditing and getting at root causes. This is what will help in making the differences between checklist auditing to actually changes from assessments.

As above, but we must remember that having management systems in place to assure compliance over time and respond to non-compliance is at the heart of the decision about whether a factory is an appropriate supplier. In other words, we will look for violations in many areas, but the systems above provide the information needed to determine whether a factory can be considered a reliable business partner. Until at least rudimentary management systems are in place, talking about anything else is a waste of time.
A thorough knowledge of management systems is essential to being a social auditor. The auditor must be able to trace observed nonconformities to a gap in the facility's management system and sustainable improvement in performance can only be achieved when the facility implements effective management systems.
The only thing I think is unessential is to understand differences in approaches based on cultural differences. Surely, cultural differences need to be understood, but not with regard to standard methods of assuring compliance. That's a slippery slope.
Knowledge on productivity & quality etc. could be useful for social auditor, but the knowledge of main production processes of different products was a must.
See 1st comment.
Homeworking is difficult to control through the audit process. Viewing it as 'unauthorized sub-contracting' is unhelpful and tends towards concealment. Auditors need skills in identifying the production capacity of a site and judging which production and processes are sub-contracted. Monitoring homeworkers' conditions should not be approached through an audit process. Auditors frequently lack skills in spotting 'markers' of non-compliance e.g. high labor turnover; segregation of social groups, women in certain occupations (i.e. discrimination).
Might add the transparency standards here instead. Need to address standards used to define organizational boundaries. Need to address standards for value chain (including supply chain) management.
Audit programs and practices of major industries and companies I have either worked for or performed audits for have evolved such that their operations personnel are doing their own self-assessments, compliance audits, and some mgmt. systems assessments. Corporate SHE&S departments are still doing the bulk of higher level mgmt. system assessments and contracting with third parties to perform such. Therefore, if I was a new baseline social auditor at a minimum I would be very knowledgeable in management systems, root-cause analysis, risk assessment principles in order to bring greater value added benefit to the audit and audit team. Just finding findings doesn't help if you don't understand the industry, operations, process well enough to find the underlying causes, contributing factors and hopefully some suggestions of how to prevent their reoccurrence.
This area is growing in importance
all are essentials - depends of the company activity
H is not entirely clear
Again, highly contextual. Auditors need the skills to understand the importance of these issues but not any detailed knowledge until in the field undertaking a specific audit
This knowledge would assist the auditors in not only measuring compliance, but also in communicating with factory management about the areas for improvement in a credible way.
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
6A: Again, as mentioned regarding ISO Management systems requirements, as a baseline standard, this isn't critical and is accumulated with experience and with further advanced training necessary for root cause analysis, long term remediation and more advanced audits beyond the "generic" one day social audit.
6A: Again, as mentioned regarding ISO Management systems requirements, as a baseline standard, this isn't critical and is accumulated with experience and with further advanced training necessary for root cause analysis, long term remediation and more advanced audits beyond the "generic" one day social audit.
6G: Auditors should encourage response to the CAP as a positive approach to working with brands and a generally favorable approach to sourcing relationships. Beyond that auditors should not discuss sourcing practices.
6H: The context of Question 6H is unclear. Is this in reference to bias by the auditors based on socio-cultural norms? E.g. auditors may not consider an issue a violation (though it may not be legal, compliant with the client CoC or with international customer expectations), but may be considered "normative" based on social cultural differences? And/or is this in reference to considerations of how factories/suppliers may feel they are being demanded/requested to comply with standards that do are not practiced in their socio-cultural situation (thus feeling they are being pressured to practice other socio-cultural norms)?

Productivity is important in the expectation of the entire investment and as such we have to allow them to develop such systems.

7. **Which of these types of knowledge related to documents review and visual inspection are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?**

Some of these depend on context and risk.
Identifying accurate working conditions is critical; auditors need to know when they are seeing double books / fraudulent records and need to be able to identify and report the true conditions.
All of these items are important during audit process. As the auditor has to verify all documentary evidence so ascertain that the factory is really compliant.
How to cross check docs. How to negotiate honesty with fty management.
Again as auditors are often eyes and ears for smaller brands without regional staff, it is essential that auditors posses these skills.
As above, but auditors need to remember that the goal is to determine what is going in the factory. The goal is not to look at documents. A fine tactic for managers in dealing with auditors is to bury them in paper, so auditors need to know when to stop reading and start looking.
Should also include knowledge of IT practices in this area
Item C is something auditors do not learn in the current EHS and Quality auditor training classes.
Ditto.
An auditor must be constantly vigil regarding falsified documents.
what about interviewing methods, sampling protocols, trend analysis, criteria for evidence quality, document and record keeping and control
Where is D. Interviews. You can walk all over, review all the documents in the world but if you can't validate such findings through personal interviews and get a true feeling of the understand, awareness, appreciation of the workers, contractors, staff regarding social issues, requirements, standards, and culture you aren't going to be able to validate what is seen or observed in documentation and understand the root causes. A, B and C are important. Doing random sampling of documentation is certainly a proven audit practice but the real benefit is in the interviews.
all are essentials - depends of the company activity
A necessary skill requirement: about the process of undertaking an audit in the field. Does not require specific and detailed knowledge until in the particular field
Common methods of visual concealment or alteration. If you are conducting an announced audit, how to identify red flags that would lead to an unannounced follow up audit
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
The auditor needs to know and to apply (adapting to each case), a technical procedure to verify and a control list to make sure to have covered all the requirements asked for by the client or settled on the basis of the national, standard conventions, international laws and codes of conduct applicable to each case.
I don't have the background knowledge to respond usefully to this question.
Document review and visual inspection should be considered two of the key core competencies for all social auditors.

8. **Which of these types of knowledge related to child, forced labor, and harassment/abuse are essential to a baseline social auditor standard?**

Some of these depend on context and risk.
All the items are very important for an auditor to know in order to perform a good audit. The auditor should however check that the standards and practices related to discipline are reasonable and according to the local laws. He should verify that there is no abuse and they are not excessive thus penalizing the workers.
hard to contest and prosecute and requires a certain degree of freedom of expression in the workforce
As above. In these areas, it is especially important to understand local practices and the ways in which regulation may be subverted day-to-day.
Including sexual harassment and sexual violence in the workplace (in C).
Research methods to verify child labor does not exist, besides document review and observation.

Sometimes the goal is to change the standard.
Not really sure where this is going. They are all essential parts of an auditor's knowledge base. A , C, and D relate to the standards and laws whilst B is useful for advising on best practice
All are naturally important. It is also equally important what corporate, company, site standards, code of ethics, policies, enforcement practices they have been implemented. Once again it is my opinion especially when initiative a new auditing program or scope to start small and build up then take on too large a scope and not do it well. The list of social audit subjects contained in this questionnaire is pretty steep for most companies I have worked with to take on.
all are essentials - depends of the company activity and country
Again, highly context dependent. General principles should be understood.
I believe that all of these are important, but put emphasis on harassment, abuse and discipline, as many believe that these are "common sense", but often are clouded by traditional/cultural practices.
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
It is fundamental to have cross investigation skills and have protection of alternative sources of information to verify breaches that in themselves are constituted in crimes. Strict confidentiality is important, mainly when the auditor is not a public inspector. It is also important to know the legal procedures for the treatment of cases in which the auditor could be forced to denounce or to testify, and the measures by which the national legislation protects him/her professionally.
Document review and visual inspection should be considered two of the key core competencies for all social auditors.

9. **Which of the following types of knowledge related to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining should be included in a baseline social auditor standard?**

Again, just want to emphasize that a "4" in my estimation, means a baseline auditor may not know/understand the concept walking in, but over time and experience will become more familiar and versed in it. Not saying it is less important as a concept, but that more experience than the "baseline" is required.
Some of these depend on context and risk.
Improvement in this area of training, assessment, and reporting could have a huge impact on improvement in many other working conditions.
All these issues are important and should be included in a baseline social auditor standard
A group of franchisees sued but had no legal staying power financially against a major international corporation. Sometimes the ideal is hard to put into practice - the system does not protect you as the little guy
Brand sourcing requirements for this topic are also important
The actual knowledge needed in this area will vary greatly from country to country.
Also how to distinguish between independent unions and company-controlled workers' unions.
I have consulted with a lawyer specialized in labor law to understand the interpretation of the laws of a central America country regarding the protection of workers who want to form a labor union. Auditors should not hesitate to do so.
again can only spilt them based on level of risk to a client , thus B,C,D can be viewed as less important whilst laws and regs are essential knowledge
My first job was working in a union shop. Needless to say it influenced every aspect of SHE&S, Workman's Compensation, Human Resources, Labor Relations, Dispute Resolution ...etc. Therefore, if it applies it will apply in a big way influencing all planning and execution of the audit including have a shop steward present during all interviews .etc. etc. etc.
all are essentials - depends of the company activity and country
Again, highly context dependent. General principles should be understood.
LIO before the Law in some cases.
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
It is important to include the administrative and judicial procedures that restrict or fortify the exercise of right to the free association and the collective negotiation, and the processing of the infractions.

10. **How important are the following types of knowledge related to worker interviews for a baseline social auditor standard?**

All of this area is extremely important, however a "baseline" auditor will not walk in knowing much of this, it will need to be taught over time. Therefore, the items I have rated "5" are those areas I would expect a baseline auditor to be able to do,

the 4's will require a more experienced auditor.
Some of these depend on context and risk.
Updates on areas where worker interviews might be taped, and potential new areas or methods to try.
All is very important
Ways to bring workers to interview sites. I often see a group of workers waiting to be let into a room for interviews (in plain sight of management).
Very few people ever speak up even if they are just justified - the stakes against them are too high. Few have the courage to break the status quo and again the reality does not support the ideal. Education also plays a part
Off site interviews would not be part of a baseline social audit - only more advanced auditors would be involved in such interventions
We don't do off-site interviews.
Example questions. Don't use checklist approach etc.. really formal and detailed training needed in worker interviews
There is a need to bring workers more into the auditing process and their voices are succinct in collecting certain information, so these skills are very important.
The above are all vital to credible auditing (was it really necessary to ask?). In addition, understanding the interview process within a specific cultural milieu is vital to gathering useful information. People in some cultures welcome strangers asking questions more than others. It is also important for interviewers not to raise expectations of the interview outcome beyond realistic levels.
Need to take into account the audit providers selection criteria when selecting auditors when will be undertaking interviews because you have a limited period in which you can obtain trust and it is also what you do when you find bad issues and how the auditor will react
This entire section cannot be stressed enough.
Country contexts are CRITICAL for this, though. For example, strengths and weaknesses of individual/group interviews will vary by country.
One of the very most important aspects of planning and executing any audit.
all are essentials - depends of the company activity and country
B is misleading - should this be an "and/or" or is this comparative; E is not entirely clear
Techniques and sensitivity training on how to get workers to talk rather than the facilitator are important.
These are skills that impact on the outcome of an audit. They are not specific to any individual fieldwork but applicable at all times.
Risks facing workers for giving interview responses not favorable to their employer, warning signs that workers are under intimidation to give favorable responses. Familiarity with economic dynamic of workers' communities includes importance of the employer in question to the local communities and possibly the power of that employer in the region. Also the outcome of any past social audits of the employer in question, and the outcome of any social audits of any employers in the local communities and in the region.
For all aspects of the audit, I do believe that the tone and attitude of the auditor is extremely important to the cooperation during, and ultimately success of, the audit. For employee interviews, this is exceptionally important, as the auditor has the opportunity to calm the management by letting them know that they are not trying to seed messages to their employees, or badmouth the management, etc. While it seems simple, the auditor should have some sensitivity training. Again, not to cloud the auditor's judgment, but to calm all parties down so that the audit and interviews can be done effectively.
As you have not defined what the legal or other mandate of a Social Auditor is supposed to be compared to all existing Auditors (fire, health, labor etc) that already operate within all government frameworks answering any of these questions in a meaningful way is near impossible.
It is important to have cross information differentiating the interviews in depth with respect to determined standard for certain vulnerable groups (ej women in the matters of fairness, protection against harassment and maternity benefits) and the general interviews that are obtained by means of a randomized sample stratified by position or place of performance of the position according to corresponds.
The ability to conduct effective worker interviews should be considered one of key core competencies for social auditors
It is not be able to obtain credible and reliable information for example when this is achieved in the workplace for workers.

11. **Are there other categories of knowledge that you believe are essential for the baseline auditor? If so, what are they?**

I think you have done a good job of covering the generic areas of the audit process, to begin the work on monitor standards.
Understanding the difference between industry standard practices, industry best practices, laws and regulations and expectations of continual improvement.
Need to be able to identify the true working conditions, regardless of the provision of fraudulent records or coached

workers.
A basic understanding of business, either gained through business studies, or some related experience. A basic academic qualification, which taught research, analysis and reporting skills. The relevant language skills. In countries where more men and women work in certain industries, then a good understanding of the need to compile an appropriate audit team. The importance of researching and respecting both the brand and the factory before the audit in order to be aware of potential issues, understand the businesses, build better rapport to gain more access to information and conduct a more successful audit.
A large spectrum of requirements has been presented above.
Auditors have to be trained on the independence and professionalism, to separate the work and personal preference during and after audit.
environmental performance with regard to water, air, waste
Basic soft skills are vital when training local auditors in Asia. Unfortunately the education systems, particularly in China, work against this as there is a history of rote learning. Selection of auditors must be based on identifying soft skill competencies or potential.
broadly understanding the various ways in which information can be manipulated, and the alternative methods of validation/identification (e.g., worker interviews, production and utility records, available production processes, surveillance techniques)
To reiterate - worker interviews are a crucial part of auditing and in identifying the issues that are important - it is therefore important to try to get an auditor who can speak the language and is culturally aware but on occasion a translator may have to be used and must also understand what the audit is trying to achieve and why it is happening to ensure workers views are heard correctly
What will the outcome be for the worker if the audit is negative - what is the support structure offered? Does the actual company have sustainability as a viable entity in an uncertain marketplace?
Management interview techniques - getting required information in a non-confrontational manner. Managing conflict in closing meetings and getting agreement to non-compliances. Ability to judge the severity and root cause of non-compliances.
Language ability and data management skills if auditor is directly entering data to our system. Excellent verbal and written communication skills either way.
Writing up findings.
How to cross check information. Understanding the factory manager mentality, role-playing.
Environmental management system. Notice and Record keeping in regard the Company registration, fire certificate, factory license.
Interpersonal skills. Flexibility, should issues arise that require further investigation they should be able to delve deeper into that investigation.
Interpreting the law and understanding the spirit of the law are critical.
Management systems get a mention here, but they are more important than indicated. The goal of an audit is to determine whether a factory is generally in compliance with local law and international standards, and whether factory management has the overall wherewithal to deal with non-compliance when it crops up. Knowing whether factory management has assigned responsibility for important tasks, and whether there is accountability within the system tells a brand far more about the suitability of a supplier than nearly any specific violation found.
How to contact local organizations like unions and NGOs that can provide helpful information about recent labor conflicts, frequent violations (on the particular farm being audited or that sector broadly) - and the importance of having such meetings. Country-specific concerns widely held by international and national organizations (like anti-union violence in Colombia) and how to address those concerns in audits in that country.
Understanding how to follow an audit trail and understanding Confidentiality.
Ideally a knowledge of environmental standards/regulations and issues relating to bribery and corruption
Broader political issues about voluntary standard and verification mechanisms, as well as ideology of trade union movements.
Good understanding of cultural issues especially when visiting other regions/countries. Ability to interpret body language and work with interpreters. They should have good awareness of how safe working practices are employed in the workplace not just be able to quote laws. Flexibility to be able to deviate from fixed question sets to interrogate issues that may well be hidden if only following a checklist of questions and finally there should be annual competency checks to ensure they have kept their skills up to date especially interview skills and report writing skills.

Cultural understanding of factory area and work force demographic.
Environmental issues, such as permitting, energy conservation, hazardous waste disposal, etc. should be added to the baseline. The reason is that these elements can have an impact on the safety and well being of workers and the local community. Additionally, the same management system failures are often responsible for issues identified in Labor, OHS and Environment.
conflict resolution community consultation skills
Understanding of special roles and circumstances such as licensing relationships and the difficulties of engaging licensees to embrace the standards and expectations of licensors.
Auditor demeanor and ensuring the privacy of employee records and interviews.
These seem quite comprehensive.
Integrity is also one of the most essential baseline for being an social auditor.
Environmental issues - restricted substances, material handling, water discharge etc.
A social auditor must be ready to receive any information regarding to compliance audit. First of all, auditor must be clean-handed, he must resist the seduction.
Ability to communicate with all types of employees and management. The ability to reference with the auditor's supervisor is critical as well.
Social understanding, language skills
whistle blower protection
Marketing communications Clients information Intimacy UN Global Compact Principles UN Millennium Goals Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines
yes, the auditor should have at least some basic psychology training
Understanding of buyer motivation in sourcing from organization
Interactions with other local community stakeholders; appreciation of company "spheres of influence" regarding human rights.
Coming from the labor movement myself and having done dozens of social audit for the Fonds de solidarity, I would add one other thing: Having a good nose. Look at the reaction of the workers if you visit a shop with management etc A good nose will lead you further than just doing what is in the good auditor book.
Operations experience. Auditors must have credibility with those they are auditing. The rest is really about the mix of the audit team. I would normally have 2-4 auditors. At a minimum I would try to get a good mix. Use in-country experts whenever possible who know the regulations cold. Mix Environmental, Health, Safety, Security, Risk, Social, HR, Law, Operations experts to get the best of all their diverse knowledge and experience. It may make the audit harder to plan, execute and prepare the report but it will add allot of added value and benefit both in the short and long run. Use Production/Operations staff (outside the company or department, division being audited). Have guest auditors, seed your team with folks that may not be the technical expert or most experienced or knowledgeable in social issues and related topics but they know the work sites, operations, practices, the auditees, have credibility with them and can learn a great deal going it and bring back the new found appreciation and experience to their organizations. Build a foundation of support through the organization for social audit programs and their benefits.
Ethics programs
Contract Labor; critical vs. corroborative sources; confidentiality of workers during on-site interviewing; how to manage coached or intimidated workers; red flags for coached or intimidated workers; standards of credibility for all sources of data
Training on participatory interview and assessment techniques are very important. Training on how to handle all staff -- including management as well as workers -- in a respectful way is also important.
Worker-Management communication and compliance systems
All the categories of knowledge mentioned above are Very Important knowledge to the baseline auditor. Standards related to the topography and infrastructure of the working site is also very important. (Factories standing on ravines, emergency exits leading to highways, floors in poor shape that may cause falling down in an evacuation; old inappropriate foundations, and so)
Understanding of not for profit sector
1. General knowledge of organizational structures and how they interact 2. Interview techniques for 3rd party verification, e.g. interviewing partners and clients

I think that as audits become more of a value-added service and less of policing, this is something that the auditors should understand and help to foster the transition of. The more trust that they can help to build on the ground, the easier it will be for monitoring firms to drive this shift. Other basic skills should be required, like basic communications skills.
No, the above are very thorough
- integrity - handle sensitive issues
Ability to verify information from management and worker interviews
root cause analysis
Professionalism, because sometimes auditors are too excited. To accomplish good work you need to be balanced during the evaluation.
-Like approaching the directors of the companies - the context of the company and its production - Systematization of the accumulation of experiences of audits
Knowledge by geographical areas (Latin America, Asia, Europe, Africa, etc.) Issues RSC
I believe that to accurately determine the needs of knowledge that requires an auditor could differentiate the auditors and accountants as auditors general expertise. The audit covers the implementation of social standards in a comprehensive and generally through secondary source of information and on-site inspection and applies to any kind of productive activity in services to the public or private, national or international level. The audit specialist can classify a) by type of standard and b) by type of economic activity. The audit specialist Standard rate implies the technical verification of compliance with the standard using a tool to demonstrate objectively that compliance (e.g. veterinary control of sewage; epidemiological control of accidents and occupational diseases by industry: analysis technical legal procedures for recruitment, hiring, promoting internal disciplinary action, termination of contracts and despite staff, and others). The auditor must know precisely the standard tools of verification and have the ability to compare the standard benchmarks for measuring compliance compared with those found in the audit in order to affirm or deny or establish the degree of compliance. The audit specialist industry includes the specific parameters of performance for this industry in particular that complement or differentiate general standards of laws. (e.g. Workers on the high seas; workers in mining camp, oil, road construction or civil works in remote locations; public workers of activities considered essential services such as water, energy, health, etc..; transporters; employed own suppliers of goods or services to third parties, etc.) These auditors should have deeper understanding of the industry that audit. Finally, the auditors did not necessarily work individually, by the Acasio not always constructs an audit team, therefore coordination and complementarity of teamwork is essential for Members and their handling of this specific roles depending on a single product is the responsibility of whoever is running the team, both members and who directs the expertise needed to develop this type of work.
Key in this area is the experience of the interviewer, something very difficult to learn during one audit. Also describe tips and strategies on how to approach workers Awareness about regional risk for offsite interviews
Systematizing information obtained qualitative and quantitative analysis
In addition to the noted competencies – visual observation; review of records; and employee interviews – the ability to effectively interact with factory management to obtain information and perspective should be considered a key core competency for social auditors. Some of this may be inherent in questions like Q1C (unannounced/announced reactions), but specifics regarding typical management reaction, best approaches to opening/closing meeting, reviewing findings, etc are critical to building trust and cooperation during an audit and encouraging further remediation and cooperation with the brand/vendor/etc. to make necessary improvements.
Of course, knowledge of the conditions of infrastructure, housing type, and so on. the place where you live is important in strengthening an audit of this nature

12. Additional comments:

What I have tried to convey with my responses, is that my understanding of a "baseline" auditor is where on e would start with a fairly inexperienced auditor. I have always believed that as part of the discussion of monitor standards, there also need to be a parallel discussion around scope of audit, meaning there can be varying levels of assurance, based on customer needs/expectations. I hope that I have conveyed that a baseline auditor should have the rudimentary skills, but that by no means should a baseline auditor be relied upon to have all of the above skills. They are going to learn over time and with experience how to address the harder to quantify issues. For me, those items were coded as "4"s, not because they are less important, but because they are more advanced skills that we cannot expect a baseline auditor to have out of the box. I hope this is helpful.
I think that the auditor should be polite, calm, capable of analyzing documents and assess situations objectively. He should be able to carry on a full documentation review within the strict legal parameters of the country where he audit

A critical skill set required of capable social compliance monitors is interpersonal skills...the ability to communicate, listen, interpret (figuratively), thoughtfully question and encourage others to provide information imperative to a successful social compliance assessment. Much of the above question set focuses on technical ability. The social aspects of a qualified monitor may actually be more critical.
What have we learned here? The survey asks whether certain issues are important in auditing, and all of the issues listed are important. We knew that when we started. The key information to tease out will be relative importance within the scope of an audit, the depth to which an auditor can be asked to dig during a standard audit, and how to spot "red flags" that indicate more work, possibly by safety engineers or CPAs, is called for.
Many auditors struggle to write reports that actually communicate the correct message - they tend to be very inflexible especially where there is a problem with communicating issues to elders that may cause offence e.g. Nigeria also dealing with the giving of gifts how they should be dealt with.
Thank you!
We have a base competency model that we use, which you are welcome to. Our standards require testing to local law.
In order to be somewhat discriminating in my ratings, I tended to choose those areas of expertise that must be acquired through experience rather than research. My logic is that any good auditor should have access to reliable resources through which to learn about relevant laws and policies, but common practices and common employer deception and harassment tactics are most experience-based.
Interesting approach. Let us know how it works out for all involved.
I believe that your survey misses one very important point. Integrity of auditors is the single most important issue in auditing today. Your program would be most effective if you focused on establishing a structure or association for auditors to belong to--in this way each auditor would be registered and could be tracked if they were fired from one company for taking a bribe--so that they do not end up on the payroll of another audit company. By looking to establish a baseline training, the program is coming up against a large amount of politics within the auditing industry--and may not address the single greatest weakness in auditing as a tool. From perspective, I would rather have a lesser skilled, but unfailingly honest auditor--than the most skilled senior auditor whose integrity is questionable. Establishing an association could then provide the platform for a CLE style of update training to improve the skills of auditors. Being able to enforce (and punish the lack of) integrity, in my opinion, is the single most important issue for the auditing industry today.
This survey was difficult to fill out. I would say that the topics mentioned would serve as a good template for a standard. I had a hard time choosing among them since they are all important.
Will be interesting to see the results of the survey when complete.
it is important to base the information in photos (positive and negative issues)
It should not be a single auditor who has all above qualities and skills. Rather, an audit team must be composed of a set of people bringing in different skills, qualities and points of view.
All of the activities that you have listed are, at national level, presently under some form of legal or regulatory system and in all countries upholding law and regulation is the responsibility of government. A key tool for governments to enforce the Rule of Law is to audits performed by the relevant government authority. Neither company nor other organization has the right to unilaterally strip. Compromise or otherwise subvert the Rule of Law and the legal functions of government. On the contrary, it becomes all other entities to support Governments in executing their primary obligation (ref Ruggie). In doing so companies may naturally engage consultants and other entities in assessing, developing and supporting practices that will meet the test of the law. To call such people and their competencies "Social Auditors" is, however, erroneous and should be replace by "Social Consultants" unless they are specifically hired by Governments to execute an Auditing function, in which case they will obviously be certified by and have the legal mandate of the appropriate government function
I found the questions not very clear, i.e. selection of answers not always matching with the questions (e.g. 9.c)
I also think there needs to be a training ore review session for auditors after a specific amount of time, because it is hard after not doing audits for 1 or 2 years. Also, continuing education training is important for these people. Thank you.
I think that the categories covered by the survey include all points of knowledge necessary for the conduct of Social Audit.
As a professional standards organization established to actively manage compliance in support of the development of the global profession for CSR monitors, the GMI is comprised of many of the leading organizations involved in the provision of social auditing services. As a stakeholder and a contributor to the process, the GMI and its members believe that the perspective of actual practitioners with real experience in the performance of social auditing – as currently practiced – is critical to the development of any standards. Additionally, the GMI and its participating service providers recognize that standards are an important element in the development of the profession. The success and acceptance of the standards promulgated by any effort is dependent upon the engagement of the organizations expected to attain the standards. Finally, the GMI believes that the development and acceptance of such standards should be for the benefit of the industry and should not benefit any individual firm or organization with an interest in social auditing. It is essential to the success of any

industry initiative that the essential steps are taken to avoid conflicts of interests by benefitting organizations.

The knowledge of workers' rights in general will allow the auditor to generate more information on ethical consistency, compliance with international agreements, and generally respect human rights work at its minimum in each country are expressed in its labor laws.

2. SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

1. **How important are the following behavior traits in a baseline social auditor standard?**

The need to synthesize information (connect-the-dots) is critical
Being perceptive is critical. Need to sift through various inputs and determine what is true.
demonstrating strong professionalism
this is all subjective and would not work well for bleeding hearts
All of these are central to being an effective auditor. If a person does not possess these basic traits to begin with, training them will not make them a good auditor.
There are many good investigative auditors who can find issues but they don't know how to deal with issues when they find them - this is a
Identifying the "hidden causes of problems" involves a good knowledge of Root Cause Analysis in addition to being perceptive.
I don't know how to operationalize this into standards, but I question the "objective" criteria even though I rated it a 5. I think it's more important for auditors to understand their own biases and to have bias-checking processes and training in place for members of their team. I rated open-minded a 4 based on similar rationale; Open-mindedness is situational and it's more fundamentally important to understand implicit biases.
All a must.
you seem to be writing a job spec for characteristics of auditors so not sure how useful this consultation will be
the social auditor must be open mind and ready for the "depends"
Must know how to communicate both positive and negative information to appropriate sources for action.
These are skills that impact on the outcome of an audit. They are not specific to any individual fieldwork but applicable at all times. Any audit, to be effective, should follow the principles of good scientific research and therefore should also be replicable.
Auditing is per definition impartial as it assesses performance against a set of public criteria (ethics of law vs. ethics of care). B-D apply in the case of consultancy not auditing.
Flexible: capable of adapting to the working conditions you find in the field; Committed (commitment): dedicated to the betterment of working conditions and environmental work towards achieving compliance with standards

2. **How important are the following professional skills for the baseline auditor standard?**

The professional integrity to CALL the noncompliance issue identified (instead of calling it a downgraded opportunity for improvement.)
Auditors tasks are more about assessing, not problem solving which is a different function. However, that does not mean that we do not require this skill for remediation efforts
Think the skills can be divided - it would be difficult for one person to have all of these skills but different members of the team may be able to make this up together.
Discretion, the ability to determine appropriate actions during the assessment. Moving away from check/audit list.
I see the triangulation as something that can happen when the audit is being written.
These are essential to being a good auditor but they are impossible to teach in a course. These are just qualities that should be emphasized.
Again, I tend to rate this skills and qualities higher than content expertise since they're harder to acquire and require more experience.
All a must.
One can, and maybe should, get help with analysis.
It might be impossible to conduct a good audit without investigative skills
As previous comment
High emotional intelligence and to build confidence and social skills of interpersonal and group dialogue leading toward an attitude of personal and institutional compliance with social standards and not to get involved emotionally if not rationally in the remediation of the violations found.

Although I consider this very very important not sure if any standard auditor can develop all this skills. if we what to raise the standard I would consider them Very important
Noted competencies are generally important for successful execution of a social audit. Given that the standard would relate to a baseline standard, appropriate consideration must be given to the expected development of these skills as an individual auditor gains experience – and presumably responsibility. In addition, as an individual progresses, the relative importance of the noted competencies will likely change.

3. **How important are the following audit preparation and planning skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?**

Baseline auditor should not be getting into issues of managing the audit team, as they would be a lower level member of the team.
Some of these depend on context and risk.
we only have one audit requirement hence response to C
Many social audits involve copious reports in manuals that no one ever reads. How can they be made to be more user friendly and actually affective in the long run
Again, would love more knowledge around manufacturing environment but limited ability require this at this time.
All req of ISO19011
I suggest having different requirements for a Lead Auditor, where team management is critical.
None of these are really baseline skills for an auditor. These are not any of your business. If the company hiring this as a staff person requires these skills or activities, that is their business.
Some of these are highly administrative. Yes, they're important but I assume someone in an audit firm would be tasked with doing them reliably.
We do not employ a team approach to our audits. We do apply it to the analysis of the data found.
now we are talking about ways of working and it is easier to grade these with a differential
These are skills that assist in the conduct of an effective audit so are necessary for the development of professional attitudes and standards
Ability to establish clearly in writing the characteristics of the institution or company to be audited, the requirements of the customer requesting the audit, the goals, procedures and products expected of the audit and outline content of the final report. Ability to coordinate the delivery of audit results, with the availability of the company to receive the audit team, the availability of peoples members of the auditor, traveling times and times and places of execution of each of the scheduled tasks Ability to formulate budgets for the costs of adequate audit the availability of financial resources to the availability of human, physical and materials according to the satisfaction of customer demand.
It is difficult to be totally prepared in this sense. Sometimes we need to work with teams that may think have all the skills but until you work with them you never know.
See response to Question 2 above.

4. **How important are the following communication and inter-personal relations skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?**

Not all items relevant to a baseline auditor, some skills should be learned at higher levels.
Communication skills are so important. Not only with management and brands, but most importantly with workers, building their trust.
Again, if a person does not have these skills to begin with, auditor training will not do much good.
All req of ISO19011
All these items are very important.
Again, nice things to emphasize and these qualities will distinguish better auditors, but how to you teach or screen candidates for these?
All a must.
Many auditors struggle to communicate with workers, have little understanding of how they or the audit process are viewed.
Do not confuse confidence and authority with aggressiveness.
These are skills that assist in the conduct of an effective audit so are necessary for the development of professional attitudes and standards and to build trust will all stakeholders. The list is long but none can be prioritized.
Includes ability not just to maintain professionalism in sensitive situations but ability to make employees and management comfortable sharing information that may reflect poorly on themselves, or may be sensitive for other reasons.
These are personal traits important for paid consultants (from the consultancies point of view).
Discern between provable facts, information indicative but not demonstrably biased information and information Distracted

or superfluous, depending on the source of information and research on the topic
All this skills are basic for a lead auditor not necessarily for the rest of the team
See response to Question 2 above (particularly regarding Q4F).

5. **How important are the following professional behavior skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?**

Corruption of auditors is the single biggest problem facing all organizations doing work with local staff in Asia.
Item D, being punctual and keeping on schedule, deserves extensive consideration. Given the avalanche of information available in an audit, it is vital that auditors control time in order to make sure that they cover everything that they must cover. The most common tactic managers use to undermine audits is to be slow to get documents or other information, and so run out the clock. If auditors are not 100% in control of the time, the effectiveness of the audit is greatly reduced.
All req of ISO19011
The only item relevant here is independence and ethical conduct that must be required of auditors. Does the Bar Association require lawyers to wear a tie?
Some of these are culturally-relative and should be adapted to the local situation. For example, it's important to understand and work productively with cultural variations around time and task orientations.
All a must for our company.
the dress appropriately - depends of the factory activity and location - if the auditor needs to speak with farm employees, he cannot dress to formal because they will be intimidated
B: what does calm "and directive" mean?
As above. I would also comment that these are skills that increase with practical experience in the field.
Needs to demonstrate flexibility and judgment about these issues.
The reason that Auditors have a legal mandate and responsibility is that that ensures their independence from special interests. While an employer would obviously expect a consultant to dress appropriately no such requirement would be placed on a government appointed fire hazard auditor - who would be dressed to get the job done!
All this skills are basic for a lead auditor not necessarily for the rest of the team
Independence – in both appearance and in fact – is critical for the social auditor. Beyond "special interests", any standard should consider all elements of independence and the potential for conflict of interest on behalf of both individual monitors and related organizations. In addition, see response to Question 2 above.

6. **How important are the following team work skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?**

Of course!
Lead auditor requirements
Elevating issues is a follow up issue. It is not an auditor's job to elevate issues during an audit.
These have no relevance to a baseline for social auditors. As someone relying on your standard, I would not require the accreditor to address these issues.
I would have rated B and D higher. It's really important to bounce assessments and analysis off team members.
D: or document conflicting data
As above. Team work is essential in undertaking any audit and an ability to work in a team is a key character trait I look for when selecting a person to undertake any fieldwork
See response to Question 2 above. Also coincides with comments regarding being able to utilize resources (regarding knowing and understanding local laws- See Section 1, Question 3)

7. **How important are the following information gathering skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?**

see previous comments
Pre-audit research may not necessarily be conducted by the baseline auditor
It's tough and time-consuming to get info from governments. Also, they generally do not have much info since their labor departments only cover a small fraction of factories.
Is it conceivable that any of these could ever be considered not important? The key is knowing when to apply each skill within the constraints of the audit.
Auditors should make sure that Unions/NGO's do not have political motives and are there to support the work force.
Mathematical analysis can be done outside the audit, although the auditor may want to see if follow-up is needed.
A must for our firm.

E-G are strategies not skills
These are all necessary in the design of good fieldwork. Everyone needs to develop good research methodology but some are more important than others depending, once more, on context
Research social audit history of the employer being audited, and of the geographic region/community in which the employer is located
Enough time for analysis and assessment of information.
See response to Question 2 above.

8. **How important are the following physical inspection skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?**

Response to B. above assumes this skill set would be more fully developed in a more experienced monitor standard.
Alternately know enough to request the facilities own proof of testing and responses.
While it is not necessary to cover every square inch of a factory, auditors must be quite confident about what they would find anywhere that they did not visit. Using basic light, sound and other measuring equipment is important, but a quick sample measurement should not be confused with getting a scientifically supported, time-weighted average exposure measurement. The quick measurement is valuable in determining whether further testing is needed, but the actual extent of the hazard, as well as appropriate management responses, must be left to experts who have the specific skills and the time to devote to the problem. The auditor is merely going to identify areas for further study. That having been said, there is nothing as effective as a photograph of a light meter showing a low reading to convince skeptical managers that their factory is too dark.
Common sense is usually enough for Q B
For our purposes, we have a distinct EHS audit conducted by specialists in that area. We don't need those skills from social auditors
Extra equipment used when dictated by client.
note, all of these point out the need for a team approach, rather than expecting that any one individual will have all these numerous expertise
conditions do not need to be tested by the social audit - the factory must show the objective evidence of the conditions
B: need to list all commonly used instruments (note some are expensive)
these are important to approach in a safety issues
Important - but depend on context. More useful would be knowledge of how to systematize a physical inspection
See the comment made earlier regarding general auditors, auditors and special teams to conduct in-depth audits
Q8B: Based on the current state of social auditing, the use of instrumentation for measurement of conditions – e.g. decibels – is not critical. A more important measure – given the current stage of development of social auditing – is understanding workers' perspective on related issues. Further, the proper use of instrumentation requires specialized skills generally which are generally not existent in the current social auditor population and which would not be anticipated in a baseline auditor.

9. **How important are the following worker interviewing skills and competencies for a baseline social auditor standard?**

Interviewing is a developed skill, baseline auditors need to be trained in interview techniques and learn over time to validate info and deal with coaching problems
These are critical skills.
Under what circumstances would any of these skills be considered unimportant? Did you really need to ask this?
Provide appropriate assurances around safety and confidentiality.
All a must.
the most important point to know the factory behavior
D: this should reference trust/rapport-building as a skill
Maintain strict protocol of confidentiality.
These are skills that assist in the conduct of an effective audit so are necessary to build trust with all stakeholders and obtain valid data. All are important.
Don't like the way this survey is organized. Communications questions should go together.
See response to Question 2 above. 9D: In addition, the ability to recognize instances where workers have been coached – which is beyond dealing with the identified result – should be considered as a key competency. Also, addressing or not addressing possible coaching to management is something that is developed over time and handled by a more advanced lead auditor, but similarly sensitive issues being addressed to management and/or vendor/brand is an important issue to at least have a basic understanding

(particularly when not to disclose certain issues).

10. **How important are the following management relations skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?**

Management skill set for most of these issues not applicable or yet learned in a baseline auditor
G. Assuming this step is actually the role/responsibility of the buyer rather than the auditor. H. Not clear this is the role or expectation at a baseline standard; requires experience and judgment consistent with an advanced standard.
We internalize management buy-in and documented inconsistencies.
We ask the auditors not to speak on behalf of A&F in relation to remediation plans or inconsistent findings. We deal directly with the vendor/factory when confronted with these types of concerns.
There is a lot of overlap of where the brands should be having some of these conversations. So careful not to put too much on the auditor. But is would still be good for them to have these skills
I won't say it again.
H client must also be involved the auditor cannot do it all.
I believe all violation - even if not fully confirmed - must be communicated to management.
On option J, question seems more like something expected from a social auditor more than confront.
These are advanced skills. A junior auditor might not be required to negotiate on a sophisticated level with management. This is setting a very high bar (impractical) for a baseline.
It's a bit confusing to mix skills and competencies. Yes, it's important to follow good practices, but I would think your criteria would focus more on competencies.
All key items.
feel less strongly about an auditor requirement to discuss remediation , this more truly belongs with the client
J: "confront" may not be the right approach under some circumstances
These are all important in the conduct of an effective audit. An audit is useless if there is no buy-in by all the stakeholders. The one about appropriate language is marked down because a) what is 'appropriate' language? Do you mean 'effective' or 'local'? b) Confidence is also about body language and status. Needs a spot of clarification if it is to be a competence in a standard.
With regard to this point I think many times management may not be aware of all the objectives of the audit (especially when it comes to verification of previous complaints) and the Auditor must be able to determine when this happens and provide only the relevant information.
See response to Question 2 above. Q10 A-F: Management interaction and communication is an area where the expectations – and involvement – of a less experienced auditor should be limited. These are skills and competencies which will be developed through experience and are part of the overall expectation – but are much more important as an individual auditor develops, gains experience and has increased responsibility. Q10 G-H: Further, to the extent there is a recognition that the role of the auditor is to evaluate and measure performance – the importance of obtaining management buy in for corrective actions and related remediation could be considered beyond the scope of the audit. As stated in Section 2, Question 6G, the auditor walks a fine line and for basic training, should have a more definite line drawn to accommodate for the strictest of client's definitions of "auditor". Ultimately, involvement in the remediation process could be considered an impairment of independence. For clients that expect this sort of interaction and encouragement to implement corrective actions and remediation, this may be in line with more advanced/experienced/lead auditors or beyond the "generic" one-day audit that this survey seems to centered on. Lead auditors/Clients/and monitoring organizations should determine appropriateness of such additional steps beyond the strict definition of "auditor" according to the client requirements, specific service, desired results, and supply chain relationship. Q10 I-J: See comments on Question 9.

11. **How important are the following resourcefulness skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?**

This is important for the individual but depends in great part of their employer (the monitoring organization).
Not clear on the difference between A. and B. Ultimately, however, audit tasks (A.) should be accomplished thoroughly, and not in a cursory fashion simply due to time constraints. The quality and comprehensive nature of the work and related results will not improve until more realistic feedback is provided by monitors about the realistic time required to complete various tasks.
If the factory is not cooperative and the audit cannot be completed, we ask the auditor to leave the factory and provide us with a detailed report.

There is an inherent tension between the time allotted for the audit and the need for flexibility should issues arise. The structure of an audit or the auditing form should allow for flexibility for the auditor to take the time to address issues, this is a management issue outside of the auditor.
None of these skills will matter when auditing in the Garden of Eden.
C This also means the auditor works in an ethical manor at all times.
If resistance gets to the point of not allowing all the audit phases to happen, accomplishing all the tasks is not the objective. Performing and audit with the expected quality is. The ability to assess is an audit needs to be stopped is another skill expected from social auditors.
Sometimes when resistance arises it can be indicative of an underlying problem that requires further investigation and/or re-modeling of the methodology. Auditors should not be required to complete all tasks regardless of resistance (especially if it comes from communities or workers), as this may lead to poor audit results and a 'box-ticking' exercise.
These are great skills but how can you require them in a standard? How can you teach them?
A is a bit questionable to me since it depends on the situation.
Key items for us.
A> this is not realistic; C should not be considered "creative" - rather corroboration should be part of data-collection process
Again, context. However, this, for me has a tendency towards 5, if not yet there, because it is about professionalism in the field. Part of being professional is recognizing ones limitations and sometimes failing (such as not meeting A)
Even if the above points are desirable, they often have to consider the obstacles that are beyond the scope of the auditor.
It is important to find creative solutions, but it must be acknowledged that sometimes the obstacles and resistance will not achieve all the goals. It is necessary to avoid that in the effort to complete all the tasks assigned to put at risk the entire process of Audit (e.g. disclosing confidential information).
See response to Question 2 above. Similar to management interaction, the areas noted are expectations and involvement of a less experienced auditor should be limited. These are skills and competencies which will be developed through experience and are part of the overall expectation – but are much more important as an individual auditor develops, gains experience and has increased responsibility.

12. **How important are the following information analysis and validation/corroboration skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?**

Again, much of this is a higher level skill set than a baseline auditor
Question E requires more clarification - is this risk of the report being rejected by factory management?
depends how long the audit is - some of these things will be challenging in a short audit
Again a focus on Management systems is key to how brands would like audits to occur.
F and I are particularly important.
Again, the corroboration can be done by audit writers
This is the baseline toolkit for a social auditor and these techniques can be taught.
Our auditors rely on our in house counsel to advise the client and contractor when issues arise.
All these points are key to the research, data collection, data analysis and discussion of any audit report. Poor performance in these areas results in a poor quality audit.
Sometimes is very difficult to corroborate the credibility of management and workers, triangulation of different sources is KEY!
See response to Question 2 above. Q12I: The intent is not clear. The audit findings should be based on triangulated evidence and not opinions. Does this reference incorporating/responding to feedback from management in a report?

13. **How important are the following documentation and report writing skills and competencies in a baseline social auditor standard?**

Articulating findings in relation to the STANDARD is important, but the legal requirements are imbedded within the standard, and don't have to be addressed directly. Regarding item D: Third party auditors do not provide assistance in developing improvement plans
For Question D - this is not within the scope of one of our audits. Question E and F?
Discussion of corrective actions plans and assistance in formulating these would be for a more senior auditor
level of detail/ description is very important. Currently there are lots of weak audit reports submitted and it is difficult to tell if it is due to a poor audit or a poorly written report
D In a third party audit this is not an allowed option.

For items B and E, the key is knowing how to describe evidence and findings; not so much reporting formats and technologies. Use of specific tools would be part of scheme-specific training, rather than baseline social auditing.
E. is an advanced skill. F. should be left to the brand or hiring organization to provide any specific requirements beyond basic social auditing practices.
Here training is requested from brands as different brands have different requirements and auditors usually have little previous training on specific client requirements. for point D, this requires an auditor to be experienced in all areas plus in processes at plant level
See 1st comment.
I don't understand 13. e
Auditing is for verification of issues, not root-cause analysis. There is too much conflict of interest when this crosses over into consulting.
the improvement plan must be established by the factory in accordance with auditor findings
E: confusing; Missing skill is CLARITY of reporting/writing with full explanation of seeming contradictions
Rigor in presentation, clarity of ideas and discussion assist in the testing and replication of results. As I have said before, social audits should be using scientific methodology to produce rigorous and replicable results.
See response to Question 2 above. Q13C&E: Similar to management interaction, report preparation related expectations and involvement of a less experienced auditor should be limited. These are skills and competencies which will be developed through experience and are part of the overall expectation – but are much more important as an individual auditor develops, gains experience and has increased responsibility. Q13 D: Further, the development of action plans and related involvement in the remediation process could be considered services that outside of the "generic" one-day audit scope that seems to be the focus of this survey. In addition, some clients and stakeholders and factories/suppliers find that remediation done by auditors is inconsistent with the primary objective of a social audit– the independent, objective assessment of performance related to the identified standards. To the extent the social auditor is engaged in these activities, the potential for perceived impairment of independence exists.

14. **Should standards for social auditor training credentials include the means for assessing language knowledge and skills?**

not sure here, language skills of who, and in what language?
Local language skills are essential
This is incredibly important. I have had auditors not speak the language of workers and it hindered the audit results.
A language requirement should not be part of an auditor's credentials, but they should know that when an someone from Burma audits a factory in Nigeria, he or she will have to accommodate language and cultural issues by partnering with someone who knows the area. In other words, language (and cultural) knowledge should not impact whether someone is a qualified auditor, but they will naturally impact how, and whether, that person is an appropriate auditor in a specific setting.
I don't see how an effective audit can be conducted without a thorough knowledge of the appropriate language.
You can provide definitions such as Native speaker, or fluent.
If by this question you mean assessing the adequacy of auditors to enter into communication with workers and managers in their own language, then yes.
If possible on site.
you mean, should auditors be able to speak the local language or other language that workers and managers speak?
especially where they are auditing in an area where English is not the first language
should be done at a team rather than an individual level
I assume that there should be a requirement that an auditor could only audit where he/she has sufficient language skills. Use of an interpreter or other auditors with adequate language skills may be sufficient.
That puts up an enormous barrier to entry and excludes a lot of potentially very well qualified people from undertaking auditing work. Adequate project design and rigorous methodology should allow multilingual teams to work together effectively
This is important for the original language but not necessary for the languages of the countries where the assessments are taking place.
Formal foreign language assessments such as TOEFL tests would not be required for all team members, just for the lead auditor/supervisor.
Can use existing system to assess language knowledge and skills, unless none are considered adequate.
Language skill is important but the priority should be more in the local language instead of English.

The method of communication is very important, and if the auditor can't communicate effectively, it will be difficult to do a good audit.
to consider its capacities to express clearly its findings
Don't understand the question. Does that mean speak well or know the language?
Linguistic capabilities are normally a presupposition for a social auditor.

15. **Please provide any additional thoughts/comments about skills and competencies here.**

Can't stress this enough, there needs to be identifiable different levels of auditors, with increasingly complex and learned skill sets
Skills and competencies can be lower, if the auditor is part of a team.
It is true that finding auditors (especially in China and HK) is difficult these days - not just talking about quality of skills and commitment but it's a market question - depends on how much you are willing to pay, particularly if you require people who speak English as well so they can report findings back to you directly or make it easier for those brands in UK and US to manage them. At the moment as the survey shows the skills and competencies required are numerous but how much they are paid does not directly relate to this level of skill and knowledge. Auditors need to have the skills to audit and then provide solutions to the non - compliances found to ensure that progress is made within the factory, with the buy in of management and ultimately to the benefit of workers.
Any standards for social auditor skills and training should build on what is already in existence and gain general acceptance - we do not need a new standard, restrictive training courses or multiple systems which add to audit burden and costs with no clear benefits to the end result.
I think all the skills and competencies here are critical to effective and successful monitoring.
Proficient written language skills in the language that the client is going to read and must speak the native language of the workers.
All of the components throughout all 15 questions are truly baseline requirements. I was hard-pressed to declare most of them anything but very important. I do not think advising any type of remedial steps or processes for corrective action should be the responsibility of the auditor. The knowledge to know what is right is essential to understanding what is wrong but advising or recommending requires a different skill set.
Certification as a social auditor MUST include evaluation during an actual audit. This could be done either as part of the initial auditor training or before the individual transitions from an "auditor in training" to auditor.
There needs to be a correlation between a factories internal HR / management systems and their performance.
Be careful to distinguish between those skills that can be included in the standard, and those qualities that can be emphasized in a training. I found this questionnaire conflating these skills and qualities.
Auditors should be able to communicate in workers' language(s); need to be sensitive (and aware of) gender issues; selection of auditors should take these into account
Not sure of the validity of this consultation . I think it may have been more useful if you had given a list of a number of characteristics and asked us to rank them in order of importance . as you can see done in this way almost all of them score 5 for me - perhaps an indication of the level of difficulty to be a good social auditor
At least one person on audit team needs these competencies - perhaps it is not necessary for every member of team to have all skills.
Experience, Cultural knowledge and social awareness
1. Need to be systematic - ensuring a clear rationale for findings that can be reviewed if necessary (e.g. appeal process) or with random sample for quality control
many managers are from other countries and would need to be addressed in their own language
it is difficult to rate the selections (boxes to tick) - they are more a list of important issues - tricky to do a "trade-off'
Most of these skills and competencies are subjective and hard to quantify for a basic auditor standard. Experience is the way people learn skills such as diplomacy, etc.
For me, an auditor must have strong moral, intellectual and professional qualifications.
Presenting an audit report in simple language directed at the workers.
As noted above, independence, objectivity – and ethics – are critical to the credibility of all social auditors. The inappropriate performance of an individual practitioner or organization can have a significant adverse impact on all involved in this activity.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. **Please rate the importance of these ethical considerations.**

Auditors receive such information from their employers, so it is not as important in training of auditors.
in order to manage the dangers of corruption, education is the first step but there have to be disciplinary measures put in place.
generally rated each item VI though intent of question not entirely clear. ethics is the baseline for any credible monitor standard and professional monitor. F. entirely unclear as to purpose or expectation.
It would be good to have some standardization throughout the field for ethics, so that everyone clients and auditors are aware and can help in the monitoring of these practices.
Ethics is the heart of auditing. If auditors do not know how to manage these challenges, they are lost. Any auditor training program must discuss the practical challenges auditors face every day.
This would be great to have a standard related to ethics, and be able to remove credentials based on violations of such. C. Does not relate to ethics of the auditor, but is useful to try to provide guidelines to the auditor to instruct the employees being interviewed. Hopefully, there is a means for reporting such violations ...
Key items for us.
There is an unhappy mindset about zero tolerance issues, which leads to unethical brand behavior. If Verite cannot get a handle on this it should move aside.
Auditors should show exemplary ethical behavior
depends of factory location
This is all part of a) being a professional and b) building trust BUT 'ethics' are cultural artifacts. 'Childhood' lasting into the teens, for example, is largely a Western construct. Human rights are inalienable but cultural sensitivity is essential.
As noted above, independence, objectivity – and ethics – are critical to the credibility of all social auditors. The inappropriate performance of an individual practitioner or organization can have a significant adverse impact on all involved in this activity.

2. Please add any additional ethical considerations that you feel should be included in the baseline social auditor standard.

The ethics of calling nonconformances when they exist should be covered for ALL auditors.
Ensuring a basic understanding of the brand you are representing. Ensuring you speak out and comment on the impact of the audit itself, especially on workers, .i.e. the workers in this factory were audited 6x in the past 3 weeks and are therefore exhausted and annoyed by the audit process and its impact on their ability to earn decent wages from work time and piece rates.
Any kind of certification has to be meaningful. If an auditor is caught accepting a bribe then the consequences have to be significant
Auditors should have systems to report any inducements offered or suspicions of any breach of ethics
Ethics relating to client and factory confidentiality and privacy.
objectivity
Auditors need awareness of and commitment to the wellbeing of workers, much as the Hippocratic oath binds a doctor to prioritize the needs of patients over other considerations, including financial ones. Any other position is simply not ethical.
Understanding of codes of conduct and international conventions relating to bribery and corruption
In my country, auditors are usually offered money by companies, because corruption is prevalent. To do a good job, one must avoid bribes and their implications.
Maintaining standards of confidentiality to clients, companies to be audited and others who might be "involuctrados"

POST AUDIT ACTIVITIES

1. How important is it for an auditor to meet standards related to post-audit activities?

Not understood
Auditors should not be getting into training activities, as this presents a conflict of interest. There needs to be a wall between presenting audit findings, and providing the tools to the factory to correct those findings. A factory can make recommendations on how to correct, but cannot be part of the implementation process.
If it is understood among auditor and client contract.
We are in the process of re-tooling our auditors to be more capable of getting involved in remediation efforts

This is a great aspect to have, but there is also a great need for the client to be actively involved and provide direction to the auditor for these tasks.
Exactly what post-audit activities are we talking about?
The audit does not end at the closing meeting.
Auditing is more than identifying the problem. It is also presenting a range of possible improvements. The only potential problem with this is where an auditor may emphasize findings in order to specifically provide a post-audit business opportunity.
The baseline should not extend beyond the baseline requirements. Companies that require them can teach them.
Two problems: First, to the extent that audit and post-audit required skills and experiences are different -- and they are -- one could reasonably ask: Why are we discussing post-audit matters in an initiative to determine auditor standards? Second, there are conflicts associated with individuals and their firms who audit and then engage in post-audit activities. These have not been adequately examined or addressed. What restrictions are there -- or should there be -- on auditors and their firms who wish to provide consulting services? This may not now be a problem (perception or reality) but should be dealt with in this process. Many other industries have failed to examine this dilemma and as a result are at risk.
Could use a consultant??
Can be important if in the same area or if meeting with management at industry functions.
the follow up of corrective action requests and the implementation of management systems at the auditee are what differentiate useful systems of audit and social standards from anecdotal reporting and make sustainable change more likely
depends upon the understanding of the role of the audit/auditor--responses in the rest of this section are based on the assumption that post-audit activities are expected
Monitors must maintain confidentiality of impressions, evidence etc. post-audit.
Depends on the audit scope. If customer requires post-audit follow up activities, then it is very important, otherwise, it is irrelevant. We must be clear that for customer who requires below activities, they must have a comprehensive monitoring program with an audit scope beyond the normal 2 man-day audit. A fully service is required including management system assessment, remediation mapping and recommendation of resources. This section of survey is based on assumption of customer requires full service with post-audit activities.
For base line audits, 3 - For root-cause audits, 5
this can't be answered. depends whether the auditor is responsible for the certification decision.
As noted above, the role of the social auditor should be the independent, objective assessment of performance related to the identified standards. To the extent the social auditor is engaged in activities subsequent to the audit which could result in the individual effectively auditing their own work at some point in the future, the potential for perceived impairment of independence exists. While there is a clear market need for post audit services related to remediation – careful consideration should be given to the risks associated with the potential impairment of independence. Such considerations might include a recommended time period before auditors can participate in remediation efforts at facilities they have audited.

2. Please rate the importance of these post-audit topics.

The knowledge of local resources would be helpful, but it is the brand/client that should be providing that information. Knowledge of root cause is important, but maybe beyond baseline.
On the spot should be prohibited as it bypasses root cause analysis.
primary reasoning for lower ratings on this section relate back to the definition of baseline monitor standards. many of these topics require experience well beyond a baseline standard; again more of an advanced standard or monitor qualification level
Much of this is not for the baseline auditor - or even for a 3rd party audit company
The most important skill here is for the factory to determine when and how they are able to address the issues of non-compliance. The factory must take ownership in order for it to be sustainable and the auditor can help guide and provide advice.
Just because someone audits does not mean that he or she will remediate. Moreover, the actual actions taken to remediate problems found in an audit may depend on information gathered after the audit by managers. Therefore, auditors often will lack key information needed to suggest actual action. Therefore, although the above skills matter, they will not always matter in every audit.
Again I refer to 3rd party audits F&G

Auditors should only be observing and reporting findings during an assessment. To place them in the role of "consultant" to address noncompliance issues is beyond the scope of their function.

Items F, G and H obviously will require significant auditing experience. These may be required of a senior or lead auditor, but not of a entry level auditor.

I think most of these go beyond whether an auditor can effectively determine whether or not a factory is in compliance with various standards. Advanced auditors can be required to have these more advanced skills.

These questions are hard to answer without knowing what role the auditor is expected to perform.

As there is no common agreement of the ratings of non-compliance or the timelines for corrective action amongst retailers it is very hard for the auditors to be able to advise on this. There is a SEDEX group attempting to address this issue but unless it is widely adopted the auditors would have to have a wide knowledge of their clients allowable timelines to resolve issues.

Here we have to be careful and identify scope of audit first. Do we want just a 'regular auditor' who will be very diligent performing his duties or do we want someone with additional experience and knowledge of the industry to give advice. some people would see that as conflict of interest to actually advise on what type of corrections should be implemented. In addition, corrections usually suggested during closing meeting or post audit usually fail to take into account the root cause that has to be identify at plant level and which is usually not part of a social audit scope. so many post audit suggestions/corrections turn out to be irrelevant and not sustainable.

These items are handled best by our in-house staff.

what does F mean ? what does G mean? it's not appropriate for the auditors to devise the action plans, the people who will carry them out need to devise them

Offering suggestions (F) is a mix. It could lead to compromising the value of the independent audit.

remediation belongs in the customer client relationship not with the auditor

Articulating benefits needs to happen more

the corrective action plan must be established between the factory and the client

Root cause analysis is extremely important for continuous improvement and remediation. The level of in-depth and accurate analysis has been a challenge due to the lack of overall knowledge a monitor needs to absorb. A good monitor does not necessarily has sufficient knowledge about the business, operation, human resources, productivity, supply chain management and much more areas of knowledge that may contribute to the audit result.

At which point does an auditor become a management consultant? These topics are context specific.

this can't be answered. depends whether the auditor is responsible for the certification decision.

Knowledge of the restrictions and access to the information collected during the audit because the final report of the same on the basis of procedures specific to each customer

These are skills for a Consultant more than for an auditor, now if auditors develop this skills would be great!

When rating the "importance of these post-audit topics" it is important to clarify, we are rating them as how important they are for baseline training of beginning auditors active in the "generic" one-day audit with the strict definition that is specific about the independence of the auditor from other activities at the facility.

3. **Please provide any additional thoughts/comments you have about post-audit issues here.**

I am not comfortable commenting on this, as I feel it is getting off topic from "Monitor" standards. Monitoring is not the solution to correct all issues in the factory, it is the verification of issues or absence of issues in the factory. There totally needs to be a segregation of duties, so post-monitoring should not be discussed as part of monitor standards.

If corrective action is not appropriate, it should not be accepted.

The company hiring the audit, as well as the auditing firm and the auditors themselves, must be clear about any expectations they will have of auditors once the audit report is finished.

It is important to understand the root causes of problems to access them correctly. I do not believe it is essential to have remediation aka "post-audit" experience to be a certified social auditor. That is a separate skill set.

As I stated above, care needs to be taken so as not to create a conflict of interest by intentionally linking findings to post-audit business with the client.

Don't believe that the auditors should be providing remediation services, but if a client contracts such, then the above are important.

The framework continues to relate to outmoded audit mindset. Where is a measure of commitment to communicate corrective actions with trade unions and workers' representatives?

Many of the post-audit topics may require time for development rather than "on the spot" advising

In general, audit and remediation should be handled separately. there is a conflict of interest when audit and remediation

combines. A good auditor should focus on audit related skills while remediation should be handled by brands or professionals who are technically focused in areas that may be directly or indirectly effect the audit result. If a monitor is required to perform all the above post-audit activities, then the audit should be a high level management system assessment which is something much more sophisticated than the regular 2 man-day audit that has been executed throughout the industry today.

See response to Question 1 above. There is potential liability for a social auditor to advise a facility on the means of correction action in the ways reference in F and G above. The role of the auditor should be limited to leading a discussion with the facility that helps the facility itself identify the options they are able and willing to pursue to come into line with legal and code compliance.

STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Should distinct levels of credentials reflecting (for example) different skill sets, qualifications or roles/responsibilities be developed and promulgated?

Basic Compliance Checklist Auditing Focused Issue Investigation Auditing Management System Auditing Train the Trainer Auditing Corrective Action Audits and Plan Follow up Environmental Skillets (Energy, Water, Waste - all kinds) H&S Skillsets (more than just fire - industrial hygiene, machine safeguarding, noise & air emissions - with basic equipment to do test measurements, safety, etc.) Labor - Human Rights - full understanding of laws and HR Systems Ethics - knowledge or FCPA, Transparency Index, high risk countries, real ability to audit and find indicators of problems in this area - not just lip service Management Systems - Full knowledge of what this really means Finally, the audit team needs to have people with different skillsets that can do everything from review documentation, do opening and closing presentations with management and be firm and well trained in high level negotiations, worker interview methodology - different from high level and technical expert auditors
A basic auditor course should allow an auditor to perform a full and professional audit. To have 'junior' auditors is not commercially helpful.
imperative that standards articulate specific expectations of baseline vs. advanced levels of qualification.
credentials don't necessarily make someone the best for a job- they give authority but do not guaranty people skills which are important to garner trust.
keep it simple - either one set or Lead vs. support role in order to develop people.
It might be appropriate to have different types of focused credentials (labor & human rights, health & safety, environmental) to reflect special in-depth knowledge of a particular subject area, in addition to the baseline skills.
I am not sure about this one, are we looking for all in one auditors or teams of people with different skills sets, the teams might be better approaches?
Basic audits are the work of generalists. When a higher skill level is called for, the task ought to fall to a CPA, a safety engineer, a human resource management specialist, etc. Different credentials reflecting different auditing specializations would imply skills that an auditor may not have. For instance, what would the difference be between a specialist safety auditor and someone with credentials from a professional organization of industrial hygienists? Highly specific auditing skills would only be meaningful with specialist professional qualifications. What the auditor offers should be a strong general knowledge of many areas, which allows him or her to determine when to hand off to an area specialist. Anyone who expects more from a standard social audit needs to adjust expectations, or else go find the kind of professional needed. The possible exception to the rule of keeping auditor certifications, and expectations of auditors, general, would be worker interviewers. Although the general qualifications for a worker interviewer come from a person's character rather than a specific academic discipline, there is much that can be taught, either through classroom training or actual experience.
It is necessary to create levels as goals and challenges i.e. the Boy Scouts in the USA; from Tenderfoot to Eagle Scout are very different level and many steps and levels must be achieve in between.
Yes. For example: a) Labor vs. EHS, b) Provisional Auditor vs. Auditor vs. Lead Auditor
It is expected that all auditors perform at the same level.
I don't understand the question.
A key area is on the assessment of Management Systems and training for suppliers on how to take ownership of improved

working conditions.
Lead auditor vs. supporting auditor
If you don't have levels you will not be able to gain any consensus and this process will grind to a halt.
I'm not sure about the implications of this (for costs, for example) and the relative benefits of this versus a unified credentials.
levels based on skills and experience primarily, product expertise less important.
Depends upon whether there is a reliable source of accreditation.
sorry question not clear
there are different credential system because of different social programs - it can be more universal but depending of the activity
Absolutely. This will then solve the challenges I listed earlier.
Forestry and fisheries have very different problems from garment factories
I think so but would need to unpack the full meaning of this questions further.
In many cases the conduct of an audit requires a set of skills that can hardly meet a single person, hence the need for a computer, in which each member input as its specialty. I think the main types of accreditation should be: (i) health and safety and (ii) other complimentary standards
To be meaningful, a monitor accreditation effort must effectively recognize and allow the market to understand the relative experience and competencies of individual practitioners. As noted above, expectations related to several competencies should be different and any accreditation/credential would need to provide recognition for the professional development and experience of an individual practitioner.

2. **Which of the following workplaces should have a distinct credential?**

we are beginning to require monitoring of our mills and sundries suppliers. although a distinct credential for apparel may not be necessary, I do think it should apply to mills, sundries, print, laundry and other specialty suppliers.
Can't comment on this.
It is not about certifying different factories, it is about certifying the auditor, and differing levels of credentials should recognize varying levels of experience and education (school, on the job or other). If you look at an accounting firm there are levels such as auditor, senior auditor, supervising senior auditor, manager, senior auditor, and partner. Each level is attained after performing the functions successfully of the previous level, and a pre-determined period of time in the previous level. The scope of work completed at each level is different, continuously taking into account the skills learned at each level.
Mining and/or construction.
Chemical manufacturing
6
Fabric mills/laundries/dyehouses (all require strong HS), Leather/PVC/Canvas bag/shoe/hat factories (all require strong HS re chemical usage, air quality, etc), Metal factories with plating etc.
Any industry dealing with dangerous material like Chemicals.
Extractives (mines, oil etc)
Electronics, Apparel and Toy could work off one credential
There should be one standard for social compliance monitoring across industries. there could be add-on requirements for specific factory types or production processes but the base level should remain the same.
pharmaceuticals mining auto
Some of these are similar in that there is heavy equipment and investment or test environments. Use of hazardous materials must be treated differently.
Electronics and Pharma - higher end factories - not sweatshops per se - techniques have to be higher end and higher skill set auditors particularly for presentations and mgmt negotiations
Plastic, metal, printing
extractives industry
Auditors should look at process and there is no difference between a toy factory and a garment factory in how they approach social compliance.
extractive, chemical
any science related/biological etc

Cosmetics/chemicals; mining and other heavy industry
keep it simple - the law is the law and that should be the baseline that all auditors know inside and out.
all sites should be treated the same. There should be a differential as otherwise it will be impossible for auditors to ever become lead auditors. Some skills should be relevant to all types however. There should also be a new standard for worker interviewer
I think where you are going to need specialized skill sets is in the technical aspects of Environmental Health and Safety. Because there is so much science based knowledge required including chemistry and engineering and these are very different skill sets than what a traditional social auditor was be asked for.
Certifying specific workplaces requires certifying people in knowledge of processes, businesses and industries much more than in auditing skills. Are we talking about certifying auditors, or toy industry professionals? The accreditation process for specific workplaces would have little to do with auditing and much to do with production. Moreover, the key auditing skills would generally cross over quite well. Financial auditors are not certified by industry, although auditors with experience in a certain industry are sought for their specific knowledge. Why would social auditors be different? However, having multiple levels of credentials and specialties, including credentials for various kinds of workplaces, would be exceedingly profitable for an accrediting agency. Consider your goals here.
The others are baseline generic.
Food manufacturing/processing
Food factory
There should be no distinct standards for industries.
Construction/civil engineering projects and shipbuilding where large volumes of immigrants are utilized
Product is product, factories are factories, baseline understanding of the set up and function make a difference but it should end there. Farms should be separate certification and home working and cottage industry should be a specialty certification.
The baseline skills and credentials should be the same. However, specialized training may be needed on sector/customer-specific codes and issues in order to successfully audit in different industries.
Automotive industry
Non-factory industries could also benefit from this training, for example impact assessments or audits at mining or oil and gas operations.
metal goods, textile gift items (like flags) and novelties (plastics, etc.)
It seems as though "factory" is the default audit and can encompass different types of manufacturing, whereas farms have a different type of labor and different potential violations
There are too many knowledge categories to even start doing this at this early stage. Maybe these can be added later when we have a skills based baseline. Let the companies teach their auditors about the differences between the various manufacturing processes.
The kind of workplace seems less important than the role/function they are being asked to play.
Automotive
Food factory
This section implies situational knowledge. Would be easier to answer following some type of needs assessment.
I think that the audit skills remain the same, the knowledge of a sector and practices in various business processes would be the difference
Not sure what other could include.
While there is a clear difference between plantations and factories, geographical credentials are more important than sector. Experience of working with smallholders and homeworkers would be useful credentials.
because the toy industry seems to be moving the most effectively to an industry level program, having ICTI-Cares accreditation could be an asset.
issues in agriculture more likely to differ than issues across consumer products manufactured indoors
food
food related, health sector supplies (e.g. surgical instruments)
As the field becomes increasingly sophisticated, credentialing will be more important for reliable audits and authenticating improvements.
Every industry and every sector has its own hot button issues, and a really good auditor understands those. In a perfect world, credentials would reflect the specifics of each sector as well.
same thing as above
the levels of credentials should not be based on the type of industry but on the ability of the individual to identify and handle

more difficult situations when identified and to effectively communicate and provide assistance to management to correct these situations.
The workplaces should be classified as different categories which organized by the industry.
in the others I include the workplaces where there are my chemicals to operate - chemical industry
I think that you could distinguish between factory and non-factory -- many factory issues would be similar, regardless of the product produced (i.e., child labor, working conditions).
Chemical/Manufacturing Industry
I guess is better use distinct credential levels in the audit role, for example, lead auditor, and the other members of the auditor team
Social auditors should know a lot more about health -- related to legal requirements, capacities of caregivers, quality of health services in or near workplace.
Each industry may have qualified monitor. a monitor may be qualified for multiple industry. the key should be focused on the level of credential on audit skills...
My background is natural resource management and social development. I don't have sufficient knowledge to answer this question.
Knowledge of regulations or chemicals in the different areas, for example, but may not nec. need a distinct credential.
food and fresh fruit and vegetables branches
Aid agencies
potentially mining, utilities, financial, transportation, etc.
Food processing
special requirements for farms in case of social audit in smallholder group certification systems
Regarding visual inspection, it can be complex to visit very specialized factories in electronics production, in terms of hygiene standards and security for example. In this case, I suggest specialized auditors.
pharmaceutical factory composite textile ceramic factory
Mining and extractive industries; Trade in goods; Financial Services; Utilities; Social Services
The proposed division is useful for all factories, since all analyze the standards of health and safety as well as others
Not sure if we need a distinct credential, I think a standard auditor should have information about this workplaces but not necessarily have a different credential for each one
Most of the basic/baseline elements of social auditing for the noted sectors are and should be consistent. The most critical element is an individual's mastery of core competencies, which cross industry sectors. To the extent an industry has significant, unique characteristics which impact the scope and execution of a social audit – a distinct credential for more experienced practitioners would be appropriate. Distinctions between scope and common findings exist primarily between Farm/Apparel/Electronic industries. The most apparent distinctions are in terms of H&S and Environmental findings and require additional vocabulary and context, but involve the same baseline training and accumulated experience regardless of the industry an auditor may begin their experience and training. But the scope of the audit, particularly in Farm/plantation audits, is the biggest potential distinction that may require additional training for a more experienced auditor and additional scope considerations.

3. Should there be differentiation and specialization in auditor certification by function (e.g. records review, visual inspection, worker interviews, etc.)?

The HS expert should be clear. When needed, the person qualified for environmental assessment should be clear (laundry, dyehouse, mill, metal object factories etc). The most competent worker interviewer on each team should be clear. And a Qualified Lead Auditor should be clear.
because of the cost of the audits it is hard for the customer to afford such ''specialization'' in the roles. One auditor should be able to fulfill all the functions.   Specially for small facilities the cost of 2 or more auditors will turn the auditing activity into a very expensive experience.
A foundational or base level auditor should be able to perform all of the above functions. There could then be an elevated level with specialization in one of the above.
Please see materials that Monitoring Standards put together - Levi Strauss had last set. We spent a lot of time discussing different abilities for these different functions - skills, behaviors, training, competencies
It simply is not commercially practical to send a team of auditors to a factory that can only do parts of the job.

areas listed should be part of baseline standard. specialization should be related to technical areas such as environment, advanced health and safety topics, FOA
technical skills do not always go hand in hand with interpersonal skills in human resources
unless incorporated to the lead and support differentiated roles.
I think auditors should be cross trained in all areas.
see above
I think it would be a good idea to build on people's strengths and have people that are focused on one area of an audit compared to others, however I know that some clients will want one person to be able to do everything, so I think there is going to be a baseline of skills required and perhaps them an expertise in specific areas.
The scope of a standard audit is such that the generalist is preferred over a narrowly trained expert. If an audit indicates a need for highly specialized knowledge, then an appropriate specialist should be sought. To expect an auditor to do a complete payroll audit in the course of a 2-day audit is unrealistic, and certifying the auditor in this area would imply that they can do something that can't be done.
A good auditor should be able to meet all requirements
All auditors should have the capabilities to do all functions during a factory assessment
An auditor needs to be competent in all those areas. I could, however, see having a separate category for worker interviewer, but that's all.
I can see benefits either way.
This is not practical. How many companies can afford to send more than one or two auditors into a factory? I think this is a min. baseline for being an auditor.
It seems to me that as social auditing gets more sophisticated it will inevitably evolve to have specialized functions.
I think this has more merit than the first item above (variable credentialing around type of workplace).
Again, depends on needs of parties contracting for/ completing audits.
in an ideal world, an auditor should be ultimately versatile. there are obviously stages involved before becoming so as well as 'field practice' so I would aim for one certification done in various stages with a proven track record in every stage/field practice
Especially in regards to knowledge of industry codes and standards - language skills (need interpreter) - metrics, vs. qualitative reviews,
as above, expertise may be combined in one person, or not. team requirements are key criterion. obviously one team member must be well qualified to do worker interviews.
I put yes above because there was no button for "I've never done an actual audit and I don't know how important functional specialization is in the audit process."
Depends upon the size of an audit team
I would expect auditor to be able to do all
I guess that the auditor should be the ability to do all the function
a qualified monitor should consist the ability to review records, visual inspection and interview workers.
Possibly, though a basic level of core competencies would be useful. Maybe develop tiered levels of certification according to specialization and experience
A social auditor must be able to perform well all the different functions of an audit
Too costly - need an all rounder where possible
It seems to me that this aspect can be very important. Considering the previous experience of the auditors, that is to say, previous to the accreditation as well as that who are winning after accreditation should be taken into account to renew or to raise of level in the scale of accreditation or specialization of the audit area.
I think it is important that the audit team can have all the skills and competencies required in each of the functions of the audit.
specify the methodology used
It is good that the auditors undertake several types of tasks, as this allows cross the information gathered by one method (e.g. interviews), with the collection through another (such documents), which facilitates the evaluation of the veracity of the information.
This is more important. to have auditors with different backgrounds. However this means that we will need a large team, and large teams are more expensive. So I think that to a standard auditor should have at least two of this specializations
In the current environment, there is not a practical, replicable model that would support separate auditors for separate audit functions. To the extent an individual does not meet defined minimum competencies for all functions, they should not be accredited for the "generic" one-day audit.

4. Please provide any additional thoughts/comments you have about structural issues here.

Specialists, lead auditors, auditors working as team members
Lead Auditor: Trained in dealing with management, team management, knowing client basic business process and customer standard expectations, language skills to deal with factory, workers and clients, understand concepts of root cause and some potential root causes and can discuss with factory and client, without actually becoming a consultant.
Need to make this a profession not dissimilar that bar or quality professionals with certification that must be refreshed annually. Monitoring standards group actually looked at different professions and compared some. Please get all this work. A lot of good thinking went into it.
I think it's important for meaningful follow up if auditors can establish a relationship of trust with the factory. I don't see relational issues here so I'm just mentioning it. Consistency between the auditor and follow up team will help build relationships.
Support the idea of different levels, such as junior, basic, lead auditor. Allows for progression as a profession.
One credential for lead auditor, another for support auditors.
Level of credential is very important to separate the level and type of service customers require. Today's one size fits all model does not work well.
The skills base required is vast and would require a team. A team would also be stronger in dealing with problems.
The previously proposed structure comprises: a) general Auditors b) Auditors specific type of standard c) Auditors for specific types of economic activity d) Teams integral in-depth audit (comprehensive audit) Bring the occupational profile of each of them, training requirements for academic standards and requirements to obtain certification and accreditation of certification before the competent national authority and / or internationally.
Any structure for the accreditation of social auditors must involve the organizations involved in the performance of social auditing. While there is clearly a need for oversight and involvement of interested parties – the process will more successfully and effectively be based on self regulation and must involve the regulated bodies. Further, any successful effort/structure cannot be exclusive to the benefit of any individual service provider and must be an open process for consideration of all potential service providers.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND CREDENTIALS

1. Should a credentials system for social auditors have a process for recognizing accumulated social auditing experience?

auditor and lead auditor
There should still be some form of assessment to determine the extent of their knowledge and skill but perhaps a simple test or a 1-day workshop where case studies and role playing are used to confirm their experience.
My experience sometimes is that some of the most experienced lose some of the basics - i.e. do not write clear evidence on the audit reports. Assume you trust them. Need to make sure there is rigor and specific and minimum/baseline standards maintained for every auditor and every report
Experience is vital in providing the foundation to being a good auditor. Similarly one may have qualified as a lawyer but until one spends years practicing the law one does not understand its subtleties.
not clear on intent. answer assumes experience does not necessarily equate to skill advancement. credentials should correlate with skill demonstration. There is value to setting certain baseline levels of experience which are combined with skills (e.g., CPAs required to work for two years gaining experience in various required areas; experience combined with passing grade on examination equals baseline certification)
actual experience in working in a similar field o
This should be by nature and type of audits and not just man-days of auditing
I think current monitors should be help to the same standards yet provided an opportunity to test out of the courses and be recognized for their experience. I think there are monitors who have been auditing for years yet don't have the skills and competencies highlighted here.
auditors should submit number of hours etc and sample reports each year but this should be a very small part of the process.
It would be useful to have this information, but not mandatory
That stuff belongs on a resume, not on a certificate. Moreover, how would an accrediting agency verify the number of audits done? It all gets very dicey.
Continuous professional development must be in place .
years of experience, trainings, and audits conducted

It should also look at not just volume as this is a poor guide to quality of output the review should also include sampling of reports (Can be sanitized) where required
Experience plays an important role in an auditor's life and should be noted as part of a renewal certification. However, if the auditor cannot move to another level, years of experience plays no role.
BUT...........that can be problematic to accurately ascertain. I have personally reviewed hundreds of auditor qualifications statements and have seen, in many cases, little correlation between alleged qualifications and actual on-the-job performance.
Proven experience should be considered.
quality does not necessarily mean that quantity is relevant
A history of well-conducted audits should be sufficient grounds for receiving credentials.
Experience is nice, but the whole point of this exercise is that there is no substitute for having baseline standard. A ten-year auditor may be exempted from a course, but will still need to take the test if they want the accreditation. Years and experience can be accounted for to gain advanced certification, provided they pass the tests.
Yes and no. If a highly experienced auditor lacks basic skills then it makes no sense that their experience should give them credit of some kind. However, it is likely that an auditor of long experience will know his/her way around a factory and as a result be able to demonstrate the ability, for instance, to detect falsification. My conclusion: no blanket certification based on service.
Although this can really limit entry into the field. I think there's a way of doing this that provides recognition and still provides reasonable entry for new auditors.
Through experience, skills are gained, these should not be ignored. However, it is important that these skills are identified and verified correctly and that it is not assumed that an experienced auditor is automatically a good auditor.
Can consider an evaluation system for the auditors from brands and grade accordingly.
A credential should be made available for a company, not the individual auditors measuring the whole of their products worth.
In order to offer a better service
Experience can be reflected on a resume; a credential is a certification that a certain body of knowledge has been mastered. I see no reason to lose this distinction.
Experiences should be reviewed on a regular basis.
crosscheck between SAI, IRCA and social audits according to clients code
maybe the standard should be use the levels like a audit hours or number of the organizations audited
years of experience in relative industry; certification from other accepted multi stakeholder initiatives; number of audits performed;...
Experience does count for a lot in this field
number of audits, number of years, participated projects in the field of social compliance
It is important to take into account previous experience because in each audit there are unexpected activities which will enrich the work.
It is equivalent to the delivery of an honorary title if the evaluation of foreground and the supporting documentation of the activity so warrants
there is no doubt that the experience acquired in each audit helps to better address the following one.
There needs to be a very careful evaluation of the experience
While accumulated experience should not be a replacement for any of the requirements for accreditation, as noted above, a monitor accreditation effort must effectively recognize – and allow the market to understand – the relative experience and competencies of individual practitioners. As noted above, expectations related to several competencies should be different – and any accreditation/credential would need to provide recognition for the professional development and experience of an individual practitioner.

2. Are there components from other certification programs that could be accepted as components for the social auditor standard?

AICPA
RAISE- GIFW, Possibly parts of the IRCA training
E.g. First Aid
Ethics, interpersonal relationships, conduct of audits, etc.
specialists based on education (like economics) and work experience (payroll and benefits)
SA-8000
OSHAS

TOEFL for English MBAs and Business/Management degrees from 2nd tier above universities for management skills Masters, PhDs for research skills ISO14001/9000 for Management Systems Qualified Lawyer for legal understanding Engineering qualifications Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi for Chinese language skills Post Graduate certificates and Diplomas in areas of relevant: Environmental Management, CSR, Sustainable Development, Health, Management, Fashion industry, Supply Chain Management, etc. Qualified Accountancy certificates
Not sure I understand this question completely but SAI, WRAP, IRCA all have certification programs that could be considered.
law profession is one of best - need to review Monitoring Standards work
E.G. WRAP, SA8000, ICTI training
The IRCA accredited ISO 9000 Lead Auditor course are a good theoretical grounding and should be taken into consideration.
IRCA requirements should form the baseline
ISO, SA8000, CPA
don't re-create the wheel but also should not make standards so specific that you exclude certain industries by taking specifics from those that have a longer history working in this space.
I am not familiar enough with current protocols. I have taken the SA 8000 course but I don't think that sufficiently prepared me with all the skills outlined here.
From BEAC: Audits of auditor credentials, Professional development/ongoing education
not sure
I do not know of others, so don't feel I can best comment on this
International register of certificated auditors. Social systems auditor scheme.
Sustainable Agriculture Standard of the Sustainable Agriculture Network for Rainforest Alliance Certified certification.
Fire and Safety Certifications, basic accounting certifications, human resources certifications.
Management Systems auditing from ISO 9000, 14001 and OHSAS 18001.
each should be specifically considered and not accepted on a case by case basis, but need be standardized.
It might be useful to explore best practices of other systems for certification
SA8000 etc
I don't know enough about other certification programs to conduct.
No reason to reinvent the wheel when it's not necessary. For ex. OSHA standards are useful. ISO9000 standards too.
This gets tricky, but if through a deliberate process, WRAP or SAI accredited auditors assessors demonstrate certain competencies, then there could be a process whereby those competencies could be assumed to be traits of all auditors in this "class." There would have to be a periodic review of the "class" in order to determine that is was still deserving of being accepted as having comparable competencies.
Language competency, cultural awareness training, significant organization development/behaviors training.
Experience of auditor
ISO19011
ISO14001, OHSAS18001
Social auditing required an individual auditor to be multiskilled, unless you have a team of specialists auditors enrolled to undertake each task. Experience and knowledge gained from other programs could be used in making an auditor who had the ability to do many of the tasks asked of him/her.
FSC P&C for forest management (P2, P3, P4); FSC-STD-20-004 V2-2, FSC-STD-20-005 V2-1, FSC-STD-20-006 V2-1, FSC-STD-20-007 V2-1, FSC-STD-20-008 V2-1, FSC-STD-20-009 V2-1, FSC-STD-20-010 V2-1, FSC-STD-20-011 V2-1, ISO 18000 series, 22000 series; ISO guides for auditing process and for auditors.
Soft skills such as communication, influencing, critical thinking skills etc.
e.g. mathematical or statistical analysis from standard auditing
None that I am aware of.
The experience accumulated in other standards is very important
social topics - if the auditor has a University degree in social sciences and psychology. H&S - if the auditor has some official higher H&S education.

parts of SA8000
ISO
someone who had already been trained in a different audit field e.g. environment or quality , has the basic audit technique and therefore a conversion course to add on social should be sufficient
auditing skills and knowledge should be transferable between recognized licensing programs (i.e., if there is a qualified BEAC auditor or ISO auditor they should not have to requalify on the auditing knowledge but simply on the specific topical areas and differences in techniques such as interviewing).
18001 standard
Environmental, safety & health auditors would possess many of the required skills.
BEAC
the guideline of the ISO 19011
Management system knowledge from e.g. ISO14001
there are many good multi stakeholder initiatives can be accepted.
Don't have sufficient knowledge to respond
global gap. fsc, ohsas 18001, among others
WRAP, SA 8000, ISO 26000 etc.
Off-site worker interviews and local stakeholder consultation.
environmental auditor certification
Various local initiatives should be included and added to the audit
Management systems - ISO
don't understand the question fully
audit quality and auditor training programs
Question unclear.
standards and technical specifications related to the activity inspected. the auditor must have specific knowledge of the area overseen
I cannot give an answer; I think that should be taken into account programs like the Fair Labor and several other similar
There needs to be a very careful evaluation of the experience
I don't know.
It involves an assessment and recognition of procs

3. **What kinds of experience should count? (Check all that apply.)**

Quality of work is the most important - linked to the years and number of audits.
education, other previous job experience, that might not have been "social auditing" but provides the fundamentals for a person to be a successful social auditor
Specialist cannot be based on auditing. It comes from education and work experience. Auditor or lead auditor comes from audit experience.
Some sort of cross-verification as to the ethical performance and/or true capability of the auditor.
experience in the manufacturing facility operations
Accreditation by or acceptance by existing brands/standards
-if number of audits is a lot in one year, this could also be signal of bad quality -also add number of internal and external trainings -degrees and education received -add qualitative change created as result of work
Quality of work
Both should be considered but only actual auditing experience is of value, not how long one has had a certificate.
types of areas covered in audits (e.g., interviews, record review, observation, leading management opening and closing meetings, reporting)
I think reviewing results should be factored in or perhaps shadowed audits.
although this shouldn't be the only thing as some poor audits have done 100's audits!
Also what trainings they have received and how many audits have been done with seasoned and senior auditors.
Verifying numbers of audits and years of experience would be difficult, and could undermine the credibility of the standard if

not handled well. The certification should indicate a minimum level of knowledge & training. Experience is something that a potential employer would have to evaluate for themselves. Moreover, doing 5 audits well is better than doing 100 audits poorly. By accrediting time or number of audits, the system would provide automatic rewards for the auditor who merely manages not to get fired over a period of time. Is that what we want?
All round experience and also include internal training and assessment
and these should be separated as farming or factory.
The flip side of minimum number audits is a "maximum" number of audits. If an audit indicates that he/she performs 200 social audits a year - that tells me that this individual does not know how to perform an audit as described by all the preceding survey questions.
follow up sessions
systems such as certification in process improvement for quality assurance, or similar programs
Quality of audits.
As above, experience will help candidates to pass the tests and meet the standards more easily. However, like flying or yoga teaching certifications, number of hours/audits should be considered in the various levels.
Could be both.
Both the length of time auditing and the number of audits are important but should not be taken as a sign that the auditor is the best he/she can be. However training alone is also not enough to make a good auditor. It is the combination of both of these elements that equips individuals with the knowledge, skills and confidence to carry out effective audits.
Specify whether the audits are done on an announced/ unannounced basis.
previous trainings done by brands like Levi etc.
A combination of both
also necessary to perform audits in different countries in order to be able to benchmark
Would have to have a way to ensure that the auditing experience was of sufficient quality to justify recognition as part of credentialing
Experience counts in conducting audits
Goo performance in previous auditing experience and audits completed
1. min. number of audits completed 2. Number of years of auditing experience
Knowledge in Local Applicable laws, Human rights, ILO etc.
How could you become qualified if you had to have years of experience or a number of social audits completed before qualifying
Additionally: Sectoral experience & auditing experience in certain countries / regions
Buying/sourcing; quality
I think that both types of experience can be considered and would have to be taken into account for the type of auditor.
Diplomas, studies, certificates of work done for inspection or auditing firms, and so on.
I think a theoretical and practical assessment is the best tool to grant a certificate regardless of numbers, more experience is the number of audits or years of experience is simply an advantage for the evaluation, what counts as established as a principle fairness at work is the ability to perform the task, regardless of age or work opportunities they have each had previously.
It could also include research time on topics related to the Social Audit which also facilitates the work of audit.
I would not stick to numbers, I would evaluate them in the field
type of experience related to specific industry

4. **Should credentials already earned (e.g. auditor training certificates, certain types of higher education degrees) be counted in any emerging credential system?**

Could be - but as mentioned above the Quality of work is the most important - of course training helps but some people are just not the audit type no matter how many trainings or number of audits
education- college degree
Education in specialty areas such as economics, health & safety, labor law, etc.
background in labor law or accounting; communication or psychology knowledge; social work and other training should count towards the credentials.

Yes to existing auditor training certification, but only if they are recent (less than 2 years old). I don't believe that higher education degrees necessarily translate into being a qualified social compliance monitor and would exclude that as a qualifying credential.
have to also accept some of downfalls and recommendation might be to still require new training
E.G. WRAP, SA8000, ICTI training
They should be taken into consideration as indicators of the auditors soft skills and academic capability for absorbing new material.
should be considered, but not automatically counted. depends on final standards and match with existing credential programs (e.g., IRCA)
existing accredited social system auditor training and approvals
ISO, SA8000, CPA
relevant credentials which contribute to bottom-line performance on aforementioned skill sets.
College Degree.
but types of training would need to be carefully considered. Could be that you have done x number of audits accompanied by an ngo etc
The value of getting an auditor certification would be to allow the auditor to apply specialized knowledge in a new way. Since standard auditing is a generalist's job, even someone with specialized academic training would need training in most areas of the audit.
Third party externally accredited social system auditor training. Self certified programs should not be considered.
Training certificates
"Counted" is an interesting term. If you mean that a related degree can substitute for x years of experience, or that a certificate in a auditor training class could replace some of the training prerequisites, then yes. However, regardless of prior education, training and experience, every social auditor will need, as a minimum, to have their actual field performance evaluated.
each should be specifically considered and not accepted on a case by case basis, but need be standardized.
don't know
Any with a specific connection to skills listed previously in this survey.
No, unless they are made requirements for the accreditation.
As a transition, yes. But on a go-forward basis, perhaps after a transition period of three years, the credentials could be based on an analysis of the process referred to in question #2 above.
if they fit the new standards.
training certificate, education, consultancy activities (not internal audit).
auditor training certificate - in requirements for all auditors;   BSc or higher education degree - in requirements for all auditors;   BSc or higher education degree on social related science - in requirements for lead auditors
FLA training
Yes but there should still be some 'exams' taken to validate knowledge
Nothing can replace the working system the auditing firm uses. If the system is valid and effective and standards are correctly taught and applied to the auditor, satisfactory results should result.
As I said before
include relevant experience, including quality inspection, other audit, procurement monitoring
Certain educational curricula could provide an "in lieu of" proof of subject mastery, in many areas. Examples: knowledge of statistical inference and sampling, engineering, labor studies.
I don't have anything in mind
But background (other credentials; academic training) could be considered in a credentialing process
Higher education degrees, ISO certifications, etc.
basic education to secondary school at least to ensure good written skills
should be flexible and viewed in context of experience
BEAC auditor credential very important
CIA, CPEA
University, Masters

There are transferable skills involved and to be able to use them would broaden the available base for recruiting social auditors - which I believe would be beneficial to the whole process
Social auditor & lead auditor training certificates
SAI, ETI, EOQ schemes
Training Certificates with he related ground of audits
training certificate
auditor training, formal education beyond 4 year degree, already acquired auditor certifications
Specific training received
It should depends on the creditability of those certified Companies.
certificates of training or specialized education number of audits years of experience
Should take into account previous certificates of training, such as higher education, especially in the case of emerging accreditation schemes, as otherwise these start from scratch.
professional background. When we work in teams I prefer to have professionals (lawyers, engineers, professionals with social sciences background as interviewers
Credentials should not be a replacement for any of the requirements for accreditation.

5. **Should there be a minimum level of formal education completed before someone can seek a social auditor credential?**

Definitely, it must be a minimum requirement to pass as this is the way to be assessed. It should be a group training but then at least 3-5 audits with an approved experienced auditor to be assessed when they conduct the lead audit. Only after that should they become approved. Quality of work is the most important - of course training helps but some people are just not the audit type no matter how many trainings or number of audits
4 year post secondary education
college degree, English studies credentials
Secondary school.
secondary school
High School Graduate (ISO 19011)
Bachelor
University degree or Technical equivalent
Enough to ensure language, analytical skills are sufficient
At least high school, preferably completion of college/university. However, there should also be a mechanism for those that haven't achieved college to prove that their experience compensates for the lack of education.
graduate college degree at minimum. Ideally masters.
college
Degree level
High School graduate, Can speak, read and write English and local languages well.
if education is a proxy for foundational skills and professionalism, a college or university degree would be appropriate. standard must set a high bar for qualification.
although it might give credibility in a difficult audit to have actual recognized expertise
College education
will vary by country
college education
Bachelor's degree
It would be good to have former workers, many of whom might not be highly educated, serve as auditors.
College Degree
difficult as in developing countries some excellent worker interviewers may not have completed formal education.
It would vary by place. For instance, many Asian and European countries have non-university technical programs that would

provide adequate background. In general, a bachelor's degree or 5 years relevant work experience would be adequate in the USA.
BA
At least completion of general education requirements.
High school or specialization in Environment
Secondary education
Four year college/university degree.
secondary school with some level of technical schooling or equivalent to an Associate's Degree.
Many of the previous questions in this survey describe necessary baseline skills and competencies. If an auditor can demonstrate that he/she has those abilities, then their formal education doesn't matter.
Bachelors degree at least.
undergraduate degree minimum
it's different in different countries.
University - Bachelors degree or equivalent
I would guess that there are situations where a local person without much access to formal education could be a fine auditor. If they pass your accreditation program and have the right level of math and writing skills, they should be allowed to be an auditor.
see comment to #6 below.
Bachelor's degree in at least.
the education level should depends from the role of the auditor in the audit group.
internal auditor
Although it is important for an auditor to be able to communicate effectively both in the written form and verbally, I do not think that the lack of a formal education should exclude skilled people from becoming auditors. Life skills gained from experience of work places is equally important.
Complete education to senior school level but where English used as a second language, this will need to be to degree level
BSc
Degree holding (e.g. social sciences, social responsibilities, languages, environmental studies)
US High School.
Shall be familiar with Laws, rules and regulations and by education shall be from same background based on the industry scope.
Experience should be prioritized over academic qualifications. If I were a mineworker I would rather the mine was audited by a miner than any kind of graduate.
I don't have anything in mind
Would have to be flexible enough to not exclude individuals with the appropriate background and skills
minimum of bachelors degree or country equivalent
see above
1st degree
BA/BS level college degree
It depends on the education level at different countries.
a degree (university)
At least a bachelor's degree
BSC
professional
At least university level
The person must be literate and have the ability to learn the skills.
4 year college or combination of 2 year college, years of experience and certifications
My first instinct was to say yes - but my experience of working with colleagues in the developing world then reminded me that brilliant people might not have any formal education!
high school and audit certification training
university (bachelor degree)
high school graduate

University graduate
Graduation
Ma./Bach. level.
An ability to write a coherent report is essential and this educational standard varies according to country
Note - practical work experience is important
University
4 year degree
A university degree should not be a necessity, but auditors should be able to "prove" their educational background, language skills, social auditing experience, sector and country experience.
It is nice to be a fresh university graduate however high school graduate should be ok.
At Least a college degree
College level
Bachelors.
undergraduate(bachelor degree from a university)
University level.
BS
in Latin American Context "licenciatura" (College education with appropriated majors)
I don't know. It seems to me that this might be appropriate for certain auditing functions, but not all.
To the extent the objective of this effort is to create a profession – completion of formal education must be a requirement. Presumably a level of education consistent with a minimum standard – e.g. a bachelors or 4 year college degree.
Vocational training and postgraduate level

6. **Should there be a minimum number of years of work experience (regardless of type of work) required before someone seeks a social auditor credential?**

2 years of social auditing experience
but minimal...one year as a trainee
5 years to become accustomed to standard business practices.
One year working in NGO, business, or Multilateral after Bachelor degree before could earn the certificate.
around 4
2 years
3 years in field
2-3 years working in factory or quality environment.
assuming baseline standard, 2 years plus specifically demonstrated experience should be minimum.
I don't think it should be someone with no actual work experience in a related field
2-3 years
It should be based on minimum # of audits, not years.
At least one year of real work experience.
not sure
But then you have to have a trainee program where people are working to gather that experience otherwise there is no avenue for auditors to get that experience.
While a new MBA who had never seen the inside of a factory would be a poor auditor training candidate, the types of work experience that could allow someone to be a good auditor are so diverse that it would be hard to qualify or disqualify someone based on length of work. As I said above, the limit should be some level of education or some length of work experience. It should weed out people who cannot write reports well enough to succeed, while not becoming a kind of secondary qualification in itself.
3 years
An auditor needs to have some work experience - in any field - just to appreciate what it means to be a worker/employee. I don't think someone directly out of school with no work experience will have the proper perspective. So I recommend a minimum of 2 years work experience.
03/05/2008

Social auditing is often an entry level job. Provide a level for candidates with no work experience.
I don't have a firm opinion on this. I am most concerned about skills and experience. We want the auditor criteria to be broadly applicable around the world. Being too strict on education or number of years work experience could exclude competent individuals.
not sure about this one.
At least 1 year
specific years of work experience in the field of third and second part audits and/or in social matters.
1.5 years min.
It is important that the auditor has had experience of working to be able to understand the issues that may be uncovered during inspections.
3 year working experience in collective/team work
A minimum of 2 years would be recommended.
auditor in training - with school experience would be a big assist to the team
Evaluate results not longevity.
Don't know
The focus should be in management systems, process business; not in philanthropy or social work, as usual
perhaps 2-3 years in industry- similar to an accountant working before becoming a CPA
slightly more maturity needed for this type of work
not for associate or trainee level, but for more advanced levels, yes
It is better to have several years of work experience. We also welcome for the fresh graduates. The auditors can be classified by their years of experience....etc
around 5 years
2 years
10 years
The person may be a new graduate from a certifying school.
It is important for an auditor to have the experience of working at a workplace so that they have a greater perspective.
Yes for two reasons: a) experience helps when doing any fieldwork b) older people carry more natural authority which is useful in an auditor
not, necessarily
at least two year.
5 years at least in a relevant industry
Minimum 2years
At least 3yrs
5 year minimum
Minimum of 3 years working experience
Since front line auditing work requires very strong interpersonal skill thus it would be a value added if the auditor has certain working experience.
5 years of Management level experience
No need for experience for a basic social auditor.
5 years minimum experience.
5 years
I insist that the performance is "unique" parameter valid to qualify the suitability of an employee, in this case an auditor.
There should be some college or technical college in some of the materials used during the Social Audit.
Unless they go though intensive training
I don't have the experience necessary to respond to this question.
As noted above, credentials could be structured to recognize the relative experience of individuals – potentially providing for an entry level credential.

Please provide any additional thoughts/comments about previous experience and credentials here.

The more confidence you require, the more stringent the assessment requirements need to be. Using a range of qualifications and experience requirements is cheaper but provides less confidence. Using competence testing methods is more reliable but more expensive. You have not considered the latter - i.e. methods of competence testing. This might be worth investigating more to complement your standard qualification approach. I am pleased to speak to you if you want more about this.
Union representation, benefits dept of a company, economics education, financial background, health field background would qualify for specialties.
As above, some ways to cross monitor the ethics and effectiveness of the auditor. E.g. if later audits, assessments and/or NGO reports find far deeper issues, there should be an industry tracking system to track that past auditors did not find this, and reflect their lower level of competence or possible questionable ethics.
previous experience in manufacturing facilities, health and safety, labor relation, human resources, legal services, etc
Suggest a simple test or workshop with case studies and/or role playing to test experienced auditors skills. There does need to be acknowledgement of someone's experience as a qualifier to a credential, however, just because someone has years of experience doesn't mean they can perform a solid audit.
where can we send documents on our learnings?
Track record is important - there needs to be a mechanism to benchmark the auditors results that he/she reports with the country benchmark in order to perform some trend analysis. If the auditor is out of step with the benchmark then this could give rise to some further analysis of the quality and result of the auditor's work.
In Asia it is best to take people who are younger and are capable of learning. Over the age of 35 years Asians are very set in their ways and it is hard to develop new skills.
this is way too long and only illustrates the issue with these types of audits - way too verbose - you begin to tune out.....
Please see IRCA.org for more details on this subject.
Skills are more relevant than experience in terms of years and number of audits. In many cases they are related; however, there are several auditors with poor performance despite the fact that they have many years of experience and many audits in their history.   Other credentials can certainly be a plus and are likely to be reflected in skill and performance but it is not always the case.
Parallel experience should be counted, e.g. trade union activity, social development monitoring skills (e.g. Rapid Appraisal)
I only completed half of the survey b/c my answers will be mostly in the 4s and 5s. There isn't anything I saw that struck me as "non-important". I hope this is still helpful.
A field experience would be extremely important and probably more useful than a degree
The questionnaire does not address issues relating to real auditing (which is measuring against public standards, laws and regulation) but rather tries to develop a set of criteria for "social consultants", regardless of the fact that many of these areas are strictly regulated and enforced by law. Auditing is a key role in preserving and developing the Rule-of-Law as the level playing-field, base line for all commercial activities. By confusing the distinction between "Auditor" and "Consultant" your questionnaire also manages to create an impression that you propose suspending the sovereignty of governments in auditing and enforcing the Rule-of-Law in this areas. This, I am sure, is not your intention, but inevitably occurs when you refer to the auditing of fire standards etc. Let me stress that companies may certainly benefit from consultants with strong knowledge of national and local social criteria when developing their operations and competitiveness above and beyond legal and regulatory minimum requirements. This role of the consultant is, however, not to be confused with role of the Auditor. In fact, the effectiveness of the consultant is partially measured through full archiving full compliance during a formal audit. In short, I find that the questionnaire (and perhaps underlying reasoning) does not sufficiently distinguish between the roles and responsibilities and division of these among different actors in society. I refer, naturally, to the landmark work of prof. Ruggie on behalf of the UNCHR which clearly distinguishes between the obligations of government and those of corporations. I believe it is important to use hat work as a starting point when identifying roles & responsibilities in various sectors. Sustainable business can only exist in societies where the Rule-of-Law reigns. Our obligation is to support developments that strengthen the Rule-of-Law and societies where Human Rights are enforced and protected. Your questionnaire does not link your proposed "social auditors" to this obligation. In fact, many of the questions imply an approach contrary to universally accepted principles and thus answering the questions is not really feasible.

My comments, I believe and hope, derive in all likelihood from the fact that you have not adequately defined your "social auditor/consultant" concept in the broader societal context (legal, regulatory, obligations, rule-of-law, international vs. national law etc.)

I shall be happy to revisit the questionnaire and/or continue the discussion through other means when I have gained a better understanding of your reasoning, definitions and motivations.

The instruments are built for accreditation based on the occupational profile of auditor in this case and accreditation to be valid must have a term of validity and renewal of mechanisms that ensure the continuous updating of knowledge and skills. From the above, is credited by mechanisms specialized knowledge of academic evaluation of the same skills and are assessed either through experience or simulated practice field regulated. The same applies for the certification of an audit team. The accreditation is necessarily a mixed school and work. Academically is provided by the institution of higher education and employment for the guild or the public authority.

Standards for the Knowledge and
Skills of Social Auditors
October 2009

Contents

FOREWORD

After more than a year of research and public consultation and dialogue, Verité and CREA are releasing the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors, which provide a benchmark to assist social auditor training organizations to identify what social auditors should know at the foundational level. The Social Auditor Standards Program, sponsored by the US Department of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility, developed these standards through the use of research, surveys, interviews, and multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement processes. These Standards comprise Stage I of the Program, while Stage II will focus on issues related to teaching and testing of these standards, and Stage III will center on dialogue to create recommendations for institutionalization of the standards.

These Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors will be revised periodically as conditions change, and to incorporate corrections and improvements received from interested parties. To comment on the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors, please send written remarks to Verité and CREA at the contact information indicated below.

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I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The intent of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors is to provide guidance to social auditing training institutions and a foundation for social auditor knowledge and activity. Social auditor training institutions will use these standards to bring consistency and rigor to their certification programs. Training programs and their graduates will be evaluated based in part on whether they meet the criteria embodied in these standards.

These Standards include terminology that has been commonly used in social auditing for the sake of simplicity and transferability. It is recognized that the terms "social" and "labor" are often confused. "Social auditor" is used in very different contexts, ranging from an auditor analyzing labor conditions in factories to broader rights issues outside the work environment, such as ethical trading, fair trading, and global standards applying to specific agricultural and forestry products. In these standards, social auditing is defined as auditing that focuses on the treatment and circumstances of workers.

The Standards in this document refer to the foundational Knowledge and Skills required to perform an assessment, audit, or evaluation of labor conditions regardless of sector, operation, location, or position within a value chain. The Standards recognize that specific industries may require additional skills above and beyond the scope of these foundational standards. These skills are outlined by the Knowledge and Skills in this document, such as those for specific conditions (e.g. dispute, work stoppage, strike, etc.), within specific scopes of work (e.g. worker needs analysis, off site impact, off farm conditions, etc.), or in additional areas of evaluation (e.g. retrenchment, indigenous peoples, environmental considerations, and wage and economic impact assessments). It is also important to recognize that social auditors may be limited by the audit tools required by the brand, company, or organization; the time allowed for a specific audit; the reporting format that is required to use; and the presence or absence of a corrective action plan format.

These foundational social auditor standards define a minimum level of proficiency, and are not intended to establish standards for higher proficiency levels of social auditing. Although mastery can only come from advanced training and experience, foundational social auditor curricula can highlight illustrative examples of social auditing processes and issues. The social auditing curricula are expected to introduce and reflect the complexity of each social auditing topic.   Over time, others may create more advanced social auditor standards and standards for specialized audits by industry.

Certain social issues, including discrimination in any form and gender awareness, are so essential to an understanding of social auditing that they cut across most knowledge and skill areas. The social auditor must have knowledge and sensitivity regarding the various types of discrimination that can exist (age, race, sexual orientation, nationality, etc.) and examine his or her own attitudes and sensitivities regarding these issues. Rather than creating separate sections on discrimination and gender issues, we highlight the specific knowledge and skills needed in each topic section as they pertain specifically to discrimination and gender.

These Knowledge and Skills Standards do not endorse one training curriculum or social auditor training institution; rather they are available to all, thus ensuring transparency and consistency of social auditor knowledge and skills. Key requirements are defined herein, and social auditing training institutions are encouraged to develop detailed implementation steps for creating training programs around these standards.

This Standards document represents Stage I of the Social Auditor Standards Program. During the second stage, we are soliciting and articulating approaches about how to best teach and test this complexity. Stage III will center on dialogue to create recommendations for institutionalization of the standards.

The Standards are presented here in two major categories: Essential Knowledge and Essential Skills. The first category identifies and describes the nature of social auditing knowledge required for a social auditor. The second category describes the skills and competencies necessary for a social auditor, including relevant personal standards. Finally, additional standards are presented that are considered desirable, although not essential.

The appendices provide background information regarding the scope of the Social Auditor Standards Program, the referenced publications, the process and timeline, a brief description of the principal organizations contracted by the United States Department of State to conduct the program, and a dictionary of terms.

II. ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE STANDARDS (EK)

Essential knowledge for social auditors refers to knowledge applicable in the field that is relevant to the task at hand including knowledge of standards, laws and regulations at the national and international level, and all appropriate forms, processes and modalities. This Essential Knowledge Standards section lists the international and national laws, regulations, and standards related to labor and health & safety, as well as the essential auditor knowledge required for a foundational social auditor course.

Labor Standards, Laws, and Regulations

International labor standards related to the UN Declaration of Human Rights and ILO Core Conventions:
ILO Convention C29 - Forced Labor
ILO Convention C87 - Freedom of Association and Right to Organize
ILO Convention C98 - Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention
ILO Convention C100 - Equal Remuneration
ILO Convention C105 - Abolition of Forced Labor
ILO Convention C111 - Discrimination
ILO Convention C138 - Minimum Age
ILO Convention C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labor
Other conventions may apply to audit object and geographic area, if not covered by local laws.

National/regional employment laws, standards, and regulations including:
Wages, overtime, bonuses, seniority, leave, holiday calculations, rest periods, productivity incentives, resignation, and termination;
Deductions, including insurance schemes and applicability of local law, understanding of living wage, and noncash payments;
Worker contracts, including contracts for foreign workers, temporary workers, other contracted workers, apprenticeships, and job training programs;
Worker housing and other facilities, such as canteens;
Gender issues, parental leave, gender-related work accommodations and benefits, and child care.

National/regional labor laws and regulations on:
Child Labor;
Cultural/Ethnic/Indigenous Populations;

Discipline/Termination;
Discrimination;
Forced Labor;
Harassment and Abuse - including gender-based abuse and sexual harassment;
Union Rights and Freedom of Association – including union restrictions and the right to collective bargaining.

Health and Safety Standards

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) management and systems including:
OHS policy;
OHS responsibility and competency definition, assignment, and training;
OHS hazard/risk assessment, minimization, and controls;
Emergency response procedures and systems;
Conformance with legal and regulatory standard requirements;
OHS objectives, targets, performance metrics, evaluation/investigation/analysis, and improvement;
OHS communication, awareness, and consultation;
OHS records and documentation.

Worksite hazards, including:
Physical hazards, including noise, vibration, electricity, light, pressure, radiation, temperature, and carrying capacity;
Chemical hazards, including corrosivity, reactivity, fire, conflagration and explosion, and toxicity;
Biological hazards;
Musculoskeletal hazards, including ergonomics;
Psychosocial hazards including work-related stress, violence, and trauma.

Essential Auditing Knowledge

The production environment, production processes, and systems.

Management systems (productivity, environmental, quality) and practices for social compliance, which vary by industry.
Knowledge of government forms/receipts showing payment of payroll tax and benefits contributions.

Common compliance issues existing in commonly audited industries.
Socio-cultural and gender differences in compliance approaches.
In-country Freedom of Association issues including: collective bargaining processes, non-union forms of worker organizations, elections, legal status, typical worker grievance mechanisms, and common forms of interfering with freedom of association.
Gender-related issues such as requiring proof of non-pregnancy, standing requirements, rest periods, and work termination due to pregnancy.

Common compliance issues existing in specific geographic regions.

General client requirements regarding social audit implementation.
The difference between generic and social auditing goals and competencies.
The difference between announced and unannounced audits.

The obtaining and synthesizing of information.
Obtaining and synthesizing information pertains to all areas within the scope of an audit against the reference standards. It includes an understanding of the difference between fact and inference, and that only facts can be used to substantiate an audit finding.

Document review and visual inspection techniques.
Common methods of document manipulation.
Triangulation to cross-check collected information.

Best practices in gathering information from workers, including the following:
Interviewing techniques;
Worker sampling methods that best represent both the workers and the working conditions in the factory;
Suitability of group vs. individual interviews according to cultural circumstances.
The conducting of off-site worker interviews;
Recognition of methods of worker coaching and intimidation.

Practical application of social, cultural, and gender dynamics of worker communities in the conduct of an audit.

Ability to communicate effectively with managers, administration, and workers as applied to the local context.

III. ESSENTIAL AUDITING SKILLS STANDARDS (ES)

Essential auditing skills for social auditors refers to skills required for a foundational social auditor course including auditing skills, communication and inter-personal relation skills, and personal standards. The Social Auditor should possess the following social auditing skills:

Scope and plan an audit, including but not limited to launching the audit request, managing pre-audit activities, and scoping of audit and audit criteria.

Report fully on information gathered through written report.
2.1. Use common social auditing reporting formats and technologies, and
2.2. Use violation and grading matrices correctly.

Plan for and adjust to differing skill sets of the audit team members and synthesize perspectives of team members as appropriate.

Communicate clearly and confidently with all parties in an appropriate language/dialect, particularly regarding informational needs.
Use of professional translators not associated with factory management.

Conduct a physical inspection of production facilities and grounds.

Conduct the audit without drawing excessive attention or disrupting business processes.

Analyze factory records relevant to compensation and work hours.

Engage workers by interviewing skillfully and managing worker expectations.

Determine credibility of information, whether the factory is adhering to policies and procedures, and verify allegations derived from other sources.

Able to keep relevant information confidential, especially to protect the well-being of workers and to comply with any confidentiality agreements.

Able to secure management buy-in to next steps, as/when required, including:
11.1. Identify when not to disclose violations in the closing meeting,
11.2. Articulate benefits of expected outcomes if required by client, and
11.3. Confront management when faced with inconsistent findings.

Communicate well both orally and in written form at all business levels and articulate findings in direct relation to legal and code standards.

Advise on ways to resolve noncompliance in practical ways that meet legal and code requirements.

The Social Auditor should possess the following essential communication and inter-personal relation skills (ECS):

Sensitivity to gender, racial, cultural, and socio-economic issues.

Ability to deal sensitively and discreetly with people from different backgrounds and to make them feel at ease.

Ability to adapt communications to the situation.

Possession of effective listening skills and awareness of non-verbal communication.

Ability to interact effectively with workers as well as management.

Ability to probe effectively and discern risk.

Maintenance of a professional demeanor.

Ability to lead discussions and to handle issues of conflict as they arise while maintaining composure and showing respect for all parties.

Dressing professionally and appropriately for the worksite.

The Social Auditor should possess the following personal standards. (EPS)

The social auditor is expected to function in accordance with the following personal and professional standards:

Strong personal code of professional standards including:
Protecting workers from retribution;
Avoidance of conflicts of interest;
Avoidance of gifts, bribes, and favors.

Perceptiveness and tenaciousness, with strong investigative and analytical skills.

Honesty, trustworthiness and diplomacy, and ability to maintain independence from special interests.

Open-mindedness, reasonableness, and objectivity.

Self-reliance, with ability to interact effectively with others and share data to arrive at mutual conclusions.

Ability to take a leadership role, particularly in problematic or unanticipated situations.

Strong planning, organizational, and time management skills.

Ability to make decisions based on objective and verifiable evidence.

IV. DESIRABLE BUT NOT ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The following knowledge and skills were considered desirable by stakeholders and should also be considered as important components of a foundational social auditor certification course.

Desirable but not Essential Social Auditor Knowledge (DK):
Content and purposes of codes of conduct;
Types of social code audits, e.g. first, second, and third-party audits;
Basic knowledge of ISO, EMAS, and BSI standards;
Brand sourcing practices;
How employer and industrial associations operate.

Desirable but not Essential Social Auditor Skills (DS):
Gather information from local unions;
Access and use information from local, national, regional, and global NGOs;
Gather information from government bodies and officials;
Use instruments to test conditions, e.g. decibel levels.

APPENDICES

REFERENCED PUBLICATIONS

In addition to stakeholder feedback through various methods, CREA and Verité have examined and used existing accreditation schemes where appropriate, recognizing that significant work has already been done to bring consistency to the field of social auditing. These Recommended Standards were informed by:

AA1000 Assurance Standard 2008

Board of Environmental, Health & Safety Auditor Certifications (BEAC), Standards for the Professional Practice of EHS Auditing

GRI, Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, 2006

Global Supply Chain Programme (GSCP) documents

ILO publications on labor inspection and Core Conventions

IRCA Certification as a Social Systems Auditor: Criteria for Certification as a Social Systems Auditor, 2008

ISEAL Code of Good Practice and Guidance for Setting Social and Environmental Standards, Draft Version July 2009

Practice of Environmental, Health and Safety Auditing, 1999

Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) Guide to Social Systems Auditor Competencies

Social Accountability International standards and publications

Social Accountability Accreditation Services standards and publications

DICTIONARY OF TERMS[2]

Audit: An examination of the records, statements, systems, and procedures of an organization together with its stated claims for performance. This is typically undertaken with a view to verifying the quality, meaningfulness (e.g., accuracy, validity, compliance, inclusiveness, completeness), and other aspects of the claimed performance of the organization.

Audit Report: A testimony produced by an auditor regarding the quality and meaningfulness of an organization's records, statements, systems, and procedures, as well as stated claims for performance. May also include an opinion on areas for improvement and predicted future progress.

Auditor: Person who conducts an audit, often certified by a professional body or licensed under statute. The auditor may be internal (employed by the organization) or external (unconnected to the organization).

Baseline: A starting point against which future changes are compared. Used for benchmarking.

Code of Conduct: A set of principles indicating how an organization expects its members to act. It is frequently general, and enforcement is left to the discretion of the organization.

Compliance: The act or process of fulfilling internal or external requirements as set forward in policies, regulations, or guidelines.

Consensus: General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process seeking to take into account the views of interested parties, particularly those directly affected, and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. NOTE - Consensus need not imply unanimity (based on ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004)

Fair Trade: A trading relationship based on commitment to social justice in which employees and producers are treated and paid in a fair manner, sustainable environmental practices are followed, and long-term trade relationships are fostered.

Internal Audit: An independent appraisal of operations, conducted under the direction of organizational management, to assess the effectiveness of internal administrative and accounting controls and help ensure conformance with managerial policies.

Internal Auditor: A person employed within an organization who conducts an internal audit. The internal auditor is generally independent of management and reports directly to the board of directors.

Knowledge Objectives: Identify and describe the nature of social auditing training standards.

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[2] Definitions of social auditing terms have been compiled from stakeholder dialogue as well as SEEP and ISEAL documents. See Social Performance glossary from SEEP at http://www.seepnetwork.org/content/library/detail/4728 and ISEAL Code of Good Practice Definitions at http://www.isealalliance.org/document/docWindow.cfm?fuseaction=document.viewDocument&documentid=220&documentFormatId=1282

Non-governmental Organization (NGO): A non-profit group or association organized outside of institutionalized political structures to realize particular social objectives or serve particular constituencies. Its activities include program operation, service delivery, research, information distribution, training, local organization, and community service, as well as legal advocacy, lobbying for legislative or social change, and civil disobedience.

Skill Objectives: Demonstrate skill and competency training standards necessary for social auditors.

Social Audit: An examination of the records, statements, internal processes, and procedures of an organization related to its social performance. It is undertaken with a view to providing assurance as to the quality and meaningfulness of the organization's claimed social performance.

Social Auditing: Examination of the records, internal processes, and procedures of an organization related to its social performance in order to provide assurance about the quality and meaningfulness of the organization's social performance.

Social Auditor: A broad professional practice involving the application of knowledge and skill to assist factories to certify their worksites are fair and equitable.

Socio-cultural: Concerned with the social and cultural practices, beliefs and traditions within a particular society.

Stakeholder: a person or organization with a vested interest in the successful operation of a company, organization, or process.

Standard: Document that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking, or labeling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL AUDITOR STANDARDS PROJECT

Verité and CREA are facilitating a process to further the development of standards for the knowledge, skills, and competencies of social auditors with the financial support of the US Department of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility. The project promotes dialogue among stakeholders on social auditor standards through surveys, a wiki, conferences, and meetings with the goal of developing a comprehensive set of training standards for the knowledge and skills of social auditors. The Project has several steps, including identifying the essential components of draft standards through a stakeholder survey, dialogue on those standards via a wiki and face-to-face meetings, development of draft standards and pilot testing of training standards with training institutions, and dialogue and recommendations for institutionalization of the standards. These steps are show below.

Project Overview

| Identify essentials of draft standard with survey | Dialogue on standards via wiki and face to face meetings | Draft Standards and pilot test with training institutions | Dialogue and recommendations for institutionalization of standards | Comprehensive set of training standards for knowledge and skills of social auditors |

Supported by the US Department of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility

CREA- Verité Social Auditor Training Standards Project

www.wiki.socialauditor.org
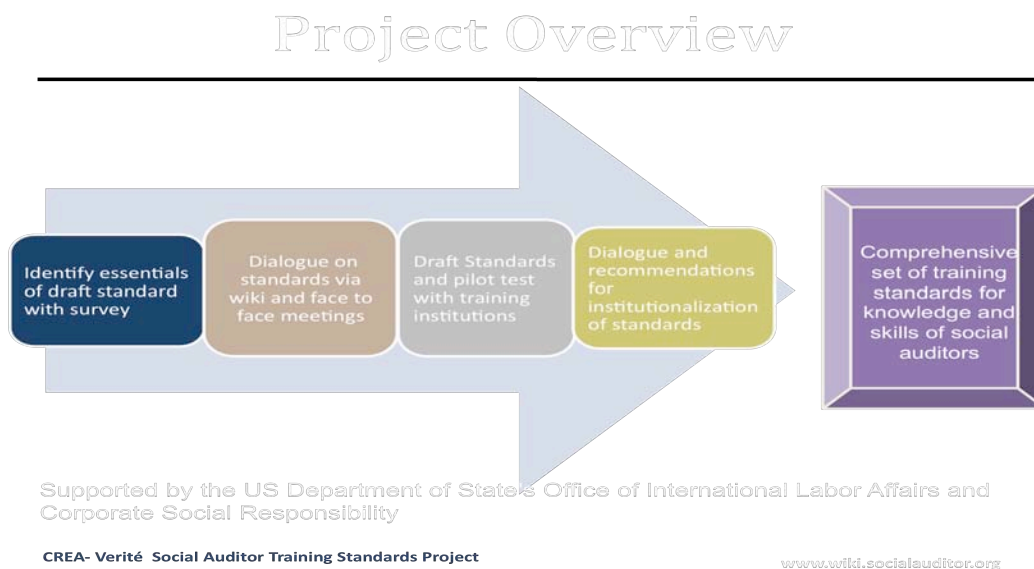
ABOUT VERITÉ
Verité is an independent, not-for-profit social auditing, research, and training organization based in Amherst, Massachusetts, USA. Verité's mission is to ensure that people worldwide work under safe, fair and legal conditions. Since 1995, Verité has conducted over 2,000 factory evaluations and assessments for multinational corporations and local suppliers in 60 countries; numerous factory-based management training and worker education programs in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East; and research for socially concerned investors worldwide. For more information about Verité, please visit our website or contact us at:

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ABOUT CREA
CREA is a social economic research and education not-for-profit institution with over a decade of CSR experience in monitoring and education. Starting with the foundational work of the Independent

Monitoring Working Group (IMWG) with Gap in Central America, CREA has been involved in social compliance monitoring including the development of codes, compliance systems and trainings. More recently CREA has been instrumental in such initiatives as Project Kaleidoscope in China with Disney and McDonald's. CREA operates through an internal network of partner NGOs. All of CREA's projects require collaborative standard setting, facilitation, education of multi-stakeholder constituencies as well as the creation of education and management tools for on-going use. For more information about CREA, please visit our website or contact us at:

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Results and Analysis of the Social Auditor Survey on Training and Institutionalization

April 2010

About Verité

Verité is an independent, not-for-profit social auditing, research, and training organization based in Amherst, Massachusetts, USA. Verité's mission is to ensure that people worldwide work under safe, fair and legal conditions. Since 1995, Verité has conducted over 1,500 comprehensive factory evaluations for multinational corporations and local suppliers in 60 countries; numerous factory-based management training and worker education programs in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East; and research for socially concerned investors worldwide.

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Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION

Verité and CREA are facilitating a process to further the development of standards for the knowledge, skills, and competencies of social auditors with the financial support of the US Department of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility. The project runs from January 2008 to June 2010, and promotes dialogue among stakeholders on social auditor standards through surveys, a wiki, conferences and meetings with the goal of developing a comprehensive set of training standards for the knowledge and skills of social auditors.

The Project has several steps, including identifying the essential components of a draft standard through a stakeholder survey, dialogue on those standards via a wiki and face to face meetings, development of draft standards and dialogue and recommendations for institutionalization of the standards. The Project is currently in the last stage, of dialogue/consensus building around institutionalizing the draft standards. In February 2010, the Social Auditor Survey on Training and Institutionalization was sent to over 3,000 stakeholders including social auditing organizations, brands, Non-Governmental Organizations, investors, and suppliers. The Survey remained open until March 26, 2010, and this document provides a summary of participant responses. The Survey focused on four key areas of the Social Auditor Standards: 1) training, 2) assessment and testing, 3) certification and recertification, and 4) institutionalization.

II. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

CREA and Verité are thankful to participants who took the time to add comments, clarify issues, make suggestions and ask questions. Their input is gratefully appreciated. The summary findings by key area are found below.

Training
The majority of survey respondents determined:
A variety of different training mediums should be used, without relying exclusively on online, face to face meetings or field activities.
Hands-on practical experience could be gained through on the job training, shadow audits, role playing, and partnering with a third party monitor.
A baseline social auditor training program should include field observation by senior auditors.
Training components should be broken up into modules with testing between modules.
Mentoring and internships could help students integrate the baseline social auditor training program into the student's work schedule.
There should be a maximum time limit between the time a student begins and completes a baseline social auditor course. (82% replied "Yes")

There was no consensus on the length of time for a baseline social auditor course, with suggestions ranging from 2-3 days to 3 months.

Assessment and Testing
The majority of survey respondents felt:
Oral exercises, written quizzes, written exams, and written evaluations by supervisors are useful ways to gauge a student's progress in a baseline social auditor training course.
Shadow auditing was very important in order to verify a baseline social auditor certification (67%)
Evaluations by course supervisors are very important to determine the student's ability to implement what was learned in the training course.

Certification and Recertification
The majority of survey respondents felt:
The social auditor certification should be valid for 1-3 years (68%)

That there should be a process for testing out of the baseline social auditor training (59%), and that years of experience, number of audits and a certificate from an existing, validated course are all valid criteria for testing out.

There was no consensus on the mandatory requirements for social auditor recertification. Suggestions included refresher training, completion of a benchmark such as witness audit, a yearly brush-up exam, and online testing. Responses were also mixed regarding the prerequisites for the baseline social auditor training course.

Institutionalization:
The majority of survey respondents felt:
There should be one social auditor standards organization.
The social auditor standards organization should have many roles, including maintaining standards, accrediting training institutions, offering certificates, and maintaining a registry of certified individuals.
There should be a process by which training institutions recognize the baseline certification of an auditor when s/he seeks a more advanced course from another provider (93%)
There should be a mechanism by which an individual's baseline social auditor certification can be revoked, particularly for corruption, integrity issues, and incompetence.
An independent complaints mechanism should be used for lodging and verifying complaints.

Survey participants felt mixed about the structure of the body(ies) that manage the Standards and accredit training organizations. They also had mixed responses about how the certification could be financed, with some feeling it should be financed by individuals taking the course, and others feeling it is the responsibility of the audit company.

III. DETAILED FINDINGS BY SECTION

This section provides representative participant comments to each survey question, with Training in Section 1, Assessment and Testing in Section 2, Certification and Recertification in Section 3, and Institutionalization in Section 4. Names and organizational affiliation have been removed to protect survey participant privacy, while duplicate comments have been deleted in the interest of saving space. Each comment below is unedited to capture the participant's own words and meaning. These comments help inform the wiki discussion at www.wiki.socialauditor.org.

1. Training

1. It is possible to teach baseline social auditors using different formats, including completely online, face to face meetings, and blended online and face to face meetings. What are your thoughts about how the baseline social auditor should be taught?

1.	Through a variety of training mediums. Only using one medium will not work.
2.	Baseline information can be imparted online but face to face training is required to work on skills; case studies; practical scenarios and role plays
3.	to teach baseline social auditors is possible through a blend of online (interactive, general knowledge) and face to face meetings (focusing in specific issues)
4.	I should think that most social auditors and/or candidates would be comfortable with online training. I personally prefer face-to-face, but would not be opposed to hybrid options if those were significantly more cost-effective.
5.	Some classroom training but mostly in the field.

	1. It is possible to teach baseline social auditors using different formats, including completely online, face to face meetings, and blended online and face to face meetings. What are your thoughts about how the baseline social auditor should be taught?
6.	All of the above can be used. Accelerated learning is one of the best tools available. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT THE KEY TO GOOD TRAINING IS THE TUTOR; THERE ARE TOO MANY TUTORS WHO KNOW THE THEORY BUT HAVE NEVER CONDUCTED MEANINGFUL AUDITS.
7.	Blended face to face and online. Given the different types of information and situations that can arise across a variety of industries, hands on at a factory is the best way.
8.	Goals of the institution aside, in order to train auditors to the point where there is a confidence level of their abilities in the field, they must be observed in the field. I think that there should be a very thorough and difficult written exam that needs to be required at an independent testing site - like what is done for TOEFL or GMAT, etc. which is based on a root knowledge and best practice protocol manual. This will allow very experienced auditors to skip costly presentation and exercise heavy trainings if they (or their firms) feel comfortable with them taking the exam. Passing should be a pre-condition moving forward. In support of potential auditors, there should be a weeklong training designed to introduce the content in the base manual. Those with little experience would really value this, while those that already have this background and knowledge would not need waste their time/money on. Once the test is passed, there needs to be a requirement of having independent evaluators observe all auditors that have passed the baseline exam. This will be an observation of them leading an audit as a lead and undertaken each key aspect of the audit. Evaluators must also be qualified and experienced in the country in question in order to properly evaluate them. This should be at the cost of the auditor/firm. They must reach a satisfactory score to pass this. If not, they should receive feedback after which they can schedule and pay for another evaluation. Nobody will want to keep paying for another evaluation, therefore this will prompt them to prepare and be ready. Similar to having a curriculum or training for the classroom baseline knowledge/protocol available for those in need, group workshops or webinars can be provided to those struggling in the field. However, I assume this whole training program will not be well suited for inexperienced independent auditors that done have access to supervisors and factories that they can visit regularly where they can practice their skills as trainees or junior auditors. In short, in the classroom and in the field, there needs to be very strict guidelines for 'passing'. However, there needs to a very low/reasonable path for experienced auditors to be evaluated without having to go through all the training, assuming they believe they can pass the evaluations/test in both the classroom and field. On the flip side, training sessions and support workshops for less experience would-be auditors should be developed. In my mind, getting the baseline knowledge/protocol manual in place, the classroom test and the field evaluation structure/process in place should be the first priority. Secondarily any trainings should/would flow from the baseline manual with supplemental regional/country inputs.
9.	blended is the best there are efficiencies for online training however, auditing involves interviewing skills that cannot be taught as well online also, the very nature of "SOCIAL" auditing requires social skills, which, in my view, cannot be effectively taught - or gauged - online there should be SOME minimum standards, and instructors should have the option/ control of NOT passing trainees who show evidence of being socially unskilled or inept.
10.	I do not believe that it can be done completely online. In the least there needs to be some field exercises, with shadow audits. There are too many "soft skills" required that cannot be tested without real-life observation.

2. Do you have any suggestions regarding how to include practical hands-on experience for baseline social auditor training to ensure that students have both the information and the skills needed?

2. Do you have any suggestions regarding how to include practical hands-on experience for baseline social auditor training to ensure that students have both the information and the skills needed?

1.	On the job training. Attending a couple of observation audits will not suffice.
2.	Within an audit firm we do this by extending the programme to include witnessing audits; working as part of a team under supervision and being witnessed before an auditor is approved. In a pure training scenario a pretend "factory" could be devised with "workers", fake records etc. and trainers taking roles throughout the training course to create a walk around. In some cases training can be conducted in an employment setting so that parts of the system can be audited to prove a more realistic setting.
3.	combination of interactive learning, case studies and small video clips with examples of good and wrong interviews (how to conduct them) and to fine tuning reactions with controlled situations (video clips or written case studies).
4.	Require a specific number of audits be conducted as co-auditor not lead. Audits should cover a wide variety of industries as well as countries. Shadow audits should be conducted at least once per year by senior level auditors/directors.
5.	include role-playing, ethical dilemmas as I've done auditor training, use on-camera interviews; play these back to trainees and critique their styles as for information, require that auditors take a certain number of continuing education courses through universities, webinars, trade associations, etc.
6.	Perhaps the accrediting firm would be partnered with a third-party monitor to allow for access to real audits that need to be conducted...for those instances when the student doesn't already work for a company that would offer factory access.

3. Please provide your thoughts on whether you think it is important that a baseline social auditor training program include field observation of senior auditors.

1.	Essential and mandatory requirement - not all "senior" auditors are equal
2.	As example of how to conduct audits, how to react to specific situations and how to apply audit criteria based on evidence, of course it is important, that could be made through video clips and written case studies or examples of audit situations.
3.	Ideally, yes. But I would be concerned about the availability of a sufficient pool of senior auditors to make the mentor/protégée partnership work in practicality.
4.	Not as a course requirement but as ongoing continuous development of the auditor.
5.	I believe this is essential. There are responsibilities for the senior auditors as well, though. They cannot audit and rely upon the observer to interpret HOW or WHY they did certain things. The field observations must include coaching on the part of the senior auditor.
6.	Yes. To observe senior auditors and also for students to be observed.

4. Please provide your thoughts on whether training components should be broken up into modules with testing between modules.

1.	agree - this would provide objective assessment results
2.	for some elements this could be useful e.g. deeper worker interview training but in most cases this interrupts audit flow and does not benefit the trainee who cannot see the full picture
3.	That is a good tool for self-evaluation and to be confident of knowledge application, but in case of failure to let open the chance or review the failed module and retake the whole module evaluation or just the failed parts
4.	Sounds like a fine plan.
5.	Definitely - auditors should not be able to advance in the training program until they pass each one successfully.

4. Please provide your thoughts on whether training components should be broken up into modules with testing between modules.

6.	Continuous assessment of each module is key. If you do not assess how do you know the student understands?
7.	Yes. It is easier to digest the information in smaller segments. Testing is key.
9.	I believe this is essential. I also believe the standards for passing from one module to another should not be low. On the contrary, they should be reasonably high, with a designed pass rate of about 70 - 80%. Trainees should have the freedom to repeat online modules at no cost, and take the quiz again. As I supported online learning at a major firm, we had a number of questions - say, 25 qsn for a 10 qsn quiz. That way, trainees would have a mix of new/ familiar questions if re-taking the quiz.
10.	Yes

5. What length of time do you suggest for the baseline social auditor course?

1.	three months
2.	2-3 days for experienced auditor in other topics; 5 days otherwise
3.	Between 4 to 12 hours, depending of the extension of the examples and modules of the course; the idea is to have modules to be covered in one to two hours time and maybe half an hour for every test.
4.	16 or 24 hour course would seem reasonable
5.	That would depend on the skill set of the auditor/potential auditor you are training. It's difficult to give one answer for this - you'd have to have some kind of pre-qualification system so that perhaps people can opt out of lower level training if they qualify.
6.	Five days
7.	2 months.
8.	Basic course for EHS Auditing Basics offered by the Auditing Roundtable (www.auditing-roundtable.org) is 16 hours, with an additional 8 - 16 hours for the subject matter area (Environmental or Health/Safety). I suggest NO LESS than 24 hours, and up to 40 hours. Segmentation into basic auditing skills & subject area has served our profession well.
9.	That depends on if it's being conducted in 8 hour days back to back or over time. If full time, it shouldn't take more than 3 months to complete, including field observations and shadow audits. On a part-time approach (4-8 hours per week), I would expect it to be completed within 9 months.

6. Should there be a maximum time limit between when a student begins and completes the course, coursework and testing?

		Response Percent
Yes		**82.4%**
No		17.6%
1.	12 months - if they cannot achieve a basic level of competency then the question of whether the person is suitable for the role needs to be asked	
2.	2 months	
3.	No longer than two weeks to finish the course at own pace.	

6. Should there be a maximum time limit between when a student begins and completes the course, coursework and testing?

4.	one year
5.	The time frame should be generous - say, one year. It should not be indefinite so as to cause problems in your system's bookkeeping. You might consider a procedure whereby someone whose coursework timeframe has elapsed can petition to reinstate due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, call-up into military reserves, etc.).
6.	Re-testing should be required annually or in least, 18 months.
7.	It would be difficult to retain the learning if it's not put into practice immediately. It should probably occur within 3 months.
8.	Course work has to be tested once a week and appropriate grades assigned.
9.	It should be intertwined with practical experience. 3-6 months.

7. Do you have any ideas about ways to integrate the baseline social auditor training program into the student's work schedule?

1.	possibly via internships
2.	We require all our trainees to undertake the baseline training followed by an integrated programme of working as part of a team under supervision through to final witnessed audit. In our experience this is the most efficient way to get the auditors through the whole programme.
3.	It depends on work load of each student, but if to be completed in two weeks to take in account around two hours per day and maybe two to three times per week, in this way also travelling could be possible to continue with the training.
	It is required the support of the organization to allow the required time to finish the work when working at the office.
4.	Well, if provided online in 1-hour modules, an auditor candidate could complete the training during lunch periods without impacting their work schedule.
5.	All new auditors should be mentored for a period of time and then signed off by a final reviewer.
6.	Require the student to go on one audit every two weeks and participate in sections that they are learning about in coursework.
7.	If a practicum or term paper is required, work with student to design an effort that complements their existing work/ career. This worked successfully as part of the UC Irvine (California) Extension certificate program in Environmental Auditing, offered from late 1980s through mid-1990s
8.	That is completely dependent upon the employer's flexibility with the student's work load and schedule.

8. Is there anything you would like to add which is important to the success of the baseline social auditor course?

1.	the personal attributes and values is a critical selection criteria
2.	Experienced trainer with good training skills.
3.	Take in account cultural diversity of the potential auditors because a friendly format encourages to go ahead to finish the course on time, otherwise the students could be afraid of a requirement of advanced computer skills to face the course; also use a plain and direct language but of course related to standards terms and a section with definitions is recommended.
	Remember not all auditors have English as a mother tongue.

8. Is there anything you would like to add which is important to the success of the baseline social auditor course?

4.	There needs to be some social/soft skills training. In addition to the auditor being well versed in the appropriate regs, the auditor needs to have a demeanor that builds trust, is trying to help the facility, is practical and can use findings as a teaching opportunity. Too many times I have come across auditors that are only interested in finding issues. They are not helpful in solving problems, and many times are not clear on what the issues really are as they have not been thorough enough in their investigation.
5.	Skilled trainers and engaging, multi-media, content and delivery are critical. We will be very pleased to finally see this come to fruition.
6.	Why stop there? Do an advanced course, and then ultimately something useful for development specialists, labor lawyers, and labor economists. The ground-level knowledge that auditing provides could be useful in many fields. Why not try to reach them all?
7.	The course has to be a combination of auditing principles accompanied with facts on globalization, ILO principles and relevant Conventions on inspection, business ethics and most importantly training under a senior (good) social auditor who understands all of the above.

2. ASSESSMENT AND TESTING

1. Which types of assessment and testing are best to gauge how a student is doing during a baseline social auditor training course? (Choose all that apply)		Response Percent	
Written quizzes at set points throughout the course		64.7%	
Written exam at the end of the course		64.7%	
Oral exercises		**70.6%**	
Written evaluation by trainer		41.2%	
Written evaluation by supervisor or others after a period of auditing		64.7%	
Other		5.9%	

1.	coaching approach to assure fine tuning
2.	All of the above are good. However, it must be practical and scalable. They need to demonstrate on paper the knowledge and in the field the skill/ability to translate that knowledge into action and outcome.
3.	Depends on content being assessed.
4.	While some students may score high in the classroom they may not fare as well on the field. It is important that a written evaluation by a supervisor who has witnessed the student during the period of auditing is evaluated to ensure appropriate learning.

2. How important is it to test a student via a shadow audit for the basic social auditor certification?

		Response Percent
1 Not important		5.6%
2		5.6%
3		0.0%
4		22.2%
5 Very important		**66.7%**

1.	A must, unless you have a certification for the written exam and a separate for the field execution.
2.	Nothing like field experience to see how the auditor is doing, and to impart tips/ coaching/ auditor growth tips.
3.	Perhaps the shadow audit is more of a feedback opportunity, rather than part of the actual test.
4.	While it is very important the student be aware that he/she is being shadowed this can be an issue because based on my experience there have been good auditors that have gotten nervous because they are being shadowed. However this is important because auditors face several hurdles while auditing (uncooperative management/uncooperative employees/in adequate auditing time/inadequate auditing space/inadequate areas to interview workers). They should be prepared for the worst (that includes someone assessing them) and perform their assignment normally (as far as possible).

3. How important is having an evaluation by a supervisor or others after a period of auditing to determine the student's ability to implement what was learned in the course?

		Response Percent	
1 Not important		5.3%	
2		0.0%	
3		26.3%	
4		10.5%	
5 Very important		**57.9%**	

1.	Sounds like an admirable goal, and an approach that would serve the profession well. I can't envision logistics of how this would work. Perhaps a shadow audit as part of recertification every 3 or 4 years? If done well, this could be outstanding, and could help maintain the high standards this profession should be known for. If only a rubber stamp, or perfunctory evaluation, it would be a burden and could backfire.
2.	This is important. However, this does not mean that the student will implement everything precisely as has been taught. Each auditor has his/her own way of assessing and determining compliance to the law.

4. Is there anything you would like to add about assessing/testing whether students have sufficiently learned the auditing knowledge and skills in the baseline social auditor course?

1.	This should not be a desk top qualification - it needs on the ground and in the field assessments and these two components (desktop and field) need to be balanced
2.	Ongoing assessments are essential to ensure that auditor skills remain keen.
3.	a coaching approach is better than just a supervisor evaluation on the field or via shadow audits
4.	a survey from the company being audited should be conducted to gather data about the auditor - were they knowledgeable about local laws, were they prepared and organized, did they offer suggestions for corrective actions, etc.
5.	Keep it simple. One excellent written exam and a passing field evaluation.
6.	There needs to perhaps be a follow up shadow audit after 4 months as part of the assessment/testing, to ensure all protocols for the Standards are being met.
7.	Written test for background info, observation of technical skills.

3. CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

1. How long should a social auditor certification be valid and why?		
	Response Percent	
0-1 year	0.0%	
1-3 years	**68.8%**	
3-5	25.0%	
5+ years	0.0%	
Other	12.5%	

1.	no end date - should be based on continuation to perform the job and it's removal if there is a breach of ethics
2.	ongoing based on continuous professional development
3.	For fine tuning and to push for updates and sharing best practices
4.	If an auditor switches countries, regions that they audit, they should be retrained.
5.	Look to other professional associations to see what their certification validity is. It should not be often enough that it becomes burdensome and unnecessary but should ensure that skills remain fresh.
6.	Dynamic industry, new methodologies, practices put into place, new issues discovered on micro and macro level to incorporate
7.	A certificate is nice, but a diploma is better. In other words, do not try to certify what someone can do, but rather certify what training the person has had. You can't control someone's competence, but you can control what he or she has studied. SAI learned the hard way that certification doesn't work.

1. How long should a social auditor certification be valid and why?
8.	As long as regular auditor calibration takes place at pre determined intervals a period of 1-3 years is adequate.
9.	As long as they participate in a certain number of continuous education courses, like any other profession, they should be able to renew their certification.

2. What should be the mandatory requirements for to social auditor recertification?
1.	Depending on the reason for the removal in the first place it could be a cool off period or a re-assessment and re-examination to get the student back up to speed
2.	refresher training; continuous professional development; successful witnessed audits
3.	Audit witness, written examination, auditee evaluations
4.	Successful completion of some kind of benchmark - witness audit, classroom, etc.
5.	written test and shadow audit by supervisor
6.	Yearly brush up exam and field observation every 2-3 years.
7.	CPEA is valid indefinitely, so long as auditor attends sufficient CEU courses, and maintains some involvement in the profession. The re-up is every 2 - 4 years. Qualified Environmental Professionals require re-up every 4 or 5 years, with extensive documentation for education requirements. Consider a requirement to make presentation or other public service element (guest lecture? teach a course?)
8.	I think the ES and EK covered in the Standards covers it.
9.	Online test; some testament by current employer that is a social compliance auditing firm or brand/retailer that employs social compliance auditors
10.	more/continuous education, shadow audit

3. What prerequisites should students have for the baseline social auditor training course?		Response Percent	
None		11.8%	
High School diploma		5.9%	
Certain amount of work experience		23.5%	
Some auditing experience		23.5%	
Bachelors degree		**35.3%**	
Other		0.0%	

3. What prerequisites should students have for the baseline social auditor training course?

1.	Work experience highly preferred.
2.	should be high school or degree, depending on amount of work experience, require work experience and other auditing experience
3.	In order to attract qualified local people in different countries I think the only requirement you can have is literacy, otherwise workers who have a low level of education, or others would be disqualified unfairly.
4.	ANAB requires college degree as part of their certification regime. This has caused some (a little - but noisy) objections for BEAC/ CPEA. Consider the college degree baseline, but twin designations ("Certified Professional _____" and "Experienced ___" or some such to allow non-degreed professionals who are otherwise proficient and pass all other relevant requirements to have a "different entrance into the tent."
5.	In addition to work experience, I would also say at least a HS diploma is required. Ideally, bachelor's degree. Work experience is important in order to gain maturity and experience in dealing with different types of people and understanding of complexities and practicalities involved in for-profit business world.
6.	Need analytical skills, which if not intuitive, can be learned in school, but need to be observed being used in practice.
7.	Students will be as varied as their reasons for learning. Beyond being literate in one or more languages, there is no hard & fast rule about what they should know.
8.	bachelors degree or equivalent auditing experience

4. Should there be a process for testing out of the baseline social auditor training? (i.e. giving credit or provisional certification for people with auditing experience)

	Response Percent	
Yes	**58.8%**	
No	41.2%	

1.	social audit techniques are still required regardless of previous experience
2.	Everyone should be treated at the same level and not assume that because someone is an auditor that they are a qualified one. People come from many different backgrounds into the field.
3.	Yes, absolutely based on the detailed exam (the same that is given at the end of the training). However, everyone should go through the field evaluation.
4.	Perhaps an opportunity to short-circuit some part of it, but there should be some avenue whereby you are able to test/ observe petitioners, and, if appropriate, decline to award the certification.
5.	An abbreviated online test and/or testament/certification from their current employer that employs social compliance auditors.
6.	Only if they can pass the test, I would not just give credit for unrelated coursework
7.	Shadow audit. Watch & see what they can do.

5. If yes to Question 4 above, what criteria should apply?

	Response Percent	

5. If yes to Question 4 above, what criteria should apply?		
Years of experience	**60.0%**	
Number of audits	50.0%	
Certificate from existing course	50.0%	
Other	20.0%	

1.	Ability to pass the exam at an independent testing site. Passing the field evaluation
2.	Years of experience or # of audits say nothing about the quality of time or experience. If there are existing certificates available, why is Verite duplicating the effort?

6. Is there anything you would like to add regarding baseline social auditor certification and recertification?
1.	This needs to tie into the institutionalization of the industry which could then provide auditors with the license to operate, regulate its members, and provide professionalization to the industry

4. INSTITUTIONALIZATION

1. Please provide your thoughts on whether there should be one or several social auditor standards organization(s) to oversee the baseline social auditor accreditation.
1.	As long as requirements are consistent across bodies it does not matter. Multiple bodies will promote competition and better service.
2.	It is better to centralize instead of having to go through different standard organizations, otherwise to have agreements or mutual recognition between organizations
3.	A single accreditation organization, with national chapters/branches
4.	One international body with local affiliates.
5.	One. There are enough issues with non aligned audit schemes that adding multiple audit standard organizations will only add to the lack of alignment.
6.	One, but with decentralized resources.
7.	It is a challenge to get everyone on the same page, but if you don't, the auditors will seek lowest denominator. One is preferred, and maintain high standards. Do a LOT of work to establish credential in the eyes of the users.
8.	There could be several, but they should all be subject to oversight and accreditation from one head organization.
9.	Ideally one but as long as they are credible organizations, with a governance structure and regular review process, then multiple might be OK
10.	I think there could be a network, so that there could be local accreditation, however there needs to be a worldwide framework that is applied. There can be additions to the global framework, to take into account local market conditions

2. The social auditor standards organization(s) could have many roles, including maintaining the standards, accrediting training institutions and offering certificates, and maintaining registry of certified individuals that have gone through an accredited training. What roles do you feel the social auditor accreditation organization(s) should have?

1.	Including the above, the organization should be required to do some spot checks of the auditors via shadow auditing. Development of the training tools and programs.
2.	See Auditing Roundtable and BEAC model for segregation of roles & responsibilities for membership, education, training, certification & recertification. We have also had discussions re: whether our codes of conduct should be the same or different.
3.	All of the above are ideal. Look to the CPA, engineering and medial professions as models for what could be created here.
4.	Independence, including the above.
5.	Limit the role to what one organization can do. Trying to be all things to all people will dilute your energy and make you vulnerable to competition from other groups seeking to do the same thing.

3. Should there be a process by which training institutions recognize the baseline certification of an auditor when s/he seeks a more advanced course from another provider?

	Response Percent	
Yes	**93.3%**	
No	6.7%	

1.	Only if the standards org has reviewed the course and process and agree that it is equivalent.
2.	No, that will only complicate things. If the other certifications and trainings are good the applicable auditor should be able to pass the main exam easily and if they have experience should be able to demonstrate their abilities in the field evaluation. The key here is that for experienced auditors there needs to be a low cost way for them to get certified that includes only taking the exam (1-200 dollars) and having a field evaluation undertaken (around US1000-1500 max). If this low cost path is provided for experienced auditors then nobody will fight for cross recognition, etc.. The big firms will also get on-board without putting up a big fight. If they put a big fight, it will pollute the whole objective and it will fail without a doubt. The rest of the industry is not aligned enough avoid that. The influence that the existing big/medium firms have with their clients should not be underestimated. They talk to their clients/buyers every day.
3.	If you go this route, yes. Education should have minimum standards, and should be portable if necessary.
4.	There should also be an endless supply of ice water in Hell. It's going to be messy for a while. One would hope that the various groups who declare themselves authoritative enough to certify auditors would be a bit flexible. Since students pay tuition, and more students= more money, they probably will be.
5.	Yes, if there's someone providing credible training on specific issues auditors must take it and this should add on to his/her qualification.

4. Many issues are important in determining the structure of the body(ies) that manage(s) the universal Standards and accredits training organizations, including the makeup of the governing board and what interests are represented. What are your thoughts about the governing structure of the body(ies) that manage(s) the Standards and accredit(s) training organizations?

1.	need a fully inclusive structure including all stakeholders (auditors too)
2.	Well there is already a lot of examples in many such organizations such as IRCA or RABQSA. I think there should be enough flexibility to allow every organization to participate through consensus and also is necessary to include the auditors and audited organizations as part of the structure.
3.	Industry, NGOs, and audit companies should be part of the governing board.

4. Many issues are important in determining the structure of the body(ies) that manage(s) the universal Standards and accredits training organizations, including the makeup of the governing board and what interests are represented. What are your thoughts about the governing structure of the body(ies) that manage(s) the Standards and accredit(s) training organizations?

4.	I believe credibility will come from intent and actions. This is a tough one though!! Whatever the bare minimum is to win over the multi-stakeholder initiatives and the influential buyers that dictate the market. The organization needs to be action oriented and be able to show/demonstrate value. If they can show/demonstrate value they will keep support. At present no other organization demonstrated that - so there is not competition on that front!
5.	multi-stakeholder, of course
6.	The governing structure should include representatives of social compliance audit firms, the companies that hire them and ideally NGOs/SRIs. It may also be useful to have representatives from government, multi-lateral institutions or academia. In addition, the terms of the individuals should be long enough to build momentum but short enough to bring in fresh energy. I recommend 2 years. These should also be organizational not individual representatives, e.g. not a specific person but a senior level employee of a social compliance firm.
7.	The officers of the governing board must work only for the accreditation or social standards organization. There can be a Board of Advisors who represent different interested parties. It needs to be set up like any other accreditation body, which is independent and impartial.
8.	Wanting the business should not be the primary criterion for selecting a certifying body. Governments and universities should be drawn into the process. Better yet, have the governments of the countries where most abused workers are employed certify their own labor inspectors and enforce the law.

5. Should there be a mechanism by which an individual's baseline social auditor certification can be revoked?

1.	yes based on proper fair investigation
2.	Possibly it is a case by case situation but because of the socials issues could be desirable.
3.	Yes. If the auditor is not capable of meeting the standards, they should not be auditing.
4.	Absolutely. This is essential, but tricky, part of the framework. Ensure the ability of ANYONE to report ANY issue they believe should be reviewed. Ensure options for confidentiality, and appeals by the individual being evaluated. Allow for gradations of sanctions (re-training, temporary revocation of certification, permanent revocation of certification, etc.). Also, if an individual is sanctioned, there should be procedures for him/her to notify affected parties, and your group should have the right to evaluate some prior work. This all needs to be in code of conduct or agreements up front.
5.	There should be a mechanism for complaints to be reported. Allegations of unethical behaviour should be investigated and if confirmed, the cert should be revoked. All other allegations should be kept on file and if so many complaints/received in certain period of time by different organizations, it should be revoked.

6. If Yes to Question 6 above, what do you feel are the circumstances or violations that should lead to revocation?

1.	business integrity issues; proven malpractice
2.	Unethical behavior, Racism, Prejudice, among other issues.
3.	corruption, integrity issues
4.	Repeated complaints on auditor performance from facilities being audited. Poor quality of reports - numerous errors, rework needed - verifying nonconformance, etc.
5.	Integrity & competence
6.	violation of independence, kickbacks, or payment in conjunction with audit results, gross negligence or non-proficiency probably others

6. If Yes to Question 6 above, what do you feel are the circumstances or violations that should lead to revocation?

7.	conflicts of interest, violation of the Standards, corruption, not meeting or maintaining the standards of continuing education

7. What are your thoughts about a fair process for lodging and verifying complaints?

1.	need an independent complaints mechanism and a properly qualified body to investigate
2.	Include also the auditors and certification body in the process.
3.	Surveys should be sent out to companies being audited as well as companies requesting audits.
4.	Yes, needs to be independent channel for third party complain with a transparent loop. We use Ethics Point.
5.	Hotline, with investigative team for ethics allegations.
6.	Very difficult. Look to other professional organizations (CPA, medical board, etc.) to evaluate their processes. There should be an anonymous complaints website that asks for full details and an investigation team that evaluates the complaint, undertakes an assessment process, and provides a recommendation.
7.	Such processes exist in many similar organizations. Don't reinvent the wheel.

8. A global social auditor certification system could be financed by training institutions that are accredited, by individuals who complete the course, by both, or by some other financing mechanism. What are your thoughts regarding financing a global social auditor certification system?

1.	fee per auditor and levy on training courses
2.	Just beware to not be biased because of the need of resources, the financial issues are case sensitive. Could be a mixture of the already mentioned sources and international organizations support, avoid audited organizations to participate, which is a clear conflict of interest.
3.	Audit companies should have to pay some sort of membership dues to be able to take part in the program and have their auditors certified.
4.	Would need to think about that. It's complicated. To the extent possible it should be shared by all those that benefit. However, it needs to be kept simple. A grant would be great for the first 12 months during which time the landscape can be evaluated and a sustainable model developed.
5.	Use all of the above consider fee for each time the certifier affixes his/her certification to a report?
6.	Look to other professional organizations (e.g., CPA, medical board, engineers) for best practices. Perhaps the individual pays a small fee but some of it is borne by their employers.
7.	It should be both
8.	Anyone who believes that they will make millions certifying auditors is mistaken. Keep costs low. Auditor certification will not be a high value item for quite a while yet, if ever. In other words, the increase in value gained by pursuing certification will not be matched by an increase in income. Apply the principles of economics to the problem, understand that the value of the training is greater in moral than monetary terms, and find ways to deliver the moral good cheaply enough that the monetary cost is not such an issue. Either that, or figure out a way to make becoming a certified auditor among thousands of non-certified auditors pay.

9. Is there anything you would like to add which is important to the institutionalization of the Baseline Social Auditor Standards?
1.	It's critical that the institution is credible and not simply an industry institution. There must be term limits, a solid governance process, and a regular review of its policies and practices.
2.	Please do not call it B-SAS.

Annex IV: Summary of Stakeholder Comments on the Draft Standards

The Social Auditor Standards Project conducted two public comment periods via wiki, press release, email, and stakeholder meetings to guide the development of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors. The first public input period, from August to October 2008, focused on gaining insights into what should be included in a social auditor standard by using a survey instrument and open-ended questions.

Based on the survey responses and wiki comments, the Social Auditor Standards Project developed a draft version of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors. The second public comment period, from May to August 2009, used press releases, directly mailing the Standards to interested parties, meetings, and stakeholder feedback at www.wiki.socialauditor.org, to solicit recommendations for how to improve the Standards and make them respond better to stakeholder needs.

Below you will find the first Draft Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors with stakeholder comments by subject and how the Social Auditor Standards Project integrated these comments into the final Standard document.

These Standards comprise Stage I of the Program, while Stage II will focus on issues related to teaching and testing to these Standards, and Stage III will center on dialogue to create recommendations for institutionalization of the Standards.

Introduction

The Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors provide a benchmark to assist social auditor training organizations to identify what social auditors should know at the baseline level. The Social Auditor Standard Program, sponsored by the US Department of State's Office of International Labor Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility, developed these standards through the use of a multi-stakeholder dialogue and the examination and use of existing accreditation schemes where appropriate. The standards answer the fundamental question: What should social auditors know and what should they be able to do? Use of the Standards is voluntary.

These Standards do not endorse one training curriculum or social auditor training institution; rather they are available to all stakeholders to ensure transparency and consistency of social auditor knowledge and skills. Key requirements are defined, but detailed implementation steps for creating training programs around these standards are intentionally omitted.

The Standards are presented within two major categories: Essential Knowledge and Essential Skills. The first category identifies and describes the nature of social auditing knowledge required for a social auditor. The second category describes the skills and competencies necessary for a social auditor, including relevant personal standards.

Finally, additional standards are presented that are considered desirable, although not essential.

It is recognized that the terms "social" and "labor" are often confused and intermixed. The term social auditor is used in very different contexts ranging from an auditor focused on analyzing labor conditions in factories to broader rights issues outside the work environment in areas such as ethical trading, fair trading, and global standards applying to specific agricultural and forestry products.

The Standards in this document refer to the Knowledge and Skills required to perform an assessment, audit or evaluation of the labor (including Occupational Health and Safety) conditions irrespective of sector, operation, location or position within a value chain. The Standard does recognize that additional specific skills could be required above and beyond the outlined Knowledge and Skills in this document such as:

under specific conditions (e.g. dispute, strike, etc.),
within specific scopes of work (e.g. worker needs analysis, off site impact, off farm conditions, etc.), or
in additional areas of evaluation (e.g. retrenchment, indigenous people, environmental considerations, wage and economic impact assessments, etc.)

The appendices provide background information regarding the scope of the Social Auditor Standards Program, the referenced publications, the process and timeline, a brief description of the principal organizations contracted by the United States Department of State to conduct the program, and a glossary.

Stakeholder Comment:	At the bottom of page 1 the document mentions that additional skills could be required which are not outlined in the document, such as "additional areas of evaluation (retrenchment, environmental considerations, etc)." As these additional areas become more and more impactful, information on these skill and knowledge sets would also be useful, alongside the skills already mentioned.
Action:	This issue will be addressed in Stage III of the Project and once training institutions use the standards and begin to add new components.
Stakeholder Comment:	"The Standard needs a detailed introduction that provides a context and defines the "baseline" level. It needs to address whether there will be more than one level of auditor proficiency. Do you envision a co-auditor level and a lead auditor level? How will there be a systematic progression towards "desirable" traits once the essentials have been addressed?"
Action:	New language has been added to the introduction to the final version of the Standards to explain the foundational nature of the standards. Developing higher level social auditor levels is beyond the scope of this project.

Essential Knowledge Standards (EK)

Every social auditor should possess the following social auditing knowledge.

EK1.   Standards, Policies, Laws and Regulations

Stakeholder Comment:	The title says "Policies", but no mention of policies is found in the section subtext.
Action:	The word "policies" removed from final version of Standards.

Stakeholder Comment:	Add here updated national laws, regulations and standards in general related to labor, health & safety, environment such as local labor laws both national level and provincial levels.
Action:	Added to final version of Standards.

1.1   International standards related to ILO conventions and the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Stakeholder Comment:	Add "for workers, trainees, and apprentices".
Action:	New language for 1.2.3. of Standards: Worker contracts, including contracts for foreign workers, temporary workers, other contracted workers, apprenticeships, and job training programs.
Stakeholder Comment:	Not all countries are endorsing all ILO Conventions, how to view local standards vs. International standards especially when it refers to social issues which involve cultures and norms, suggest to consider ILO Conventions as "reference" where countries have not signed on.
Action:	New language for 1.1.9. of Standards: Other conventions may apply to audit object and geographic area, if not covered by local laws.

1.2   Employment laws and regulations related to wages, benefits and hours of work, including code standards on wages, deductions, bonuses, seniority, leave, holiday calculations, productivity incentives, resignation, and termination.

Stakeholder Comment:	Add worker contracts to list.
Action:	See 1.1 above.
Stakeholder Comment:	Change to "... laws and regulations related to wages, **health**, benefits ...".
Action:	Health and safety issues are covered in Section 2 of the Standards.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Should also include "gender-related work accommodations"
Action:	This issue now found in Section 3.3: 3.3.3. Gender-related issues such as requiring proof of non-pregnancy, standing requirements, rest periods, and work termination due to pregnancy.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add EK2.6 to this section. Concepts such as maternity leave et. al. are really related to benefits and should appear here so as not to be forgotten.
Action:	See 3.3.3 above.
Stakeholder Comment:	Perhaps some mention of regulations on worker housing or dormitory housing?
Action:	Now found in 1.2.4. Worker housing and other facilities, such as canteens.
Stakeholder Comment:	Deductions are noted; deduction LIMITS are not listed but are actually the more important concept
Action:	New Standards language includes this concept: 1.2.2. Deductions, including insurance schemes and applicability of local law, understanding of living wage, and noncash payments;
Stakeholder Comment:	Add temporary contracts and limits to their renewal, apprenticeships, job training programs.
Action:	See reference to 1.2.3 above.
Stakeholder Comment:	Need to identify auditor understanding of insurance schemes.
Action:	Now included in Standards Section 1.2.2. Deductions, including insurance

	schemes and applicability of local law, understanding of living wage, and noncash payments;

Stakeholder Comment:	Add Migrant workers.
Action:	Included in Standards Section 1.2.3. (see above)

1.3 National laws on subcontracting and home-work practices.

Stakeholder Comment:	Contractors, agents – what are best practices in this area?
Action:	Beyond the scope of the Standards for the Knowledge and Skills of Social Auditors
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add "foreign workers, temporary workers, and contracted workers."
Action:	Added to Section 1.2.3. (see above)
Stakeholder Comment:	-What if National Law on home-work practices and subcontracting is absent? Suggest to add Industry standards and practices.
Action:	This fall under new language added to 1.1.9: Other conventions may apply to audit object and geographic area, if not covered by local laws.

1.4   Laws and regulations on child labor, forced labor and harassment/abuse such as minimum hiring age and work restrictions, nondiscrimination at the worksite, harassment and abuse, discipline, freedom of movement, and common practices in age verification.

Stakeholder Comment:	Change to "Laws and regulations on child labor, forced labor, harassment/abuse, gender-based abuse and sexual harassment."
Action:	Section 1.3.6. now reads "Harassment and Abuse - including gender-based abuse and sexual harassment"

1.5   National/regional laws and regulations and on freedom of association, and the right to collective bargaining.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add union rights and restrictions.
Action:	Standards now read: 1.3.7. Union Rights and Freedom of Association – including union restrictions and the right to collective bargaining.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add international standards on protecting freedom of association and collective bargaining. EK1 / 1.2-1.5: These four points seem like they should be made into just one for clarity's sake. Too many terms-- "Employment laws & Regulations", "National Laws (but no mention of regulations)", "Laws & Regulations", "National/regional laws and regulations."
Action:	Section 1 regarding laws and regulations has been completely reworked to remove confusion and improve clarity.
Stakeholder Comment:	Add 1.6: Codes of conducts\ of related stakeholders such as brands, clients…etc.
Action:	Found in Desirable but not Essential Social Auditor Knowledge (DK): 1.1. Content and purposes of codes of conduct

EK2.   Health and Safety Standards

Stakeholder Comment:	No mention of laws in this section, just standards. However, there is also no mention of laws that relate to H&S in the EK1. Is this supposed to be a comprehensive list of H&S areas?
	Why is there so much more detail on Health & Safety? One could argue that all of the elements are equally technical and could require additional detail. In general, auditors already tend to focus on Health and Safety, and this would perpetuate this thinking.
	To me the Health and Safety standards (EK2) are not comprehensive enough: One should add for instance working at height, occupational health (noise exposure, heat exposure, repetitive motions, fatigue, etc.), risk assessment, ... With regard to safety and health one should not only refer to local regulation but to good international practices too.
Action:	The entire Health and Safety section has been reorganized and reworded to reflect the same level of specificity as the rest of the Standards.

2.1   Fire, chemical, machinery, safety, and evacuation laws and standards

Stakeholder Comments:	Need reference to laws on building structure safety (x2)
	-Add "electrical" safety (3 comments)
	-Should specify areas of safety -Production locations, canteen, dormitory, general factory building areas like administration (office).
	-Fire, chemical and machinery should each comprise their own category. As it stands, this category should include a notation of gender-based safety standards, such as avoidance of exposure to chemicals, certain machinery, heavy lifting and otherwise dangerous work. For example, gender-based laws exist for chemical exposure -- and the effects of chemicals on reproductive health -- and dangerous machinery. Alternatively, this notation could be listed as its own standard.
Action:	The Health and Safety section has been modified to correspond to existing Occupational Health and Safety standards including 2.1: OHS Management and Systems and 2.1: Worksite Hazards

2.2   Provision and safety of drinking water

2.3   Personal protection equipment

2.4   Ventilation, lighting and noise

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add heat, fumes and odor.
Action:	This is now part of worksite hazards in 2.2.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add basic knowledge of ergonomics. (2 comments)
Action:	Now part of 2.2.4. Musculoskeletal hazards, including ergonomics
Stakeholder Comment:	-Should be more broadly stated as "Industrial Hygiene," so as to include principles of recognition, evaluation and control, and the full range of physical, chemical and biological hazards
Stakeholder Comment:	-Suggest to include hazardous materials, such as Dust.

Action:	The Health and Safety section has been modified to correspond to existing Occupational Health and Safety standards including 2.1: OHS Management and Systems and 2.1: Worksite Hazards

2.5 Sanitation of cafeterias, dormitories and washrooms

Stakeholder Comment:	-Sanitation should include – entire unit including production area besides dormitory canteen, washroom.
	Include privacy, adequate space, security, safety, regular maintenance on broken windows, doors locks as well as lighting and ventilation are also areas shall be considered beyond sanitation for dormitory; in addition, hot water for shower, adequate number, privacy and convenient location are as important as sanitation condition at bathroom.
Action:	The Health and Safety section has been modified to correspond to existing Occupational Health and Safety standards including 2.1: OHS Management and Systems and 2.1: Worksite Hazards

2.6 Pregnancy, maternity leave, menstrual and breastfeeding leave, and benefits.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Suggest moving to EK 1.4, unless this is referring to the health & safety standards for required facilities for childcare, lactation room, nursing room, etc. within the factory.
	-This standard should mention paternity leave: "maternity and paternity leave The standard should also include "laws and customs related to pregnancy testing," which corporate codes usually address in their sections on discrimination.
	This standard is the place to include "child care" and "gender-related work accommodations," both of which are legally required in workplaces of a certain size in many countries, including Bangladesh, Pakistan and Vietnam. Many countries have laws restricting work for pregnant women, as well as mandating the provision of child care.
Action:	This issue now part of 1.2.5. Gender issues, parental leave, gender-related work accommodations and benefits, and child care.

EK3. Essential Auditing Knowledge

Stakeholder Comment:	-To describe "Essential Auditing Knowledge", a better definition of scope of the audit is necessary? Will this include broader systems assessments? What are the limitations of the audit day/size of the facility/number of interviews/type of report? The scope of the audit is important to determine the necessary essential audit.
Action:	Section 3.6 of the Standards now discusses the scope of the audit.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add "the client's company/industry Code requirements and audit criteria. (Note: this could also be added to EK1 if that section were expanded to include company/industry)
Action:	This goes beyond a foundational social auditor standard.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Is English language essential for social auditors?
Action:	This issue is beyond the scope of the Social Auditor Standards program, and will be part of later discussions among certification organizations.

3.1   The manufacturing environment, production processes and systems

Stakeholder Comment:	-Production process in case of multi brand retailers may not be known to auditors for products like paints manufacturing, chocolate making, shampoo and soap making factories- It is not essential for auditor to know the process; Hence under essential Auditing knowledge- "Production process" of only key products can come (Apparel, toy, home furnishing, accessories etc); For other products can come under desirable knowledge (DK)
Action:	This is beyond the scope of a foundational social auditor certification.
Stakeholder Comment:	- Labor assessments may also be performed in non-manufacturing settings such as agricultural, construction, service industries, retail, etc.
Action:	Language to this effect has been added to the Standards introduction.
Stakeholder Comment:	Facility's ownership / management & middle management nationalities (because it would have great impacts on the management mindset, management styles, facility cultures and etc.). Also the structure of workforce population included general education level of workforce.
Action:	Comment Unclear

3.2   Human resources requirements, management systems (productivity, environmental, quality) and practices.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add "internal control" when describing the type of management system that the auditor should have essential auditing knowledge of.
Action:	Section 3, Essential Auditing Knowledge has been rewritten to reflect this concept.
Stakeholder Comment:	Add knowledge of common local practices with respect to payroll, benefits and wage disbursement. Knowledge of government forms/receipts showing payment of payroll tax and benefits contributions.
Action:	Section 3.2.1 has been added to the Standards, which states: Knowledge of government forms/receipts showing payment of payroll tax and benefits contributions.
Stakeholder Comment:	- It seems these would vary by industry. Suggest that this should be 'Desired' knowledge. Productivity and quality knowledge can be helpful especially in identifying root-causes, but I don't think they are necessary for identifying labor/social issues.
	-Putting factory management system (productivity, environmental, quality) and practices as essential for auditor to know may be too un-realistic for without working in the manufacturing operation, one can hardly understands what is what.
Action:	Based on stakeholder feedback, this issue remains in the Standards under 3.2. Management systems (productivity, environmental, quality) and practices for social compliance, which vary by industry.
Stakeholder Comment:	Overall, we feel that management systems are fundamental to effective social compliance in the workplace. They are the key to continual improvement, and

	verification systems should incorporate this as a key foundation. As such, social auditors must have a strong understanding of management systems for social compliance.
Action:	Management systems have been moved to 3.2 to reflect their greater importance in social auditing.

3.3   Compliance and management systems, socio-cultural differences in compliance approaches, and background knowledge of common compliance issues existing in commonly audited industries.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Make management systems a separate point specific to social compliance.
Action:	The issue has been reworded in Section 3.2. Management systems (productivity, environmental, quality) and practices for social compliance, which vary by industry.
Stakeholder comment:	Clarify "socio-cultural differences in compliance approaches?" (2 comments)
Action	Socio-cultural is defined in the glossary
Stakeholder comment	"Compliance and management systems" seems somewhat redundant with 3.2 references.
	- Definition is needed here on what is included in "Compliance and management Systems" Seems like it should be less vague and clearly state that knowledge needed for whatever context the auditor is working in.
Action	Redundancy has been removed and Section 3 on Essential Auditing Knowledge has been reworded.
Stakeholder Comment:	Make background knowledge of compliance issues in "commonly audited industries" a separate point.
Action:	The issue is now addressed in Section 3.3. Common compliance issues existing in commonly audited industries, which now has 3 sub-points.

3.4   Unions, collective bargaining processes, non-union forms of worker organizations, and typical worker grievance mechanisms.

Stakeholder Comment:	-"Unions" seems to hanging there. Perhaps it would be more clear as "Relevant country knowledge related to union activity including: collective bargaining processes, non-union forms of worker organizations, elections, legal status, ... etc."
	-Add knowledge of common forms of interfering with freedom of association
Action:	Section 3.2 has been reworded as 3.3.2. In-country Freedom of Association issues including: collective bargaining processes, nonunion forms of worker organizations, elections, legal status, typical worker grievance mechanisms, and common forms of interfering with freedom of association.

3.5   Typical client requirements regarding social audit implementation, as well as the difference between generic and social auditing goals and competencies, and announced and unannounced audits.

Stakeholder Comment:	- It should be acknowledged that the ever-expanding and diversifying client requirements is one of the major challenges of consistent social auditing. Auditors in the field are dealing with constantly changing codes, tools, checklists and report templates that vary from client to client

Action:	This issue is addressed by new wording in the introduction: It is also important to recognize that social auditors may be limited by the audit tools required by the brand, company, or organization; the time allowed for a specific audit; the reporting format that is required to use; and the presence or absence of a corrective action plan format.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Reads like an agenda point for a generic training that might be given rather than a set of standards. As a standard, the auditor must know specifically what their client expectations are prior to ever visiting a site. "Typical" should be "Specific".
Action:	Section 3 has been reworded, and "typical" replaced by "general."
Stakeholder Comment:	3.5 should maybe broken into to - one related to knowing specific client needs/expectations, and the other related to the rest. Maybe that is in the skills section. Actually, I'm not sure what the "difference is between generic and social auditing goals and competencies" is trying to communicate.
	-Unclear - several issues are lumped
Action:	Section 3.5 has been reworded to say: General client requirements regarding social audit implementation. 3.5.1. The difference between generic and social auditing goals and competencies. 3.5.2. The difference between announced and unannounced audits.

3.6   The Obtaining and Synthesizing of Information

Stakeholder Comment:	Expand 3.6 to include an understanding of the difference between fact and inference, and that only facts can be used to substantiate an audit finding
Action:	This issue is addressed in the introduction to Section 3.6: Obtaining and synthesizing information pertains to all areas within the scope of an audit against the reference standards. It includes an understanding of the difference between fact and inference, and that only facts can be used to substantiate an audit finding.

3.6.1   Document review and visual inspection techniques, such as how to review payroll and time records, and common methods of document manipulation.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Poorly constructed sentence
	-Add "what documents to review" before "how to review payroll
	-Add techniques on cross- checked the collected information to confirm its triangulation
Action:	3.6.1 reworded to 3.6.1. Document review and visual inspection techniques. 3.6.1.1. Common methods of document manipulation. 3.6.1.2. Triangulation to cross-check collected information.

3.6.2 Interviewing techniques, how to choose a representative worker sample, suitability of group vs. individual interviews according to cultural circumstances, off-site worker interviews, and methods of worker coaching and intimidation.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Poorly constructed - too much crammed in there. Some of seems like skills.

Action:	Section 3.6.2 has been completely rewritten to clarify best practices needed.

3.6.3   Familiarity with typical social, economic and cultural dynamics of worker communities.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add "gender" to this list: "... typical social, gender, economic
Action:	Section now reads: 3.6.3. Practical application of social, cultural, and gender dynamics of worker communities in the conduct of an audit.
Stakeholder Comment:	This requirement should not be essential as these are knowledge gained by practice
Action:	An introductory social auditor certification course should discuss the importance of these issues.
Stakeholder Comment:	- It is unclear what is meant by the term 'worker communities' and what specific knowledge is required here.
Action:	"Worker communities" is considered the appropriate term.

3.6.4   Fluent speaker/reader of the language(s) used by managers, administration, and workers.

Stakeholder Comment:	-This may not be possible to achieve in all cases. There should be an acknowledgement that the team as a whole may combine different language speakers to cover the language requirements and in some cases, a translator may be required (e.g. for local dialects; migrant worker situations; etc.). (2 comments)
	Know language spoken among top management, middle management, and workforce. (slight rewording?)
Action:	Text of 3.6.4 has been changed to: Ability to communicate effectively with managers, administration, and workers as applied to the local context.
Stakeholder Comment:	- **Add "root cause analysis" to the list here, as the auditor must identify the fundamental, system cause of a finding in order to enable the audited facility to effectively address the issue**
Action:	
Stakeholder Comment:	Use of translators that are professional and not linked to factory management. (In fact, this section does not really address the fact that auditors will sometimes be in a situation where they are not able to speak directly with "senior executives" and workers, especially in multi-language environments
Action:	This has been incorporated into Essential Auditing Skills 4.1. Use of professional translators not associated with factory management.

Essential Auditing Skills Standards (ES)

The Social Auditor should be able to do the following:

ES. 1 Prioritize client requests, plan and adjust to different client audit requirements.

Stakeholder Comment:	Add "Clients Company overview and Business Model
	Add "Clients Company overview and Business Model

	-It is not clear what is meant by 'prioritizing client requests'. What if the client asks the auditor not to do any interviews? Or what if the client requests the auditor to only conduct a partial assessment (e.g. just focusing on one issue
	Willingness of auditor to do worker interviews during every compliance visit. (There should be some language to the effect that skipping worker interviews is not an acceptable practice.)
Action	Section ES.1 has been changed to: Scope and plan an audit, including but not limited to launching the audit request, managing preaudit activities, and scoping of audit and audit criteria.

ES.2   Write at least some sections of a complex reporting tool and a full version of a simple tool.

Stakeholder Comment:	Rationale of only being about to write some sections? It that because this is for entry level/junior staff?
	-Clarify - are you implying that there are multiple skill levels for reporting.
Action:	Section ES2 has changed to: Report fully on information gathered through written report. 2.1. Use common social auditing reporting formats and technologies, and 2.2. Use violation and grading matrices correctly.

ES.3   Use common social auditing reporting formats and technologies as well as violation and grading matrices correctly according to client specifications.

ES.4   Plan for and adjust to differing skill sets of the audit team members and synthesize perspectives of team members as appropriate.

| Stakeholder Comment: | Implies there are multiple levels of auditors - please clarify (Comment on question ES.2 above) |
| Action: | This issue has been combined with ES2 above. |

ES.5   Secure management buy-in, speak confidently with senior executives in an appropriate language/dialect, and communicate informational needs.

| Stakeholder Comment: | Buy-in is subjective choice which is hardly secured, suggest to change to "communicate |
| Action: | This Section now reads: Communicate clearly and confidently with all parties in an appropriate language/dialect, particularly regarding informational needs. 4.1. Use of professional translators not associated with factory management. |

ES.6 Conduct a physical inspection of production facilities and grounds.

| Stakeholder Comment: | It is not a skill but just action. |
| Action: | Section introduction has been changed to say "The Social Auditor should possess the following social auditing skills:" |

ES.7   Conduct audit discreetly without drawing excessive attention or disrupting business processes.

| Stakeholder Comment: | Add "Know how to determine the appropriate sample size and select samples for testing and interview that would best represent the conditions of the |

	factory" here
Action:	This issue is now covered in 3.6.2.2. Worker sampling methods that best represent both the workers and the working conditions in the factory.

ES.8   Analyze compensation and production records.

Stakeholder Comment:	"Analyze gender composition of workforce and related work issues or problems
Action:	This issue now covered under 3.3.1. Socio-cultural and gender differences in compliance approaches.
Stakeholder Comment:	-This is an activity, not a skill - need to identify underlying skills.
Action:	Section introduction has been changed to say "The Social Auditor should possess the following social auditing skills:"
Stakeholder Comment:	The word "analyze" implies something more shall be done, suggesting "understand factory records relevant to compensation and work hours" as this would include some other records not just production records.
Action:	"Understand" is a knowledge issue, while this section deals with skills. Section changed to: Analyze factory records relevant to compensation and work hours.

ES.9   Interview skillfully, including validating worker information without compromising the source, and manage worker expectations.

Stakeholder Comment:	Redundancy regarding confidentiality with ES.11.
Action:	Redundancy removed with ES.11. Section now reads: 8. Engage workers by interviewing skillfully and managing worker expectations.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add "maintain the scopes of the conversation when necessary" to ensure the requirement of auditor being capable of maintaining the discussion/interview and probing on topics that require follow-up
Action:	Scope is discussed in Section 3.6. The obtaining and synthesizing of information.

ES.10 Determine credibility of information, whether the factory is adhering to policies and procedures, and verify allegations derived from other sources.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add "Detect and differentiate areas of non-compliance that are due to errors or intentional acts by the factory management" as ES 10.1
	-Should also include the ability to identify falsified records (double books) and worker coaching.
Action:	Already covered in Knowledge Section 3.6.2 above.
Stakeholder Comment:	-This section should include an auditor's ability to accept/understand alternative ways of achieving compliance
Action:	This issue now covered in Section 13. Advise on ways to resolve noncompliance in practical ways that meet legal and code requirements.

ES.11   Keep relevant information confidential, especially to protect the well being of workers and to comply with any non-disclosure or confidentiality agreements.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Suggest changing to "Record sufficient information about the source of the evidences" to ensure the requirement of recording traceable information when a follow-up audit is necessary.

	Renumber the existing skill standard "Keep relevant information confidential, especially to protect the well being of workers and to comply with any non-disclosure or confidentiality agreements" as ES 11.1
	Complying with non-disclosure or confidential agreement shall be a relevant term only, what if auditor found out from the interview that the worker are child labor, pregnant, worker being sexually harassed but they are working in hazardous environment?
Action:	This issue is now addressed in Section 10: Able to keep relevant information confidential, especially to protect the well-being of workers and to comply with any confidentiality agreements.

ES.12 Identify areas of non-compliance with respect to a law or code

Stakeholder Comment:	-Too much of a sweeping, all-inclusive statement - this is a result.
Action:	Changed to 13. Advise on ways to resolve noncompliance in practical ways that meet legal and code requirements.

ES.13   Secure management buy-in to next steps, as/when required and identify when not to disclose violations in the closing meeting, communicate informational needs, providing clarification during closing meetings, articulating benefits of expected outcomes if required by client, and confronting management when faced with inconsistent findings.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Suggest combining ES 5 and ES 13 to simplify and clarify emphasis on communication with management. (2 comments)
	Are 'secure management buy in to next step' and 'articulating benefits of expected outcome' applicable to 3rd party auditor? Seems that this is applicable to buying office's auditor
Action:	Section changed to: 11. Able to secure management buy-in to next steps, as/when required, including: 11.1. Identify when not to disclose violations in the closing meeting, 11.2. Articulate benefits of expected outcomes if required by client, and 11.3. Confront management when faced with inconsistent findings.

ES.14   Communicate well both orally and in written form at all business levels and articulate findings in direct relation to legal and code standards.

ES.15 Advise on ways to resolve non-compliance in practical ways that meet legal and code requirements.

Stakeholder Comment:	Providing practical solutions shall not be essential skills but preferred skills as it requires different skill sets and knowledge.
	-Certification audits do not allow the auditor to provide any guidance on corrective actions.
Action:	The foundational social auditor standard covers all areas social auditors should be aware of, but does not require mastery.
Stakeholder Comment:	-This borders on consulting - while this is fine for internal auditors, it is a conflict of interest for a third party to provide consulting and auditing to the same company. Clarification of your "baseline" auditor may help to address this.
Action:	Issue now clarified in Standards introduction.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add Ability to motivate factory for implementation by effective and practical guidance (in regional context on issues like overtime solutions.
	Add Skill to list non compliances as per nature of the "product made". For example Safety issues & health hazard in apparel, toy factory & a shampoo or honey making factory may not be same. Hence these cannot be evaluated at par.
Action:	These issues are too specific for a foundational social auditor standard.

The Social Auditor should possess essential communication and inter-personal relation skills as follows: (ECS)

ECS.1   Sensitivity to gender, racial, cultural and other issues.

ESCS.2   Ability to deal sensitively and discreetly with people from different backgrounds and to make them feel at ease.

ECS.3   Ability to adapt communications to the situation.

ECS.3   Effective listening and awareness of non-verbal communication.

ECS.4   Effective interacting with workers as well as management.

ECS.5   Effective probing and discernment of risk.

ECS.6   Maintenance of a professional demeanor when re-interviewing management and employees on sensitive findings.

Stakeholder Comment:	Omit 'when re-interviewing man…
Action:	Omitted.

ECS.7   Confident management of discussions, including issues of conflict as they arise.

Stakeholder Comment:	-The standards shall not expect auditor as superman who can resolve and handle every problem. Instead, this should focus on calm when conflicts arise and escalating, seeking assistance and support should be the appropriate way in general circumstances.
Action:	The foundational social auditor standard covers all areas social auditors should be aware of, but does not require mastery.

ECS.8   Ability to resolve conflict while maintaining composure and showing respect for all parties.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Remove word 'conflict'
Action:	Section now reads: Ability to lead discussions and to handle issues of conflict as they arise while maintaining composure and showing respect for all parties.

ECS.9   Dressing professionally and appropriately for the worksite.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add Ability to engage with right factory staff at the right time based on type

	of finding (Code of Conduct responsible, production manager, CEO etc).
Action:	This issue already covered in Sections 3-6.

The Social Auditor should possess the following personal standards. (EPS)

EPS.1   Strong personal code of ethics as it relates to conflicts of interest, gifts, bribery, protecting workers from retribution, and zero tolerance for child labor and forced labor.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Add zero tolerance on accepting bribes, gifts, and take care accepting entertainment, dinners from an audited unit.
	This is a strange grouping of items and would be better if separated.
	-Not sure zero tolerance for child labor and force labor shall be the personal standards because these issues are often very complicated to judge right or wrong. According to ILO, force labor is referring to a lot more issues than we normally perceive. Suggest to remove the last sentence
	-What does zero tolerance mean from the auditor's perspective? Wouldn't this be driven by the client
Action:	Section has been changed to: 1. Strong personal code of professional standards including:
	1.1. Protecting workers from retribution;
	1.2. Avoidance of conflicts of interest;
	1.3. Avoidance of gifts, bribes, and favors.

EPS.2   Perceptive and tenacious, with strong investigative and analytical skills, including ability to triangulate information from different sources and creatively corroborate evidence.

Stakeholder Comment:	Shall auditor be required to take personal strait test and the score for investigation skills not less than a certain range? Comments on how to test for this?
Action:	The foundational social auditor standard covers all areas social auditors should be aware of, but does not require mastery.

EPS.3   Honesty, trustworthiness and diplomacy, and ability to maintain independence from special interests.
EPS.4   Open-mindedness, reasonableness and objectivity.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Suggest adding or changing to "Maintain a professional skepticism attitude." This is to require the auditor keeps a questioning mind and a critical assessment of audit evidence throughout the audit process, and neither assumes the factory management is dishonest nor with unquestioned honesty.
Action:	Issue already covered in existing language.

EPS.5   Self-reliance, with ability to interact effectively with others and share data to arrive at mutual conclusions.

EPS.6   Ability to take a leadership role, particularly in problematic or unanticipated situations.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Not clear what this refers to.
Action:	This refers to the social auditor's need for flexibility.

EPS.7   Strong planning, organizational, and time management skills.

EPS.8   Ability to make decisions based on objective and verifiable evidence.

Stakeholder Comment:	-Fundamentally, we agree that auditor competency should be built on a foundation of knowledge and skills. We would also add Attitude as a third critical area, which you touch on under Personal Standards.
Action:	Unclear what comment is suggesting.

Desirable but not Essential Social Auditor Knowledge (DK)

National and international laws and standards, including the following:

DK.1   History, content and purposes of codes of conduct

Stakeholder Comment:	-This should be essential for why this role is created. Without such background, it may be difficult for auditor to make a sound judgment at audit. Identify mission of codes and purpose.
Action	The word "history" has been removed.

DK.2   Types of social code audits, e.g. first, second, and third-party audits

Stakeholder Comment:	- It is essential for auditors to understand the differences in the types of audits, even though they may doing primarily CoC audits
Action:	No action required.

DK.3   Common, recurring compliance issues in specific geographic regions

Stakeholder Comment:	-In our experience, regional knowledge of compliance issues is critical to effective auditing - in fact in our training we are pushing towards more region-specific training at the advanced levels. Since EK 3.3 requires background knowledge of common compliance issues existing in commonly audited industries, it seems knowledge of common, recurring compliance issues in specific geographic regions should also be considered Essential Knowledge.
Action:	This issue has been moved to Knowledge 1.3

DK.4   Basic knowledge of ISO standards

Stakeholder Comment:	While we agree that knowledge of the ISO standard may be optional, we strongly believe that the knowledge of the ISO-type management systems is essential.
Action:	Since only one person commented on this issue, it remains in desirable, not essential knowledge.

DK.5   Ergonomic standards for seating, machinery, etc.
DK.6   Health/safety standards relating to employer-provided transportation

Stakeholder Comment:	Either preceding or subsequent to DK 6: Add standard: "Laws and regulations regarding gender-based violence and abuse in the workplace
Action:	This issue has been moved to the Essential Knowledge Section 1.3.6.

Auditing knowledge

DK.7   Brand sourcing practices

Stakeholder Comment:	-Delete DS.7 as it is already listed under Essential Auditing Skills Standards (ES.16)
Action:	Comment unclear, since there is no ES16.
Stakeholder Comment:	-Add How employer and industrial associations operate.
	Add knowledge of local stake holders operating in the region of auditor like Industrial Associations, Partnership forums, Government agencies, NGO, Unions etc
Action:	Now covered under 1.5. "How employer and industrial associations operate."
Stakeholder Comment:	-You should also be adding a list of items related to social compliance in the supply chain and control of sub-contractors and suppliers. Add control of sub and suppliers because is really essential knowledge for an auditor
Action:	This issue now addressed in the Standards introduction.
Stakeholder Comment:	Suggest to include: knowledge of social dialogue structures and processes to DK
Action:	Statement unclear.

DK.8 How employer and industrial associations operate.

Stakeholder Comment:	It is unclear what the relevance of this is.
Action:	No

Desirable but not Essential Social Auditor Skills (DS)

Human Relations and Communications

Stakeholder Comment:	Suggest to include: participatory interview techniques; preventive orientation; ability to identify, categorize, and prioritize workplace risks; ability to articulate the business case for compliance.
Action:	These issues already covered under Essential Skills section above.

DS.1   Effectively coordinate travel with team members

DS.2   Ask for assistance from support personnel or supervisors if necessary

DS.3   Gather information from local unions

Stakeholder Comment:	-Have access to a network of solid and independent people and labor activists to help you move forward and talk to the right people and organizations
Action:	Issue already covered under existing DS.3

DS.4   Access and use information from local, national, regional, and global NGOs

Stakeholder Comment:	Add: knowledge of local government operations/legal requirements/alerts/problem factories.
Action:	This issue already covered in the Essential Knowledge section.

DS.5   Gather information from government bodies and officials.

Examining, Evaluating and Synthesizing Information
DS.6   Use instruments to test conditions, e.g. decibel levels

Stakeholder Comment:	Should be essential.
Action:	Based on low survey and wiki participant interest, issue remains in desired, not essential section.

DS.7   Provide preliminary guidance/technical assistance in the development of a draft factory performance improvement plan if required

Stakeholder Comment:	This also borders on consulting -
Action:	This item deleted.
Stakeholder Comment:	-There are some missing skills like writing a corrective action request and effectively following up as an auditor to determine if the company is addressing cited problems
	This is already included as an essential skill in ES.16.
Action:	Item removed.

General Comments

Stakeholder Comment:	In ongoing conversations I have been having with brands and other stakeholders, a continuing question is the different knowledge needed re: sector.
Action:	Issue is beyond the scope of a foundational social auditor certification.
Stakeholder Comment:	We want to better understand the level of knowledge and skill required to meet each standard (e.g. EK1, EK2, EK3, ES, ECS, EPS, and DK).
Action:	Comment unclear.
Stakeholder Comment:	Add Somewhere to standards: Expertise concerning CTPAT and recognition of Country of Origin, in addition to traditional social compliance skills.
Action:	Issue is beyond the scope of a foundational social auditor certification.
Stakeholder Comment:	Be able to discuss/show a client the business implications/potential risks with not complying.
Action:	This issue is already covered under Essential Skills 11.
Stakeholder Comment:	The need to have people with a "good nose" (streetwise)
Action:	Issue already covered in Essential Skills section
Stakeholder Comment:	Add the word "worker" to the Glossary
Action:	ILO definition of "worker" is used for these Standards.
Stakeholder Comment:	A lot of these standard points are written in a broad, sweeping manner. How will you verify that auditors have these skills and knowledge AND are applying them in the field? This is why we noted above that the standard alone outside the context of an implementation and verification system is only a small piece of what must be a holistic system. At the bottom of page 1 the document mentions that additional skills could be required which are not outlined in the document, such as "additional areas of evaluation (retrenchment, environmental considerations, etc)." As these additional areas become more and more impactful, information on these skill and knowledge sets would also be useful, alongside the skills already mentioned.
Action:	Foundational social auditor knowledge and skill standards will be used by social auditor certification organizations to develop uniform training programs for social auditors.
Stakeholder Comment:	Social Auditor Standards: In general, the standards are very similar to what IRCA has already outlined in their criteria for social systems auditor certification. It is not clear what additional value this document brings or how it fits in with what already exists (IRCA, SA8000, etc.). Global Monitoring Institute to take these standards and others to

	concrete operational approaches including a clearer operational approach of the auditor standards, scope of a social/labor assessment and organizational capacity standards (e.g. as hiring criteria; evaluation criteria; training references; conducting staff skills assessment; etc.).
Action:	Project efforts have focused on aligning these standards with existing social auditor standards, while ensuring uniformity and clarity of social auditor training programs.
Stakeholder Comment:	Appendix A: Referenced Publications What about considering criteria and guidelines used by national labor inspectorates to recruit and train government labor inspectors? Also, the ILO has a number of publications regarding labor inspection skills: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/labinsp/ http://www.iali-aiit.org/iali/download/directions/IALI_s_FUTURE.pdf Note that GSCP will also be tackling the issue of auditor competence: http://www.ethicalcorporation.com/content.asp?contentid=6490 View the webinar (third one): http://www.isealalliance.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=1054&grandparentID=490&parentID=511
Action:	Additional publications have been added to the document.
Stakeholder Comment:	Suggest to classify in Fundamental (base) auditor, Lead auditor, Principal auditor
Action:	This is beyond the scope of the Social Auditor Project.
Stakeholder Comment:	Need to refer to skills to identify illegal subcontracting
Action:	This issue implied in existing knowledge and skills sections above.
Stakeholder Comment:	Clarify what is meant by social audit. is it 'audit' or 'audit+'? How does this set of standards relate to audit scope?
Action:	Issue is clarified in the Standards introduction.
Stakeholder Comment:	Separation of technical skills/info vs. experience vs. personal skills/character
Action:	They are now separate in the standards document.
Stakeholder Comment:	How do we test for subjective qualities
Action:	The foundational standards will be used by social auditing certification organizations to develop training materials. It is up to them to determine how to test for these qualities.
Stakeholder Comment:	How do we give credit for prior industry knowledge
Action:	This is beyond the scope of the Social Auditor Project.
Stakeholder Comment:	Identify a baseline of what these skills will allow an auditor to do. Articulate the minimum 'brief' that these skills will enable you to accomplish.
Action:	The foundational standards will be used by social auditing certification organizations to develop training materials. It is up to them to determine how to test for these qualities.
Stakeholder Comment:	How relate to environmental issues? need to clarify that we aim to respect and build on, rather than duplicate, a set of standards where there are other standards available.
Action:	

Annex V: Project Timeline to End of Project

Activity	January	February	March	April	May	June
Develop Training Survey	Jan. 13					
MONSTA Committee reviews survey	Jan. 13-21					
MONSTA Committee meeting to discuss Survey	Jan. 21					
Training Survey Revision	Jan. 21-Jan. 26					
Clean up/add to Survey mailing list	Jan. 21-25					
Create Constant Contact Blurb	Jan. 25					
Send out Constant Contact to Stakeholders to launch Survey	Jan. 26					
Revise wiki to focus on survey and link	Jan. 27					
Constant Contact Survey Reminder Sent out		Feb. 11				
Survey closes (duration: 3 1/2 weeks)		Feb. 19				
Survey Analysis Completed			March 12			
MONSTA Committee Reviews Survey Analysis			March 19			
Survey analysis/recommendations sent to stakeholders via Constant Contact			March 24			
Survey analysis/recommendations uploaded to wiki			March 25			
Develop Institutionalization Survey		Feb. 1-10				
MONSTA Committee reviews survey		Feb 10- 18				
MONSTA Committee meeting to discuss Survey		Feb. 18				
Institutionalization Survey Revision			March 1			
Create Constant Contact Blurb			March 5			
Send out Constant Contact to Stakeholders to launch Survey			March 10			
Revise wiki to focus on survey and link			March 11			
Constant Contact Survey Reminder Sent out			March 31			
Survey closes (3 1/2 weeks)				April 6		
Survey Analysis Completed				April 20		

MONSTA Committee Reviews Survey Analysis				April 30		
Survey analysis/recommendations sent to stakeholders via Constant Contact					May 10	
Survey analysis/recommendations uploaded to wiki					May 10	
Final Report Developed for USDOS						Sept. 1
MONSTA Committee reviews Report						Sept. 30
Submit Report to USDOS						Oct. 1

Annex VI: Project Team and Major Stakeholders Consulted

Core Project Team

Team Lead: Shawn MacDonald, Senior Advisor, Verité
Ruth Rosenbaum, Executive Director, CREA
Patrick Neyts, Senior Advisor, Vectra International
Dan Viederman, Executive Director, Verité
Bettina Brunner, Consultant
Julie Sobkowicz, Communications Consultant
Rob Gladden, Director of Information Technology
Debra Hertz, Grants Manager

Major Stakeholder Outreach

In addition to soliciting stakeholder input via online surveys and the wiki, the Project also solicited input directly from stakeholders at Project workshops and through direct contact. Here is an alphabetical list of the major contributors to the Project.

American Eagle Outfitters Asia Ltd	Intertek
Adidas-Reebok	IRCA
Ann Taylor	ISEAL
Avery Dennison	Kwintet
Belton Group	Level Works
BSD Shenzhen Representative Office	Level Works
Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI)	Levi Strauss and Co
Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)	Li & Fung (Trading) Ltd.
Common Code for the Coffee Community	Mattel
Council for Responsible Jewelry Practices	NBC Universal
CSR Asia	Oxfam
Disney	Patagonia
Disney	RSO Asia, Philips Consumer Lifestyle
DNV Shenzhen	SCSA Ltd.
Fair Trade Labeling Organization (FLO)	SGS Hong Kong Limited
Fair Wear Foundation (FWF)	SOMO
FLO	The GAP
Global Monitoring Institute	The Home Depot Asia Sourcing Operation (Shenzhen)
Growth, Grants, and Good Ideas for Non- Profits	TUV Rheinland (Shenzhen) Co.
GSCP	University of California, Los Angeles
GTZ	University of Southern California
Hewlett-Packard	UTZ
ICTI CARE Process	Wal-Mart Global Procurement
ILO, Ethical Tea Partnership	WRAP
Impactt Limited, China	
International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers	

Federation (ITGLWF)	