

ABR PROGRAM TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE GUIDE



VOLUME I					VOLUME II	VOLUME III		
CRITÉRIO 1	CRITÉRIO 2	CRITÉRIO 3	CRITÉRIO 4	CRITÉRIO 5	CRITÉRIO 6	CRITÉRIO 7	CRITÉRIO 8	CRITÉRIO 9

Volume I

LABOR RELATIONS AND LABOR RIGHTS

In recent years, the demand for sustainable and socially responsible agricultural practices has grown significantly, driven by more conscious consumers and stricter environmental legislation. In this context, social responsibility emerges as an essential element for the ABR Program, aiming not only for environmental sustainability but also for the well-being of workers and the communities involved in production. Its Social and Community Development pillar covers best business practices for respecting and promoting human rights, ensuring dignified working conditions, and contributing to the social and economic development of local communities..

In the cotton sector, this means implementing measures ranging from the elimination of child and forced labor to the promotion of fair wages, workplace safety, and access to basic social benefits such as education and health. The ABR certification standard establishes rigorous criteria to ensure that cotton production occurs under ethical conditions in alignment with the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and the current regulatory norms in the country.





CRITERION 5

PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION AND RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES



5.1	Does the PU/PBA, in the act of hiring, dismissal and during the employment contract, have mechanisms to combat all forms of harassment and other forms of violence in the workplace, adopt transparent, firm and determined processes, standards or policies to prevent any discriminatory attitude, procedure or restriction, especially regarding age, gender, appearance, race, creed, nationality, sexual orientation, marital status and political ideology?							
LEGAL BASIS: CF Art. 5. Everyone is equal before the law, without distinction of any nature, guaranteeing to Brazilians and foreigners residing in the Country the inviolability of the right to life, liberty, equality, security, and property, in the following terms: I - men and women are equal in rights and obligations, under the terms of this Constitution; (...) XLI - the law shall punish any discrimination violating fundamental rights and freedoms; XLII - the practice of racism constitutes a non-bailable and imprescriptible crime, subject to the penalty of imprisonment, under the terms of the Law. CLT Art. 5. Equal salary shall correspond to all work of equal value, without distinction of gender. Art. 461. Where the function is identical, equal salary shall correspond to all work of equal value, provided to the same employer, in the same business establishment, without distinction of gender, ethnicity, nationality, or age.		Interviews: With the UP/UBA representative, the professional responsible for the HR department, and employees. Physical Verification: Verify the internal rules and procedures adopted for hiring employees and the content of advertisements placed in newspapers or other media. Verify if the topic of harassment is discussed in CIPATR meetings (where applicable) through meeting minutes. Documentary Analysis: Analyze supporting documents such as notices, warnings, or internal announcements, courses or training sessions, meeting minutes, internal rules or regulations, or through the implementation of psychosocial risk control according to NR 01.						
		Comments: The principle of non-discrimination is a consequence of the principle of equality and is based on Art. 5, caput, of the Federal Constitution (CF), which provides for the equality of all before the law and equal treatment among all persons without any distinction. The company must adopt a non-discriminatory and transparent policy in the hiring process. Discrimination or harassment can occur during the job interview when a person is subjected to unequal treatment or negative valuation due to age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, political opinion, physical disability, or family situation, among others.						

5.2	Does the PU/PBA warn and guide its employees to prevent the practice of any discriminatory or humiliating procedure in the relationship between its agents, managers and supervisors and their subordinates, as well as among them, under penalty of suffering disciplinary sanctions?
LEGAL BASIS: CF Art. 5. Everyone is equal before the law, without distinction of any nature, guaranteeing to Brazilians and foreigners residing in the Country the inviolability of the right to life, liberty, equality, security, and property, in the following terms: I - men and women are equal in rights and obligations, under the terms of this Constitution; (...) XLI - the law shall punish any discrimination violating fundamental rights and freedoms; XLII - the practice of racism constitutes a non-bailable and imprescriptible crime, subject to the penalty of imprisonment, under the terms of the Law. CLT Art. 5. Equal salary shall correspond to all work of equal value, without distinction of gender. Art. 461. Where the function is identical, equal salary shall correspond to all work of equal value, provided to the same employer, in the same business establishment, without distinction of gender, ethnicity, nationality, or age.	Interviews: With the UP/UBA representative, the professional responsible for the HR department, and employees. Physical Verification: Verify if the UP/UBA expressly and transparently warns and guides its employees to prohibit any discriminatory or humiliating procedures in the relationship between its agents, managers, and supervisors and their subordinates, as well as among themselves, under penalty of disciplinary sanctions. Documentary Analysis: Analyze supporting documents such as employment contracts, OS (Service Orders), notices, warnings, or internal announcements, courses or training sessions, meeting minutes, and internal rules or regulations. Comments: The company must inform all its employees about the principle of non-discrimination in workplace relationships. This should be done through all valid means, especially by including specific clauses in employment contracts and using internal media, regulations, and notice boards, among other communication channels. The principle of non-discrimination is clearly expressed in Art. 5, caput, of the CF, which provides for equal treatment of all persons before the law, without any distinction. Discriminatory or humiliating procedures include verbal, psychological, or physical actions to which a worker is subjected at the workplace, whether by superiors, colleagues, or subordinates against their superiors.
ABR CMP BCI CMP CMP = Critério Mínimo de Produção (item obrigatório). Aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI. Não aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.	

5.3	Does the PU have open communication channels with local communities?
Interviews: Conduct interviews with HR managers and/or unit leaders to understand communication strategies used for dialogue with employees and the community; include employee interviews to evaluate the perception of access and effectiveness of existing communication channels. Documentary Verification: Analyze supporting documents, such as: evidence of the existence of formal channels, such as information boards, signs, or visual materials containing contact information (telephone, email, suggestion/complaint boxes), which facilitate access for employees and communities to communicate with the company; prove the use of these channels through records of messages received, service reports, or any forms of contact made by this public (interaction logs), if any; and provide evidence of the form of contact with local community representatives.	
Comments: Additional Documents: Present minutes, attendance lists, and meeting protocols demonstrating structured dialogues with internal or external groups.	
ABR  CMP  BCI  CMP  EXCLUSIVE BCI  CMP = Critério Mínimo de Produção (item obrigatório).  Aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.  Não aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.	

5.4

Does the PU have an open relationship with the community, promoting the hiring of local workforce without distinction of race, gender, ethnicity, religion or other cultural aspects?

Interviews:

With HR/Unit Managers: Obtain detailed information on recruitment processes, dissemination channels, and regional outreach strategies.

With Employees: Identify how they learned about job opportunities and evaluate if the channels used are accessible and inclusive.

Documentary Verification: Present proof of vacancy advertisements in local regions (e.g., SINE ads, company website, employment agencies, radio, social media, or other relevant platforms); present current recruitment and selection policies aligned with equality of opportunity and non-discrimination principles, if any. If the UP has not implemented this policy, a formal indication of the intent to revise, update, or create these policies must be presented, including a preliminary plan for improvements.

5.5	Does the PU take measures to identify and mitigate the social and/or environmental risks that the operation represents for communities and adjacent areas?
Interviews: With the farm manager to describe the existing risk identification and management system. The manager must provide concrete evidence, such as the designation of internal focal points for risk management, training conducted, and updated mapping of adjacent communities with identified local focal points (e.g., community representatives or local leaders). Documentary Verification: Analyze supporting documents such as: 1. Documented risk management action plan, detailing the implemented measures. Examples of documentation to be presented: 1. Monitoring of affected areas and communities; 2. Engagement and dialogue with other local actors, including community representatives, local authorities, and strategic partners; 3. Records of impact assessments performed and the results obtained. 2. Examples of mitigation measures adopted or planned, highlighting how they were developed. Examples of documentation to be presented: 1. Collaborative process with the affected communities (e.g., meetings, public consultations); 2. Participation of public authorities or relevant organizations in the planning and execution of the actions; 3. Results achieved in terms of risk mitigation and improvement in the relationship with local communities.	
ABR  CMP  BCI  CMP  EXCLUSIVE BCI  CMP = Critério Mínimo de Produção (item obrigatório).  Aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.  Não aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.	

5.6

When there are disputes over land use with local communities (including indigenous populations or traditional land users), are transparent processes implemented to resolve these disputes?

Interviews: With the person responsible for the production unit (UP) to describe the dispute resolution process in detail, including: 1. The approach adopted (theoretical and practical); 2. Involvement of external actors or third parties, such as mediators, community groups, or local authorities, if applicable; 3. Examples of resolved disputes (maintaining necessary confidentiality) to illustrate the practical application of the process.

Documentary Verification:

1. Present evidence of standard policies and procedures for dispute resolution.

Example of documentation to be presented: internal company policies or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) detailing the stages for managing conflicts; records of past or current disputes, including documentation of the resolution stages (reports, minutes, protocols). Examples of the involvement of third parties or community representatives in arbitration or mediation processes, reinforcing impartiality.

2. Present evidence demonstrating how the UP ensures transparency in the process.

Example of documentation to be presented: public announcements or reports showing the results and actions taken to resolve disputes fairly; records of periodic reviews of the process, ensuring continuous improvements and alignment with best practices.

Comment: If the farm reports that there are no disputes or that there are no nearby communities, the requirement shall be considered as compliant.

ABR  CMP 

BCI  CMP 

EXCLUSIVE BCI 

5.7

Does the producer have procedures for acquiring new areas considering social risks and land use disputes by traditional communities, in addition to verifying the veracity of land documents?

Documentary Verification: Verify land ownership and usage licenses, CAR (Rural Environmental Registry) registration, etc. (linked to other indicators, notably 7.7 and 7.8).

ABR  CMP 

BCI  CMP 

EXCLUSIVE BCI 

CMP = Critério Mínimo de Produção (item obrigatório).

 Aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.  Não aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.