

March 2024 Progress Update

M&S AND WAITROSE JOINT HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT
-
CONDUCTED WITHIN THE KENYAN SMALLHOLDER TEA SUPPLY CHAIN

Background

In 2021, in the context of increasingly well-publicised human rights challenges in tea and with the backdrop of Covid-19, M&S and Waitrose jointly commissioned a Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) of the Kenyan smallholder tea supply chain. Kenya is an important origin for both M&S and Waitrose. As brands that have well-established commitments to responsible sourcing and recognise the value of collaboration, we worked together and in alignment with our first-tier supplier, Ringtons to commission the report by a third party, Partner Africa, who have significant expertise in-country.

The purpose of the HRIA was to gain a deeper understanding of our shared supply chain by engaging directly with smallholder farmers, hired labourers and factory workers, along with other stakeholders within the sector. Importantly, we wanted any resulting action plan to be evidence-based and rooted in this stakeholder engagement. We also committed to making the summary findings of the report publicly available, in line with our brands' commitments to transparency. The Executive Summary of the report can be found [here](#).

In response to the findings, M&S and Waitrose, through consultation with KTDA and Ringtons, have worked to develop a high-level action plan, which was first published in January 2023 and can be found below, along with progress updates.

Going forward, while remaining independently committed to Fairtrade, we will continue to work both together and separately to address the challenges highlighted in the Partner Africa report and support further industry collaboration.

Agreed Actions and Progress

	Recommendation from Partner Africa report	M&S and Waitrose response	Progress
1	Evaluate living income for smallholders and living wage for hired labourers and factory workers respectively and evaluate the price paid for tea per kilo	M&S and Waitrose will support KTDA on the development of a collaborative project with IDH on living incomes & wages, drawing on the various pieces of work underway as referenced in the Partner Africa report.	We have supported IDH to conduct a Service Delivery Model Analysis, which reviewed the KTDA business structure and supply chain, and identified opportunities to add more value to farmers and workers. The study assessed the factory performance, opportunities for income diversification, climate resilience awareness and risk, as well as purchasing practices. The report will be made available this year via IDH here . The findings from the study will continue to inform our activity.
2	Strengthen financial knowledge and empowerment of smallholders and hired labourers through alternative income-generating activities for smallholders and financial empowerment trainings	M&S plans to support KTDA's current work with smallholders through our partnership with Emerging Leaders and its 'Leadership for Life' programme, to include training for smallholders on financial literacy, the development of income generating activities (IGAs) and household & community level financial empowerment. This programme will have a particular focus on training for female smallholders. Waitrose will work through Farm Africa to support current KTDA work with smallholders on strengthening economic resilience by improving agricultural practices. M&S and Waitrose will work together with KTDA and Fairtrade Africa to explore amplifying existing work with smallholders on crop diversification.	Together with Farm Africa and Emerging Leaders, we have designed a joint programme to improve the resilience of smallholder tea farmers. The pilot will begin with a dynamic ' <i>Leadership for Life</i> ' course delivered at a household level to include financial literacy training, followed by the establishment of Leadership Hubs to apply knowledge and initiate climate resilience and income-generating activities across the community. The collaborative pilot project will leverage the strengths of each delivery partner, allow for efficient delivery and enable KTDA to evaluate the impact and opportunity for future scale up across their smallholders in line with their strategy.
3	Strengthen worker representation and access to grievance mechanisms	Waitrose will support KTDA to review current tools and develop policies and processes which enhance and improve worker voice and representation. This work will have a particular	We have started scoping, with KTDA, the opportunities to enhance grievance mechanisms, in line with their refreshed KTDA Foundation Strategy. We expect to define the scope of this work across 2024.

		focus on women being able to access grievance mechanisms and reporting tools effectively, linked to recommendation 5.	
4	Increase availability and affordability of PPE to reduce the risk of injuries from tea farming activities for smallholders and hired labourers. Support the distribution of PPE to farmers and labourers	M&S and Waitrose will support KTDA to risk assess PPE requirements across all areas of tea production and understand barriers to distribution and use. Based on this assessment, we will explore options through Farm Africa's model (e.g. micro loans and village-based agents) to support PPE provision and necessary training through e.g. KTDA's field extension officer network.	We will be prioritising this action throughout 2024
5	Increase awareness of GBVH and women's rights in both the farm and factory contexts and work to combat gender discrimination in the smallholder supply chain	Waitrose will share learnings from FCDO WOW project with KTDA and assess opportunities for alignment/inclusion, facilitated through Farm Africa. M&S's Emerging Leaders training programme will have a particular focus on women's economic empowerment. KTDA currently deliver gender-related training to tea-farming communities; M&S and Waitrose will explore with KTDA ways in which we, along with others, can support the scaling of this programme.	The Human Rights Impact Assessment has been shared with the Work and Opportunities for Women Programme. As part of our livelihood improvement programme (Action 2) there will be a specific emphasis on women producers and their workers.
6	Develop a better understanding of any risks to children living in tea producing communities	M&S and Waitrose will collaborate with Fairtrade Africa and other in-country organisations and stakeholders to better understand risks to the rights of children living in tea producing communities.	We will be prioritising this action throughout 2024
7	Raise awareness of human rights and labour standards for smallholders, hired labourers, and factory workers throughout the supply chain	M&S and Waitrose will make findings and recommendations of this Human Rights Impact Assessment publicly available, along with an action plan which we will commit to reporting against on an annual basis. We will work with Ringtons, KTDA, Fairtrade and others to communicate the challenges and opportunities outlined in the HRIA to relevant stakeholders and rightsholders.	Since completing the Human Rights Impact Assessment, we have both shared this online in our brand's commitment to transparency. The full research findings have also been used to inform the THIRST Global Human Rights Impact Assessment of the tea sector . THIRST is a knowledge and action platform for civil society actors and tea

			<p>industry stakeholders who are committed to working together to create a fair and thriving tea industry.</p> <p>We have also shared learnings at various events throughout the year, such as the Ethical Tea Partnership ETP Gender Based Violence and Harassment event.</p>
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Challenges and Learnings

- Whilst implementing the Action Plan over the past year, the KTDA Foundation has also been developing a refreshed strategy. To ensure that the agreed actions achieve their intended impact and contribute appropriately to the Foundation strategy, some of the initiatives above will need to be delivered following the completion of the planning process.
- Due to the complex structure of KTDA and associated factories and smallholders, there is a robust engagement process and governance framework to ensure we act in the best interest of the business. As a result the implementation of some initiatives took longer than anticipated but have been factored into future planning.

Priorities for 2024/2025

1. Agree on actions from the Service Delivery Model Analysis, and publish the report on the IDH website (Action 1)
2. Complete the delivery of pilot livelihoods improvement programme including focus on women with Farm Africa and Emerging Leaders (Actions 2, 5)
3. Define the scope of, and designed the access to grievance mechanisms project (Action 3)
4. Begin the risk assessment to PPE requirements and barriers to distribution and use (Action 4)
5. Begin to better understand the risks of child labour in Kenyan tea with industry stakeholders (Action 6)