



ETHICS & SUSTAINABILITY

WOMEN IN AND AROUND
JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP
SUPPLY CHAINS

2022

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FOREWORD BY MARIJA ROMPANI, DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABILITY & ETHICS AT JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP



As a business that sources products globally, the John Lewis Partnership has a fundamental impact on the happiness and wellbeing of the women who work in our supply chains. The cultural and societal challenges workers face in different countries vary, but it is a common theme that wherever they work, women are disproportionately affected.

That's why, in 2021, we released our first 'Women in John Lewis Partnership supply chains' report, which identified the areas of greatest inequality and the best strategies to give women the information, skills and confidence to create that change for themselves. The 2022 report provides an update on the experience of women working in global supply chains, including how existing challenges have been exacerbated by Covid-19.

We work directly with our suppliers, local charities and communities to implement the projects funded by [The Waitrose & Partners Foundation](#) and [John Lewis Foundation](#). Through our programmes, women have been able to achieve inspiring change. Examples include increasing their financial independence, finding strategies for managing their mental health, improving their employment prospects and creating the work-family-life balance they want. Depending on the scope of the programme, the women involved have developed the confidence and skills to negotiate real change, such as pay raises, successfully campaigning for women-only spaces at work and developing business plans to support new income streams.

We can feel some pride in these successes because they are catalysts for longer-term change. But, we know we're only at the start of what we can achieve and that together we can do more. Providing opportunities for women to find the right solutions for themselves, and helping them access the tools they need to affect those solutions is the key to a safer, more equal and happier future for women. I look forward to continuing this positive work and seeing what the next year of working with inspiring women around the world brings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2021 we released our first ‘Women in John Lewis Partnership supply chains’ report detailing the challenges women in our supply chains face, many of which have been exacerbated by Covid-19. This year, our report provides an update on the reality that 190 million women working in global supply chains’ experience, whilst also detailing what the John Lewis Partnership is doing to address these issues.

Our [Responsible Sourcing Code Of Practice](#) sets out our expectations on how all workers in our supply chains should be treated. The experiences of men and women in relation to these expectations are often different. Examples include women working in supply chains often having fewer opportunities to access effective grievance mechanisms.

At the John Lewis Partnership we have initiatives in place to support women in our supply chains where there is a specific risk to their rights. Our supply chain programmes - The Waitrose Foundation and Better Jobs - focus on ensuring that all workers, including women, are listened to. The John Lewis Foundation provides support in similar ways, but focuses on the communities in which the John Lewis Partnership operates, rather than the workers in our supply chains.

In the Partnership’s raw material supply chains, we work with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) whose ambitions to support women farmers we fully recognise. Examples include Better Cotton Initiative and the Fairtrade Foundation.

Although we have increased our own advocacy work for women’s rights, we know there is still a long way to go. Over the last 12 months we have worked with various implementation partners, from Farm Africa to ActionAid and The Centre for Child Rights & Business, to deliver informative and beneficial programmes for female workers across our supply chains. The work to address challenges faced by women does not stop here. We are committed to continuing our work around understanding gender balance in our supply chains and how we can help empower women and improve their opportunities.



¹ Ethical Trade Initiative. ‘[Gender Equity in Global Supply Chains](#)’. 2021. Accessed 26th January 2022

GENDER INEQUALITY AND COVID-19



The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing gender inequalities within global supply chains, with the impacts of the virus disproportionately affecting women. Exposure to greater health risks, the increased burden of care and increased risks of gender-based violence are just some of the gendered impacts of the pandemic¹. We recognise our responsibility in this area as contributors toward Goal 5 of the SDGs - to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

To address gender issues within our supply chains, it is important that we recognise why these issues exist in the first place. You can read about this in our [2021 Women in JLP Supply Chains](#) report.

Pre-pandemic, women were spending at least three times as many hours undertaking unpaid care work as men². Covid-19 has not only worsened inequalities but brought additional social and economic challenges to many women, such as an increased pressure to undertake unpaid care roles looking after family or home-schooling children, and an increased chance of losing their existing low-paid employment³. In addition to this, rising domestic violence rates have affected women and girls around the world as they are forced to live with their abusers in precarious living situations. The Partnership has carried out a range of projects to help combat these inequalities. Case studies throughout this paper provide an overview of some of the projects that took place in 2021 and 2022.

1 United Nations. 'Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women'. 2020. Accessed 13th December 2021

2 United Nations Stats. 'The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020'. 2020. Accessed 15th July 2020

3 United Nations Foundation. 'How the COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating gender inequality'. 2020. Accessed 30th December 2021

OUR POLICY

The John Lewis Partnership Responsible Sourcing Code of Practice (RSCoP) sets out our commitment to workers' rights, and our expectations of suppliers regarding issues such as pay, working hours, and child labour. It is based on the [Ethical Trading Initiative \(ETI\) Base Code](#) and in turn, relevant [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) Conventions](#). More details can be found in our latest [Modern Slavery Statement](#).

For Tier 1 factories⁴, we assess compliance with the RSCoP through ethical audit programmes. We use Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audits (SMETA) for these assessments as it is a cross-industry recognised audit methodology. You can find further details on our risk assessment and audit programmes in our [Modern Slavery Statement](#).

Depending on personal circumstances, the code may impact individuals of the same sex differently. For example,

a pregnant woman may not only have different health and safety requirements from a man, but also to a woman who is not pregnant (see [appendix 1](#) for further examples).

It is important to note that, should a grievance need to be raised, the mechanism for doing so is also not always the same for men and women. This could be due to restrictions on women joining trade unions, or there could be systemic issues deriving from a lack of female worker representation. To combat this, we encourage our suppliers to have union representation, or an equivalent, at all sites to strengthen their grievance mechanisms as it is usually a site's internal grievance mechanism that is the most effective at resolving worker concerns. Additionally, we also promote workers making use of third-party grievance channels, online or via the phone via SpeakUp, Stronger Together, UNSEEN or ISSARA in South East Asia. In the UK, we also encourage workers to access apps which can provide them with grievance channels, including Just Good Work App and the Farm Work Welfare App.

4 Tier 1 factory, Defined as those sites manufacturing a finished product, or where the majority of assembly and packaging of the product bearing the John Lewis or Waitrose label occurs

OUR FOUNDATIONS

The Partnership does not stop at policy making and implementation with regard to the equal and fair treatment of women. We also design and implement support programmes, offering training to both our own supply chain partners and the wider communities in which we operate.

THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION

The Waitrose & Partners Foundation is a supply chain programme set up to help improve the lives of, and create better opportunities for, the people and communities who grow, pick and pack our fresh produce. A percentage of retail sales of Foundation products is invested directly back into the farms and communities from which we source. Currently established in 10 countries, the Waitrose & Partners Foundation directly supports projects chosen by worker committees on farms, and its global fund that focuses on supporting strategic initiatives that work to ensure the long term sustainability of the supply chains, including providing opportunities for women and young people.

CASE STUDY: THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION SOUTHERN AFRICA

In response to female workers expressing that they felt their unpaid care pressures were increasing as a result of the pandemic, the Waitrose & Partners Foundation Southern Africa team have been running a programme to train health workers on the farm to support those who may be struggling emotionally. The training aims to improve workers' self esteem and self knowledge whilst equipped with the skills to self-regulate and prevent burnout.

A participatory arts-based approach has been used. This aims to develop the attendees' understanding of the role that the arts has in emotional support and provides workers with experience of using the arts to connect with each other, build group cohesion, and strengthen personal and professional relationships.

5 workshops have been successfully run with a total of 100 participants, 92 of whom were women. Due to the overwhelmingly positive response there are plans for 4 more workshops in 2022:

“ These two days meant so much to me, you have no idea. I could identify what I need to live through my personal crisis”
- Participant of the Eastern Cape workshop

To ensure the participants felt supported in how to apply the learnings from the workshop in their place of work, regular contact and follow- up sessions were organised 3 and 12 months after the workshop.



THE JOHN LEWIS & PARTNERS FOUNDATION

The [John Lewis & Partners Foundation](#) is an independent charity, established in 2007 to benefit communities in the UK and overseas where John Lewis operates. The charity specifically seeks to support projects and programmes that lead to meaningful and sustainable employment, covering areas such as training and skills development, with a particular focus on women's rights and working conditions. The Foundation does not focus within John Lewis supply chains as its work is designed to support those living and working in the locality in which our supply chains are based.

CASE STUDY: THE JOHN LEWIS & PARTNERS FOUNDATION

The John Lewis & Partners Foundation has been working with ActionAid since 2018 to secure a living wage and decent work for female garment workers in Delhi and Chennai, India. Although the garment workers are not employed in our supply chains, we remain committed to providing support for the betterment of women's working conditions.

Since inception, the programme has helped female workers form collectives to have their voices heard, and drive a positive impact on their working conditions and pay. The pandemic made workers' lives especially difficult for many reasons, so to help ensure the great work done to date was not lost, the John Lewis Foundation funded an additional seven months of the programme to provide more time for delayed activities to take place and build the sustainability of the collective groups. Through careful planning the team was able to set aside enough of the budget to provide 900 garment worker families with food and hygiene supplies to support them for 10-15 days.

Over the course of the programme, 262 workshops took place, reaching 2942 workers (an increase of 1786 workers since 2020). As a result of the workshops the women negotiated with factory management 126 actions that led to improvements such as pay rises, pension payments and distribution of food provisions during the Covid-19 pandemic. They also secured social welfare support schemes and other benefits for 1,222 garment workers, such as accident insurance, disability allowance, bank accounts and Covid-19 relief support. As well as being more empowered within their workplaces, the collectives have been able to utilise their new skills to support their local communities.



One worker, Sadhana, reported that through the awareness sessions she attended she learnt about her rights and factory laws. During one of the sessions, she learned that women had the right to ask the owner for a separate room for their work. As many women at her factory didn't feel safe working overnight in the factory with the men, she decided to take this to the factory owner. As a result of her confident request the owner agreed to provide a separate room for women. Thanks to this success, and similar successes in other factories, many other workers have started to feel more confident in taking their demands to factory owners.



BETTER JOBS

Standard factory auditing processes only give a snapshot of working conditions at a particular moment in time. Although auditing is an effective tool, we want to drive more meaningful and sustainable positive behaviour change within our own-brand supply base. In 2019, John Lewis launched the Better Jobs programme within its UK supply base. Through an online portal, workers can complete a survey on their day-to-day experience of the workplace, including their opinion of what makes a good job. Using the responses, our suppliers determine which improvements they should prioritise and the Partnership helps them to track their progress year-on-year. In 2020 the programme was expanded to include 21 of our suppliers and 24 of their factories in China. We now plan to continue expanding with more suppliers within these countries.

The Better Jobs Programme applies a gender lens throughout the survey to help us understand the gender differences within our supply chains and the impact that this has on working conditions. Questions regarding gender are asked to both managers and workers. This helps to provide an understanding on areas such as pay gaps, women’s health and broader gender discrimination. Data is also collected on the workers’ gender in order for us to identify any trends and patterns. This information is then used to help us properly understand what the risks are and accurately address them in future projects.

CASE STUDY: PARTICIPATORY THEATRE WORKSHOP

The Better Jobs Survey in China uncovered that 57% of 690 female workers surveyed felt feelings of stress and anxiety in relation to their work, for example from challenging relations with managers, heavy workloads or upcoming deadlines. To support this, in 2021 we worked with a local implementation partner to break barriers and promote open and effective communication between management and workers through a participatory theatre workshop in Shanghai.

Overall 21 participants from 7 factories attended the workshop (1 manager and 2 workers from each factory). Of the participants, 10 were female workers and 2 were female managers. As a result of the positive feedback from both sides an identical workshop was later carried out in Guangzhou with 19 attendees from 6 factories, 5 of whom were female workers and 4 that were female managers.

All participants took part in workshops and exercises to help them learn new ways to

communicate, overcome difficult conversations and ease work stress and anxiety. They then reflected as a group on how they can share their learnings and organise training for managers, supervisors and workers. Suppliers were also given a toolkit on communication skills for them to use when training back at their factories.

“ The training was very interesting. I’ve learnt how to improve my language when I communicate with the manager”
- Ms Yuan, Worker representative

“ I think the team game was the most impressive session because it was quite fun and taught me about the goal of communication. No matter what kind of way we use to communicate, the ultimate destination is to achieve our goal”
- Ms Wang, Factory manager



WHERE WOMEN IN OUR SUPPLY CHAINS WORK



Women are often in lower paid positions and often have more precarious employment than men¹, especially since the outbreak of the pandemic². Although women work in a variety of the Partnerships supply chains, the proportion of male to female workers differs depending on the tier of the supply chain, the country, and the industry. As part of our ongoing ethical trade work we have tailored supply chain programmes in place to assess where the greatest risks to workers' rights and non-compliance to RSCoP might be. We also try to map where women are working in our supply chains and what the specific, or disproportionate, risks are to them.

1 International Labour Organization. 'Global Wage Report 2020-21'. 2020. Accessed 2nd February 2022

2 International Labour Organization. 'Global Wage Report 2020-21'. 2020. Accessed 2nd February 2022

TIER 1 FACTORIES

The garment industry is one of the largest employers worldwide, providing work for over 150 million people. Over 75% of whom are women³ (European Commission, 2018). In food supply chains this number differs across the various sectors as there has been, traditionally, higher employment of women in food production and packing than farming and fishing. Although this has been changing over recent decades.

To gain understanding of where the greatest proportions of women are employed in Partnership supply chains we use data collected on our Tier 1 factories, across food, farming, fashion and home. To improve our visibility further, we recently updated our ethical policy to state that all own-brand Tier 1 sites must report gender disaggregated data.

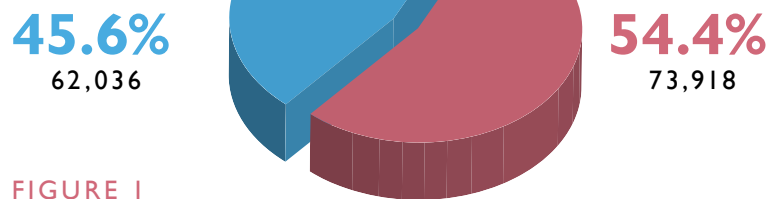


FIGURE 1
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN WORKING IN OUR TIER 1 FASHION SUPPLY CHAINS

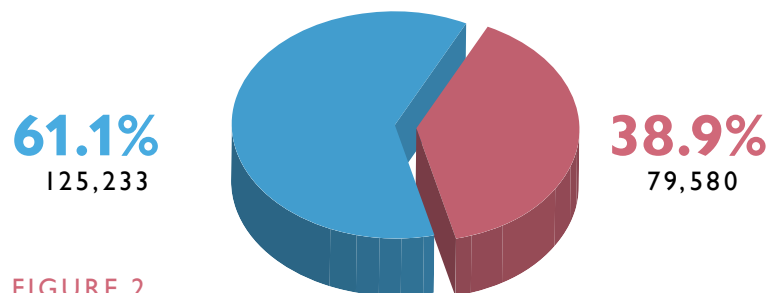


FIGURE 2
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN WORKING IN OUR TIER 1 HOME SUPPLY CHAINS

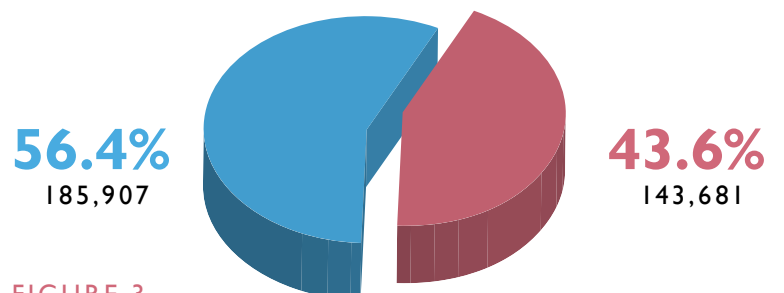


FIGURE 3
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN WORKING IN OUR TIER 1 FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS

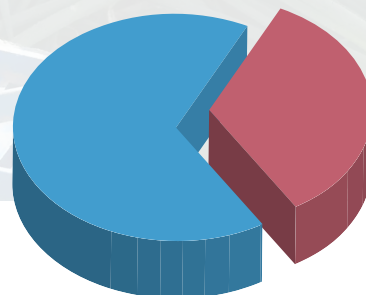
3 European Commission. 'Sustainable Garment Value Chains'. 2018. Accessed 6th July 2020



FARMING & FISHING

We have a high level of insight into the working conditions on our livestock farms as we are able to cross-reference data from our farm assessments with information from trade unions and NGOs. This enables us to have increased awareness of where women's rights are most at risk.

66%
14,499



34%
7,484

FIGURE 4
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN WORKING IN OUR LIVESTOCK SUPPLY CHAINS



RAW MATERIALS

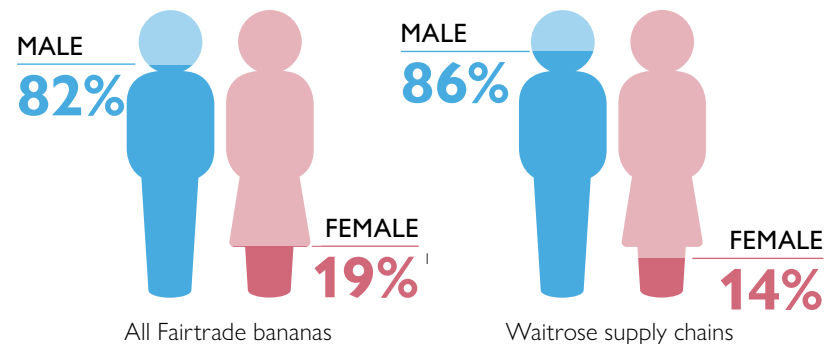
We have less insight into the working conditions in our raw material supply chains. However, in a number of our high risk supply chains we work with third-party certifiers who enable us to better understand where women work in these supply chains and what the working conditions are like. In our tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar supply chains we work with the Fairtrade Foundation, and in our cotton supply chains we work with Better Cotton Initiative (BCI). These certifications also help to ensure that sites meet basic standards of working conditions, adhere to JLP RSCoP, and meet ILO Standards. food

FOOD

Waitrose has supported the Fairtrade Foundation since its launch in 1994 and continues to offer the largest range of own-brand Fairtrade products of any high street supermarket in the UK. The Fairtrade Foundation launched their [Gender Strategy](#) in 2016 to outline the benefits of Fairtrade standards for empowering women and to articulate pathways of change on gender-related topics. To achieve this they have set themselves 3 targets around increasing women's active and equal participation, empowering more women and girls with opportunities, and challenging gender based discrimination by raising awareness of the benefits of gender equality¹. We proudly support Fairtrade's advocacy work, and their calls for action from governments and businesses to address inequality in these supply chains.

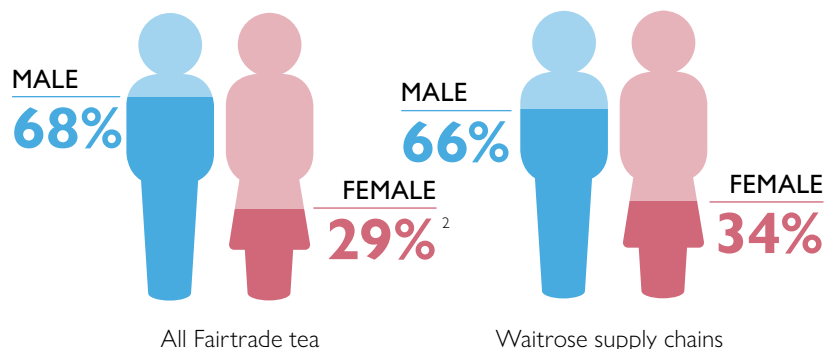
¹ The Fairtrade Foundation. 'Gender Strategy: Transforming Equal Opportunity, Access and Benefits for All'. 2016. Accessed 10th February 2022

FIGURE 5:
PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN FAIRTRADE BANANA SUPPLY CHAINS (ALL FT/WR)



¹ The Fairtrade Foundation. 'Monitoring the scope and benefits of Fairtrade: Overview - Monitoring Report'. 2021. Accessed 27th January 2022

FIGURE 6:
PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN FAIRTRADE TEA SUPPLY CHAINS (ALL FT/WR)



² The Fairtrade Foundation. 'Monitoring the scope and benefits of Fairtrade: Overview - Monitoring Report'. 2021. Accessed 27th January 2022

CASE STUDY: COFFEE QUALITY TESTING



The Partnership, in collaboration with Bewley's, Olam Speciality Coffee and the Fairtrade Foundation¹ have committed to invest £100,000 to support the Asociación de Productores Ecológicos de Planadas Co-operative (ASOPEP) build a quality testing lab and deliver training programmes for its coffee farmers. The programme focuses specifically on engaging with women and young people to help ensure their economic sustainability. Currently 63% of participants are from these groups.

Despite delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters and political unrest, the Association has progressed with building a kitchen, sample lab and coffee-cocoa bar on site, delivering training on preventing contamination of organic products, and applying for a government grant to extend the scale of the facility. In 2022 the Association plan to continue work on construction and purchase materials and equipment for the lab. The ambition is that farmers will see a 10% increase in their yield following project completion.

¹ The Grocer. '[John Lewis & Waitrose invest £100k in Colombian coffee farmer programme](#)'. 2020. Accessed 29th July 2020

GENERAL MERCHANDISE

John Lewis has been a member of BCI since 2015 and we continue to source cotton that supports the programme. As an industry leader in sustainable cotton, BCI launched their Gender Strategy in 2019 to address gender inequality impacts in the industry. As part of the strategy, BCI have committed to collating data on the participation of women in their training programmes at different stages of the supply chain and to taking a gender-sensitive approach to their work. Due to the pandemic, the duration of the strategy was extended to ensure a number of postponed activities were delivered.

BCI delivers training to farmers and farm workers on a range of topics, such as the preparation and use of pesticides, health and safety and quality harvest practices. In 2019/20 BCI trained 28,966 farm workers in China and 329,034 in India. 66% of Chinese participants and 46% of Indian participants identified as female, equating to around 170,472 women workers². As two of our major cotton sourcing countries it is invaluable to know that so many farm workers are receiving quality training on both work and non-work topics.



In 2022 we will be working towards improving visibility and traceability of our cotton supply chains in order to further improve opportunities for the women working in them.

² Better Cotton Initiative. '2020 Impact Report'. 2020. Accessed 20th December 2021

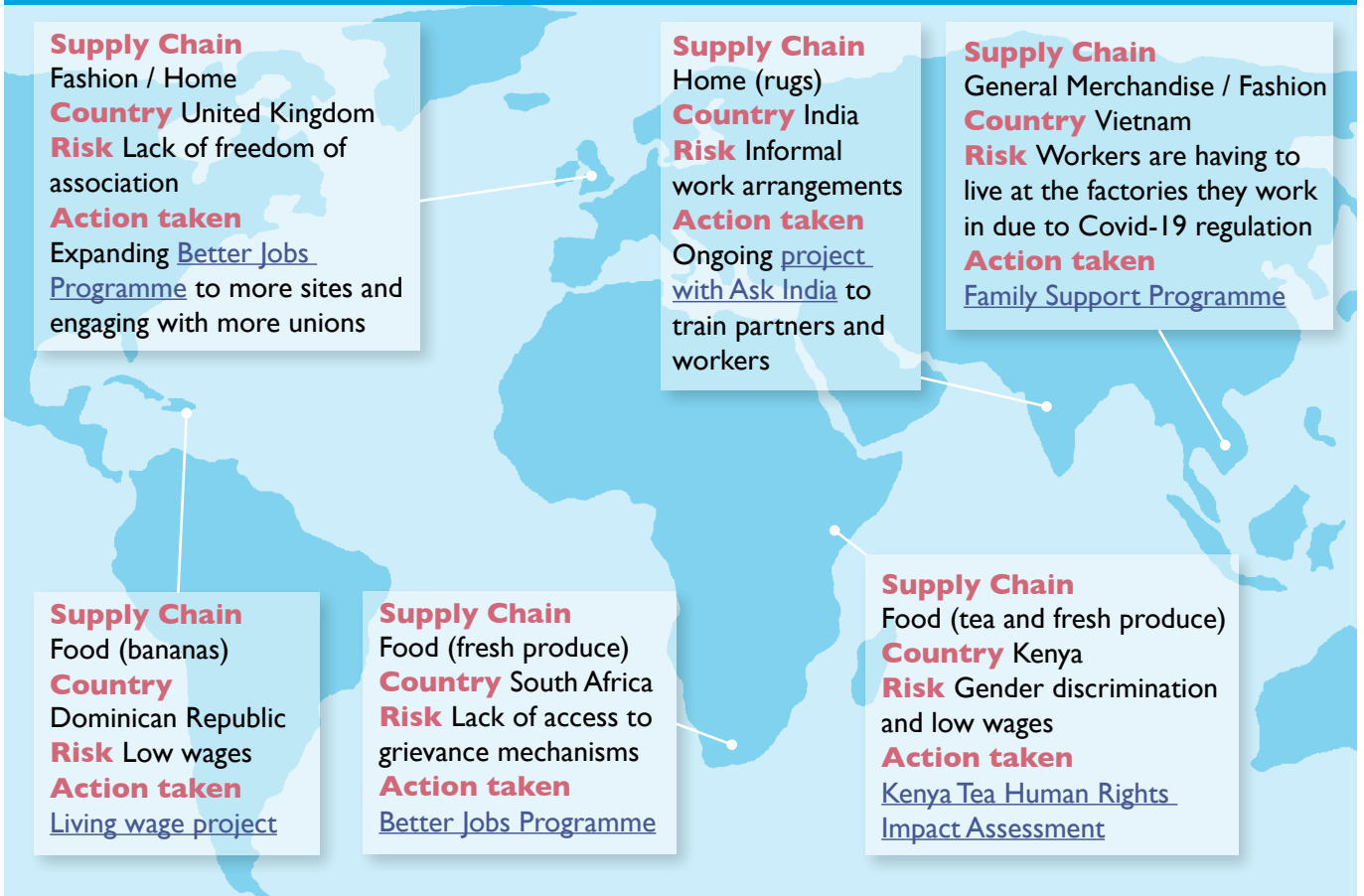


GOODS NOT FOR RESALE

In 2022 we will be working on improving visibility and traceability in our Goods Not For Resale (GNFR) supply chains. We aim to work with third-party organisations to verify the working conditions of sites and gain accurate data on the ratios of men and women workers. For further details of our risk assessment and audit programmes please see our [Modern Slavery Statement](#).

SALIENT RISK MAP

Based on our risk assessments we have identified key areas where women’s rights are at risk. This map focuses on some of our highest risk supply chains in Goods For Resale.



SUPPORTING WOMEN IN OUR SUPPLY CHAINS AND BEYOND

IMPROVING WORK OPPORTUNITIES

When women have the opportunity to lead, they demonstrate the same leadership qualities as men, and prove to be even better when it comes to devising long-term solutions that prioritise health, well-being and our natural resources¹. The Partnership has been working with implementation partners, such as the Frukus Foundation in Costa Rica, to carry out training opportunities to help contribute towards women's progression and will continue to do so in 2022.

¹ UN Foundation. 'When Women Lead: Perspectives from a Global Dialogue'. 2020. Accessed 11th February 2022

CASE STUDY: THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION, COSTA RICA

Since the Foundation's inception in Costa Rica, the focus of work has been to improve work and non-work skills, and provide positive work opportunities for workers and the communities around our partner farms.

From 2019 to 2020 a pilot entrepreneurship programme was launched with our partner, The Frukus Foundation, to support women and young people in the community to build confidence and develop the skills needed to set up successful businesses. Over the course of the year, 58 participants took part in 26 workshops. Start-up funds following the programme's completion have supported members from the training programme to establish their businesses, which are now progressing well.

“ I liked the programme because it allowed me to get to know different people - either as a team or individually we all were able to play with our imagination, work on our self confidence, believe in ourselves and our ideas. All of this empowered us to overcome our fears and successfully finish our project business plan and financial presentation”
- Mileidy, Programme Participant, 2020



The success of the programme meant it was enlisted for a second phase to be completed in 2021. The virtual programme complemented the learnings of the first phase by supporting participants to understand local community needs and design projects that meet them. This, combined with their improved business skills and confidence, helped many participants to develop innovative business ventures that also benefited their community. For example, one participant designed a business that focussed on understanding what support was needed to get more women into jobs on the farms.

Working collaboratively with farm management, local communities and the worker committee, the Partnership hopes to make viable and sustainable changes, and subsequently share these learnings with relevant industry stakeholders.

CASE STUDY:

THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS
FOUNDATION, SOUTHERN AFRICA

In 2021 the Southern African Foundation allocated a portion of their funds to training for worker committee members.

Training was designed to cover a range of topics from planning and preparing for community development meetings, to leading group discussions and demonstrating knowledge of gender, equity and diversity issues in development projects.

Thus far the training has been presented to 64 worker committee members (43 women and 21 men) with 28 having successfully completed the course and 36 with some modules remaining.

**TARGET:**

As part of our target to impact the lives of over 14,500 women through Waitrose & Partners Foundation programme work, we will be carrying out further training to improve women's participation in worker committees in 2 key supply chains; citrus and grape. To assess the effectiveness we will measure the extent to which female representation on worker committees improves after the training is complete.

CASE STUDY:

THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION,
EAST AFRICA

In 2021 similar work was also carried out across 6 of our Foundation sites in Kenya. Four-day training events were run by the Foundation with the worker committees of the 6 sites. The training was designed to develop the participants' ability to plan, prepare and deliver community development meetings, communicate effectively and produce technical reports. It also covered integrated and holistic frameworks for community development and ways to develop community participation through active citizenship.

After the training, workers were asked about how they felt about their role and all stated that they were all keen to propose and implement projects as soon as possible.

Seven existing sites and a number of sites that we have recently begun working with in Kenya are yet to be trained, this training will hopefully take place in 2022 as part of our Human Rights strategy.



CASE STUDY:

SECURING WORKERS' RIGHTS IN EAST AFRICA

In 2020 the Partnership joined the 'Securing Workers' Rights in a COVID-19 Context in East African Agriculture Supply Chains' project led by the ETI in partnership with suppliers and other retailers. The project secured funding from the FCDO's Vulnerable Supply Chain Facility, to support farmers in East Africa to secure workers' rights in a Covid-19 context.

The multi-sector (cut flowers and horticulture) supply chain programme impacted over 10,000 workers. Training programmes included business continuity, Covid-19 management and awareness, financial literacy and good agricultural practices. As part of the agriculture training, 479 female smallholder farmers were provided with seeds, such as kales and spinach to strengthen their food security during the pandemic. To help embed the teachings of the training, 2,170 attendees received a follow up text message reiterating what they learnt in their local language.

The training was attended by 187 workers from 11 suppliers but has since been shared with more than 3,783 more workers.

“The Financial Literacy Training will help me ensure I save my money and do not waste it. I learnt that it is important to invest some of my money. I used to buy things that I did not need. I have started saving and I plan to buy a piece of land once I have saved enough”

- Financial Literacy Training Attendee

“During the training, I learnt how important it is to wear a mask, keep a social distance, wash hands regularly and to get vaccinated. I learnt that the vaccination boosts the body's immunity in the fight against Covid-19. After the training, I trained my colleagues and other out-growers who bring their coffee to our Factory”

- Covid-19 Awareness Training Attendee

SUPPORTING FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

Men and women are frequently paid differently for the same job. While this is illegal in many countries, it still occurs - even in the UK¹. We require all Partnership suppliers to comply with our RSCoP, which includes the requirement to ensure equal pay for equal work. We verify this through a combination of third party audits, supplier assessments and self assessments, though we recognise that this may not always give us the complete picture.



The Partnership is committed to understanding the living wage within our supply chains, starting with our banana supply chains where we are currently working with The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) to identify what constitutes a living wage and how we can work towards achieving this for banana workers.

Working practices in different industries pose varying risks to workers. It was identified that our rug supply chains in India have a high percentage of workers working from home. This poses a high risk as we cannot trace the number of hours employees work and therefore whether the work is being paid at a rate that meets statutory requirements. To help combat this we completed a risk assessment of these supply chains with our partner Ask India in 2019. As a result of the findings, we worked with Ask India in 2021 to build the capacity of our partners to conduct future risk assessments and facilitate remediation processes. We will continue this work into 2022 and aim to develop it further by facilitating a full remediation program for a number of sites.

RECOGNISING AND SUPPORTING UNPAID CARE WORK

Even if state structures are in place to mitigate the usual imbalance, care roles fall disproportionately on women. Unpaid roles include looking after elderly family members and children, domestic work and fetching water. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this situation with women having to take on more care provision as lockdowns have been in place globally and home-schooling necessary.

At the Partnership, we recognise that these unpaid domestic inputs can prevent women from undertaking paid work or additional training, often meaning they have to take up flexible, lower paid positions and miss out on opportunities to advance to managerial roles. The Waitrose Foundation in Southern Africa and Kenya are trying to tackle the challenge of unpaid care work by creating and running on-site childcare facilities and after school clubs for children of school age. This allows parents, specifically women, to undertake paid work on the farms without the constraint of childcare. You can learn more about the benefits of the care centres in our [2021 Women in JLP Supply Chains Report](#).



¹ The Guardian. 'Gender pay gap at UK's biggest firms is growing, data suggests'. 2021. Accessed 10th February 2022

CASE STUDY: THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION, SOUTHERN AFRICA

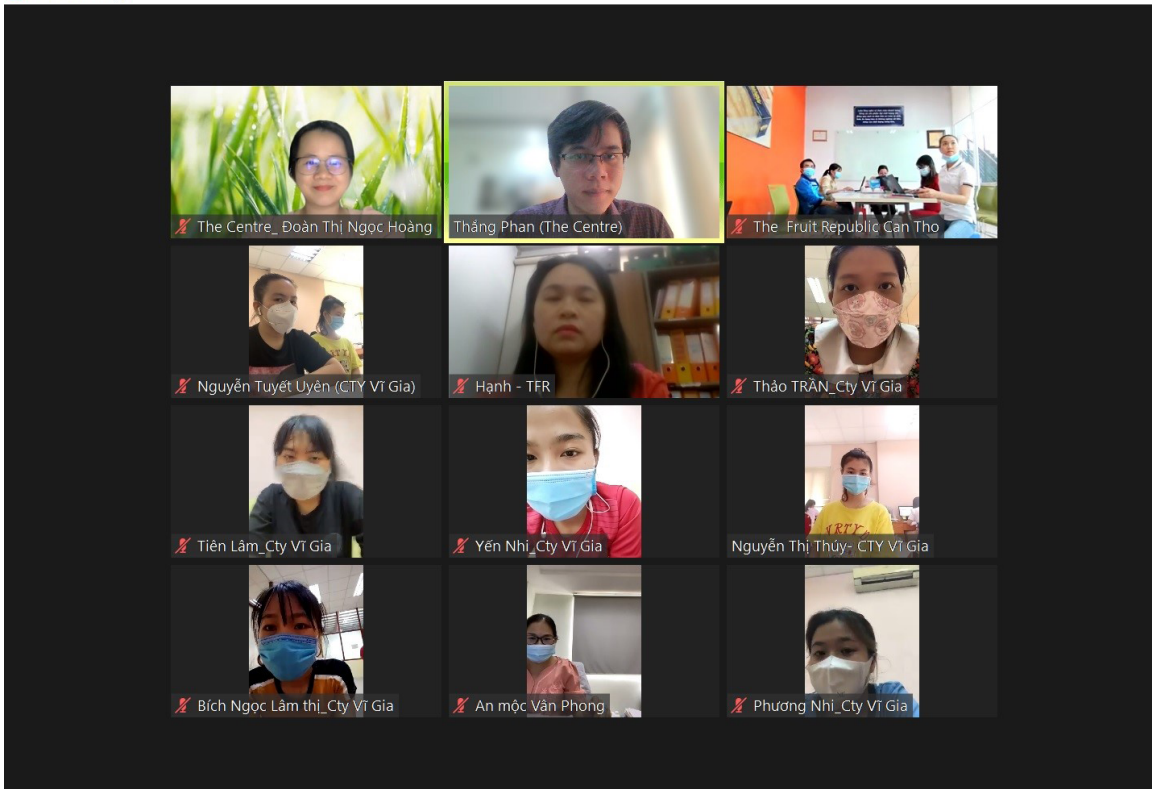
To support unpaid care burdens, the Waitrose & Partners Foundation provided safe and secure childcare options, all equipped with proper healthcare provisions and educational stimulation, for 3166 children across 90 partial care facilities on 90 farms. This support enabled the parents working on these farms to increase their earning opportunities by reducing their care burden. As unpaid care work statistically falls more on women, this has been particularly effective at increasing the earning opportunities for mothers:

“ Now you can enjoy your work, because you know that your child is safe at the centre. You know that there is a professionally skilled teacher, who can assist your child with homework, after school...Years ago, the children would be in the orchard with the parents, while we were working. Children had to leave school at an early age as there was no one to take care of them”
- Farm Worker, 2020



During the first lockdown in South Africa learning activities at the Foundation funded creche and aftercare centre at Monteith had to be paused. During this time staff first diverted their attention to making and distributing face masks for workers and their families. They then looked at opportunities for continued learning outside of the classroom and used funding from the Waitrose Foundation Global Fund to design and run a series of activities outdoors, including drama, dance and storytelling workshops. These provided diversionary activities for 89 young people, ensuring they were in a safe environment. When the lockdown was eased and centres were able to re-open, they extended the hours of operation to ensure all children could attend in smaller groups.

Zoom Meeting



CASE STUDY: WORKING PARENTS FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN VIETNAM

In 2021 the Partnership worked with The Centre for Child Rights & Business to provide support for Vietnamese parents that were required to work, live and rest at their place of work as part of the government's Covid-19 policy to control the virus while allowing production factories to remain open.

The training was held for 8 suppliers and 72 workers attended, 66 of whom were women. The sessions covered topics such as children's rights and child protection, stress and anxiety reduction during the pandemic, how to communicate with children more effectively, and Covid-19 health and safety.

Benefits of the training included women becoming confident in educating their children and learning different methods to communicate and build their relationship with them. A survey before the sessions began revealed that 31% of participants felt they had difficulties communicating with their children. After finishing the training, 93% said the lessons they learnt will help them strengthen their relationship with their children.

One month on, participants were asked how the training had impacted their lives.

One mother said:

“The Covid-19 situation put financial pressure on me and I used to be very stressed. After the training I tried to apply the stress relief methods such as playing with my son, doing house chores with him and it was very effective. I also talk and explain about Covid-19 everyday to my son so he can understand the risks better”.





ENABLING ACCESS TO FINANCE

In many countries it is common for women to have unequal access to capital and financial resources. This could be due to societal norms discouraging women from applying for credit, or because legislation has made it more difficult or illegal for women to access finance¹.

To help overcome these challenges, enhance income generation and improve job opportunities, micro-loan programmes can be introduced to provide women with small loans to invest in micro enterprises. It is common for women to spend the majority of their additional income to improve the family situation, meaning this economic empowerment also greatly benefits their children and their future².

¹ Oxfam. 'Empowering Women to Improve their Livelihoods'. Accessed 17th December 2021

² Micro Loan Foundation. 'Why Lending to Women Works'. 2017. Accessed 20th December 2021

CASE STUDY:

THE WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION, EAST AFRICA

In Kenya, the Waitrose & Partners Foundation delivered locally by Farm Africa, has been supporting a micro-loan programme, managed through a digital platform. To date, more than £555,000 has been disbursed to workers. Alongside this, Farm Africa have also delivered financial management training for workers to ensure they are able to budget effectively.

Approximately 45% of the loans have been allocated to women. In the majority of cases women are using the funding to support the education of their children. In some cases funds are being used to develop additional income-generating projects.

“ I used the money to buy two female pigs each at Ksh 8,000, pig food as well as to build a shed for the pigs. Without Okolea (the Micro Loan Programme), I wouldn't have afforded that. I have so many demands and saving money to buy the pigs would have been impossible.”
- (Female worker, Simbi Roses)





MITIGATING HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE AT WORK

A woman who has successfully negotiated the legal and social barriers to becoming economically active, then faces the shocking reality of being more prone to be a victim of workplace violence or harassment. UN Women UK reported in 2021 that 86% of women aged 18 to 24 have experienced sexual harassment in public spaces¹. The staggering figure is made worse by the fact that the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)² also reported that 40-50% of women experience unwanted advances, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment at work.

In response to the gender issues uncovered in tea supply chains in Malawi, we recognised the need to look more widely at our tea supply chains in East Africa. As a result of this we formed a partnership with another retailer to fund a human rights risk

assessment of the smallholder tea supply chain in Kenya. Conducted by Partner Africa, the project aims to assess gender-specific risk for tea workers, identify salient human rights risk, and identify opportunities for positive action to address the risks. We will share the findings with relevant industry stakeholders once the project is completed in 2022.

TARGET:

Once the findings of our human rights impact assessment in Kenya are published we will devise an action plan as part of the next phase of the project.

To learn more about the work of The Waitrose Foundation Ghana has done to support a domestic violence support unit in Ghana, please visit our [2021 Women in JLP Supply Chains](#) report.

¹ UN Women United Kingdom. 'Prevalence and reporting of sexual harassment in UK public spaces'. 2021. Accessed 10th February 2022

² ITUC. 'Stop Gender Based Violence at Work'. 2019. Accessed 17th July 2020

STRENGTHENING STATE & LEGISLATIVE STRUCTURES

To help combat issues that the John Lewis Partnership are unable to tackle on its own, we often find that advocacy and collaboration with other stakeholders provides an opportunity to use our influence as a leverage for change. This can be demonstrated through our successful lobbying of the UK Government with the ETI and other members, to ensure the [ILO Convention on Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work \(c190\)](#) was brought into force. You can read more about this in our [2021 Women in JLP Supply Chains](#) report. Since the Convention came into force in June 2021 it has been ratified by 10 countries¹.

Where we are unable to influence governments to raise standards, we work with industry-specific voluntary schemes that enable us to make changes that benefit workers by setting better standards. Activities to date include work with the Responsible Fishing Scheme, Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) and Oxfam to influence industry standards and empower marginalised women; to learn more please visit our [2021 Women in JLP Supply Chains](#) report.

¹ International Labour Organization. 'Ratifications of C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)'. 2019. Accessed 22nd December 2021

UNITED NATIONS WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

This year The John Lewis Partnership signed up to the [UN Women's Empowerment Principles](#) (WEPs). The Principles present seven steps that businesses can take to advance and empower women.

Joining the WEPs demonstrates our commitment to take action in the workplace, marketplace and community to empower women. It helps us achieve our goals by guiding our journey and facilitating knowledge sharing to ensure gender-inclusive supply chains



FUTURE AMBITIONS



We are aware that there is still much to be done to secure equity for men and women in our supply chains and, as we have already noted, we cannot do this alone. Our two main ambitions are to improve monitoring and evaluation of our programmes and transparency of our supply chains.

An area we are focused on improving is how we evaluate the impact of our work with the Waitrose & Partners Foundation. We began reviewing our monitoring and evaluation framework in 2020 with an assessment of the activities undertaken by the Waitrose Foundation Southern Africa over their 15 years of operation. Findings from this assessment and subsequent consultancy support in 2021 are helping to inform the development of our monitoring and impact framework and theory of change. In 2022 we will continue to roll the new framework out across all Foundation countries.

During 2022 work on improving transparency of our cotton supply chains will begin. We will work with our partners to understand where women are working in these supply chains and subsequently review our targets based on this. A Senior Manager from the Partnership has also recently been elected onto the BCI Oversight Board to help ensure that the gender specific elements of the certification scheme are advocated for and strengthened. This will help to ensure that progress is made throughout wider supply chains, not just those of the Partnerships.

EXAMPLES OF HOW RSCOP APPLIES TO WOMEN

Description	Examples of how these clauses affect women
Employment is freely chosen	Protects against instances of forced labour, for example through human trafficking, of which women and girls make up 72% of victims ¹
Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining	Protects women from disproportionate barriers to trade union representation and exclusion from worker committees.
Safe and hygienic working conditions	Ensures women's specific health and safety requirements when they are pregnant or lactating are met Ensures workplaces are designed to meet the basic needs of women, e.g. separate toilet facilities and accomodation
Child labour shall not be used	Child labour is often caused by families being unable to meet their needs without supplementary income from children.
Living wages are paid	Helps to ensure that rates of pay are fair for the work carried out and that pay for the same role is equal for men and women
Working hours are not excessive	Helps to prevent overworking and working in unsafe conditions. For example, pregnant or lactating women may have limits on hours worked and when these hours can be worked (e.g. no night work in some countries)
No discriminaion	Prevents gender discrimination, such as specific preferential treatment being given to male workers over women. This can take a number of implicit and explicit forms, e.g. unequal access to training, promotions or working hours flexibility
Regular Employment	Helps to ensure working hours support women with unpaid responsibilities. Helps to prevent home working arrangements exploiting women. Examples could include pay not adequately covering other duties that women may need to carry out
No inhumane treatment	Helps to prevent harassment and abuse in the workplace, which is commonly experienced by women in factories. Helps to ensure grievance raising procedures are effective, non-discriminatory and safe for female workers to use

¹ UNODC. '[Global Report on Trafficking in Persons Report](#)', 2018. Accessed 12th February 2022

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