

John Lewis Partnership Tea Sourcing

Malawi

We source a proportion of our black teas from the Sukambizi Association Trust (SAT), a Fairtrade co-operative in Malawi. Tea from SAT is processed by Lujeri Tea Estates Ltd. We condemn all forms of abuse to workers and were extremely concerned to learn about the disturbing allegations that were reported in early 2021. Others in the industry took the decision to suspend orders but we believe strongly in this case that this was, and is not, the most ethical approach and could have resulted in more harm than good.

By suspending orders in countries like Malawi where communities depend on international trade to make a living, we would be causing deeper economic and personal hardship. The best way to ensure this can never happen again is to work closely with NGOs, the supplier and affected communities and individuals rather than walk away from this awful situation.

We have continued to engage with our supplier in Malawi, who is working through corrective actions within their operations. They commissioned their own independent review, conducted by Impactt, the recommendations of which have been shared and are being acted upon. We continue to monitor developments closely and have remained in regular contact with Lujeri. Since the review began, the progress on remedial actions has been as per the expected timelines.

Kenya

To understand more about the wider impact of our tea sourcing, we committed to, and have since undertaken a Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) within our Kenyan tea supply chains. Kenya is an important tea sourcing country for us, and we buy our tea from Fairtrade certified smallholders. Revisions to the Kenyan Tea Act in 2021 changed how tea can be sold in Kenya and it was therefore the ideal time to undertake this study.

Undertaken by Partner Africa, the HRIA has identified actual and potential positive and adverse human rights impacts based on severity and likelihood. Using this assessment, we are currently developing an action plan for 2023 and beyond, and have committed additional investment into these supply chains to address the recommendations of the report. We will be working on this action plan in collaboration with industry partners.

India

Assam is a remote tea producing region in northern India. Assam is a challenging context to work in, with many people facing chronic poverty and poor living and working conditions. Fairtrade has

worked in Assam for more than 20 years to drive improvements in the industry, however, there are currently few Fairtrade certified producer groups in the region, each selling a small percentage of tea of Fairtrade terms. This has resulted in a relatively small volume of Fairtrade certified Assam tea in the UK market and limited impact at producer level.

We remain committed to sourcing as much tea on Fairtrade terms as possible. In the immediate term, where supply is limited, we are updating our packaging to reflect any composition changes. We are continuing to work closely with our supply chain partners and Fairtrade as they develop their new approach to certification in Assam. When supply shortages exist, we are maintaining equivalent Minimum Price and Premium contributions for any tea purchased outside of Fairtrade in order to continue supporting our key producer groups and this is verified by a third party. We expect Fairtrade's new approach to be launched in 2023. For more details see www.fairtrade.org.uk/tea.

Many Fairtrade brands and producer groups have been in our supply chain since Fairtrade was launched in 1994. We're actively working to increase the transparency of our Fairtrade supply chains, enabling our customers to understand where their best loved products are coming from, and how their purchases are helping to improve the lives of farming communities globally. Information on our tea supply chain is available [here](#) and we are committed to publishing details on more Fairtrade categories over the coming year.