



## PEOPLE IN SUPPLY CHAINS

**We source own-brand products from over 50 countries and over 1,700 tier one supplier factories manufacture or assemble finished products for us.**

It's essential that every person in our supply chains, whether they grow, pick, pack or make our products, or supply services to our business, are treated fairly and also appropriately rewarded for their work. The ambition of our Human Rights Programme is to enable everyone in our supply chain to realise their fundamental human rights. We believe that championing worker voice and building strong supply chain relationships creates lasting value for both our Partnership and those we work with. Ensuring these high labour standards is no mean feat. We continually strive for transparency throughout our complex supply chains, identifying risks, and taking opportunities to positively impact workers' lives.

## OUR STRATEGY

Our aim is to take a long-term view, working with suppliers across our supply chains, forming mutually beneficial partnerships that encourage employee engagement and improve working conditions. We develop advanced supply chain programmes to reduce salient risks, encourage better worker voice channels and enhance the experiences of workers in our supply chains.

We will collaborate with experts and other retailers to push for industry change and increase our transparency on issues to push for higher standards of worker welfare.

[Our 2021/22 Progress Report](#)

## OUR EXISTING PROGRAMMES

Since 2015 we have followed the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) to identify our highest risks. We work with NGOs, trade unions and industry experts to identify workers most at risk and tailor our programmes to address human rights abuses in the supply chains where it is most needed. We work with suppliers to develop their knowledge and skills so they can identify and address the human rights risks in their own businesses.



#### BETTER JOBS PROGRAMME

Find out how we're promoting better jobs in John Lewis supply chains.

[Learn more](#)



## TACKLING MODERN SLAVERY

Read about our approach to tackling modern slavery.

[Learn more](#)



## WAITROSE & PARTNERS FOUNDATION

The Foundation aims to improve the lives of those who grow or produce our products overseas.

[Learn more](#)



## FAIRTRADE

We believe farmers and workers in our supply chains deserve a fair price for their work and to benefit from good working conditions.

[Learn more](#)

## OUR SUPPLIER ON BOARDING AND DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS



We are long standing members of the [Ethical Trade Initiative](#). Our [Responsible Sourcing Code of Practice](#) reflects the [ETI base code](#) and international labour agreements and details what is expected of all our own-brand suppliers, including terms of pay and working conditions. We seek to build lasting relationships with our suppliers and are committed to upholding human rights throughout our product and services supply chains and only work with suppliers who share our values of fairness and respect for human rights and welfare. Where issues are found we work with our suppliers on remediation and offer them support, for example, as outlined in our [Child Labour Remediation Best Practice guidance](#).

[All tier one general merchandise supplier factories](#) are monitored on how they are performing against our [Responsible Sourcing Code of Practice](#) (RSCOP) via an ethical audit. Tier one food and grocery supplier factories are put through an initial risk assessment before deciding on the appropriate level of monitoring to RSCOP. This process alongside additional sources of information, such as in country risk assessments, provide a valuable snapshot of our supply chain working conditions and helps us tailor our ethical trade programmes to address issues in high risk sectors and regions. The [John Lewis Partnership Ethical Compliance Policy Summary](#) explains more on how we assess and monitor our Tier 1 own brand factories.

The suppliers we use for Goods Not For Resale (GNFR), cover products such as; IT hardware, hygiene materials, fork lift trucks and services such as; advertising, photography and temporary agency workers. The due diligence process for these suppliers includes verification via the Retail Supplier Qualification System (RSQS), including acceptance of RSCOP. We are also implementing independent third party site based audits, to assess the experience of agency temporary workers against the requirements of RSCOP. Where gaps are identified we will collaboratively address these with suppliers.

Despite our comprehensive due diligence programme, we recognise that systemic labour violations still exist throughout global supply chains, especially in situations when local law and its implementation does not adequately protect workers' rights. Our policies and practices have a strong role to play in ensuring that workers in our supply chains have a positive, fair and safe work experience. Our policies are shared with our suppliers and their compliance against these is regularly reported. We support our suppliers to engage with various 'beyond audit' programmes such as the [John Lewis Better Jobs Programme](#), [ILO Better Work](#), the [Bangladesh Accord](#), and [ISSARA's Strategic Partners Programme](#).

## WORKER GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

Robust grievance mechanisms are important for workers to report any issues they witness or encounter within the workplace. The mechanisms for raising grievances and the quality of proposed remedies are not always the same for every worker. For example, the success of grievance mechanisms may be limited by language barriers, contractual issues for temporary and agency workers, and trust barriers for those who have had their grievances handled poorly in the past. Women often face additional barriers when accessing effective grievance mechanisms, for example they may be restricted from joining a trade union simply because of their gender.

A site's internal grievance mechanism is normally the most effective at resolving worker concerns. To combat access issues, the Partnership encourages suppliers to have union representation in place and for workers to make use of third-party grievance mechanisms. Any worker in our supply chains can raise an issue or concern regarding modern slavery with [UNSEEN](#) either online or via phone and migrant workers in Thailand can raise grievances with [ISSARA](#) through a smartphone app.

We are currently undertaking a number of projects that look to improve access to effective grievance mechanisms and improve remedial action for issues or concerns raised in our high risk supply chains. In Italy we are working with Oxfam to assess existing grievance mechanisms in a tomato supply chain and support the site and its workers to create more accessible channels and effective remedies. We will share the findings of this project with key industry stakeholders to strengthen knowledge on creating and maintaining successful grievance mechanisms.

## ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY





In countries where equality is a legal requirement, women still face more barriers than men. Poverty, discrimination, access to education and violence against women are major barriers to opportunity. Women often lack the protection of basic rights and laws. As nearly half of the workers in our supply chains are women, it is important for us to play our part in combating gender inequality.

The Partnership has initiatives in place to support women in our supply chains where there is a specific risk to their rights. Our [RSCOP](#) outlines ethical standards suppliers must adhere to and our supply chain programmes - the [Waitrose & Partners Foundation](#) and [John Lewis The Better Jobs Programme](#) - provide support for female workers.

The Waitrose & Partners Foundation delivers programmes to encourage women's economic empowerment and improved access to healthcare and education across the 10 countries in which it operates.

The John Lewis Better Jobs Programme applies a gender lens across the survey helping us understand gender differences within our supply chains and the impact this can have on working conditions.

 [Women In John Lewis Partnership Supply Chains Report 2022](#)

 [Women In John Lewis Partnership Supply Chains Report 2021](#)

## SUPPORTING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

Smallholder farmers are imperative to deliver the range of food we stock at Waitrose. Many of our best loved products like tea, coffee, chocolate and vegetables are grown by smallholder farmers. However, these farmers are often the most vulnerable because of low incomes, and a lack of access to finance and agricultural expertise. We also know that these farmers will be most likely to experience the impacts of climate change.

Our work with Fairtrade supports an estimated 800,000 smallholders annually, through minimum pricing, Fairtrade Premiums, and additional training and support offered through Fairtrade's producer network. We are committed to stocking Fairtrade products across core categories like tea, coffee, block chocolate and sugar, all of which have a high proportion of smallholder farmers working within them. [Learn more about our work with Fairtrade](#)

The Waitrose & Partners Foundation is working to increase the resilience of smallholder farmers. In Kenya, we are working with smallholder vegetable farmers to increase their yields and incomes through a programme of support, including provision of inputs, training and access to agri tech tools.

The Foundation has also funded a number of solar cooling stations to enable smallholders to earn a higher price for their crops by maintaining crop quality for longer. [Learn more about the work of the Waitrose & Partners Foundation](#)

Decent wages and a fair system of value distribution are also important to ensuring smallholder farmers are able to cover their basic living costs, plan for emergencies and live a happy life. One example of our activity to improve smallholder income is our partnership with the [Sustainable Trade Initiative](#) (IDH) to identify the living wage in our banana supply chain, which is currently made up of a number of larger plantations, alongside an estimated 1,400 smallholder farmers.

This work will enable us to understand the gap between current incomes and living wage, and move towards closing this gap.

We cannot solve all of the issues smallholder farmers face alone. This is why efforts are also required by governments to ensure that small-scale farmers are resilient and prosperous, earn a living income and receive a fair share of the value accumulated in food supply chains.

We will continue to use our voice to advocate for improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers across all of our supply chains.

John Lewis Partnership	+
Useful Information	+
Other websites	+