



2nd February 2023

Ahmad Tea does not currently source tea from James Finlay Ltd or Ekaterra or CVC Capital (formerly Unilever) owned plantations in Kenya.

The last time we bought from James Finlay Co was in 2022, as per the tea tracker. This made up around 5% of our Kenyan tea portfolio, which sits as a small proportion of our global tea sales.

In response to the documentary, our in-country team has held direct in person discussions with the senior leadership team of Finlays in Kenya. We have informed Finlays that purchases from their gardens are on hold and will continue to be on hold until we have seen evidence and are satisfied of the corrective measures and meaningful safeguards put in place to prevent these abuses from happening again. We have requested a copy of the Finlay's investigation and evidence to prove that the victims have been fully protected through this process. We continue to put pressure on Finlays and request disclosure of the findings from two independent investigations commissioned to understand the extent of any crimes committed and to investigate whether there is an endemic issue with sexual violence, abuse or harassment against workers at James Finlay Kenya. We have asked Finlays to disclose their action plan to reinforce the existing safeguards and ensure enhanced visibility of all anonymous report channels.

Once we are satisfied that the appropriate safeguards have been put in place, we will resume purchasing as we are aware of the needs of hundreds of women whose livelihoods depend on companies to purchase the tea they harvest.

We also continue to work closely with the Ethical Tea Partnership and support their role in looking into the allegations as part of Finlay's steering group. As members of ETP, we ask you to review the statement prepared by the Ethical Tea Partnership which we fully support:

<https://ethicalteapartnership.org/bbc-africa-eye-panorama-documentary/>



For further information on the requirements we place on our suppliers please refer to our [Social Responsibility Standards](#) which are signed and subject to monitoring for all direct suppliers and indirect suppliers, such as the tea gardens. Tea Gardens are also subject to an audit and reporting process in order to understand any issues which may arise in the gardens over a one-year period. Within these Social Responsibility Standards there is a whistleblowing procedure which we ask our in-country team to follow and monitor.

Due to the fact that the majority of our tea is not bought directly from the tea gardens, rather it is bought through auction, we recognise some difficulty in ensuring compliance to these standards. That is why we are piloting projects at the community level to support women by creating safe spaces in the tea garden for women to come together for workshops, knowledge exchange and discuss issues and difficulties they may be facing. We hope that these safe spaces provide the means through which abuses, such as the ones reported in the documentary, can be called out.

The BBC documentary has highlighted the importance of transparency within our supply chain and we continue our efforts in identifying potential safeguarding gaps in our value-chain. We hope to work with the BHRRC to understand 'best practice' and improve the public disclosure of our supply chain data.