

**27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 - Twinings' response to BHRRC to the allegations of sexual abuse on tea plantations in Kenya revealed by the [BBC Africa Eye / Panorama investigation](#) that aired on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February**

At Twinings, we were appalled and deeply concerned by what was shown in the BBC Panorama documentary. Gender-based violence and harassment has no place in our organisation or supply chains. As has always been the case, Twinings does not own any tea estates and we do not directly employ anyone on tea estates or farms. However, we do source our tea from a variety of selected tea gardens and estates worldwide and, like many tea manufacturers in the UK, this includes Finlays in Kenya. All our tea sources can be found on our [Global Sourcing Map](#) on our website, which is updated annually.

Since we became aware of the documentary, we have been in close contact with Finlays to understand the nature of the investigations and what actions they are taking accordingly. Finlays have confirmed that they have instructed a specialist NGO, Partner Africa, to conduct an independent investigation. Finlays have also confirmed that the individuals identified in the programme no longer work for Finlays and have been reported to the police. In addition, the Kenyan authorities have announced a separate investigation into this issue, which we fully support.

While Partner Africa is carrying out their independent investigation, we informed Finlays that we will not be placing any new orders for Finlays Kenyan tea. However, we are committed to working with Finlays and ready to support them to help ensure they address the issues identified in the documentary. Whenever possible we endeavour to work with our suppliers to help them remediate any issues and improve the lives of workers in our supply chains. Through our conversations with Finlays we believe there is a willingness to take robust action, which we wholeheartedly support. Our Social Impact Team will stay in close contact with Finlays, monitoring their ongoing progress. Any decision to recommence orders will be subject to the outcome of the investigation and the implementation of any necessary actions by Finlays.

At Twinings, we have been working with our suppliers to improve the lives of workers and farmers in the tea communities we source from through our [Sourced with Care programme](#) since 2016. The standards we expect in our supply chain are detailed in our [Responsible Sourcing Policy, which](#) is underpinned by the standards laid out in our [Code of Conduct](#) and complemented by our [Human Rights Policy](#). It details our commitment to conduct our business with integrity, to respect human rights and to uphold core labour principles, including no forced or bonded labour, freedom of association and no discrimination nor harassment.

In order to help us understand conditions and to hear from the workers, farmers and the broader communities in our tea supply chain, we have developed a holistic participatory framework, Twinings Community Needs Assessment, which we have been rolling out to tea gardens we source from since 2016. These assessments are at the centre of our Sourced with Care programme and help us to identify areas for improvement. We are committed to working with our suppliers to help ensure a safe working environment for everyone, which is why we are in discussions with several respected international NGOs to review and enhance our approach to addressing gender-based violence in our supply chains.

In respect to grievance mechanisms, we expect all our suppliers to provide effective, transparent, accessible grievance mechanisms for their workers. We take any allegation that human rights have not been respected very seriously, and we recognise the importance of effective mechanisms to allow people to raise complaints and concerns. Where we become aware of potential adverse

human rights impacts in our supply chain, we are committed to doing what we can and cooperating with others to remediate.

In addition to publishing our Global Sourcing Map and in order to further increase transparency on the issues facing the agricultural sector, we have recently published our first human rights report, which articulates how we help embed human rights in our business and supply chains. [The report](#) provides details about the work we do, and will continue to do, in this area.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that we remain committed to working to improve the lives of those working in our industry and supply chain, which involves collaborating with our supply chain partners, governments, industry bodies and NGOs to help ensure a safe working environment for workers in the tea communities we source from.