

Promoting fairer working environments, Kenya

www.ethicalteapartnership.org

Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP) has been working to promote equal treatment in the workplace and reduce discrimination and abusive behaviour by rolling out the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) 'Supervisor Training Programme' to Kenyan tea producers. The project has developed a pool of accredited trainers and run training with all levels of management at the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA), which operates 65 factories supplied by smallholders.



What's included:

Supervisor training

Teaches supervisors the importance of managing people with respect. It increases supervisors' understanding of harassment and discrimination, thereby reducing incidences of abusive behaviour.

Manager training

Raises awareness of the issues and teaches managers how to ensure that there is a culture of respect (including fair treatment) in the workplace. It introduces policies and systems that can be utilised to support supervisors and eliminate poor practice.

A toolkit is provided for supervisors and management to enhance their learning.

Addressing equality issues

Abusive behaviour in the form of discrimination and harassment are two areas covered by the ETP Standard that aren't readily addressed through auditing. In some areas, barriers may exist that prevent women from securing full time employment in the first instance, and then from advancing their careers. Other issues include unfair job and housing allocation, reduced hours during the low season, and sexual harassment.

In order to tackle these issues, ETP partnered the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) who has developed well-respected training for both

managers and supervisors. The emphasis of the training is geared towards supervisors because they have direct contact with workers on a daily basis, and as such largely influence how they're treated. However, although supervisors are principally responsible for the well-being of tea workers, they usually have very little 'formal' training and often lack the skills or desire to handle sensitive issues like discrimination and harassment.

About the training

Using role-play and other interactive exercises, the training improves supervisors' overall people

management skills. It also gives them the skills and knowledge to identify and address issues of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.

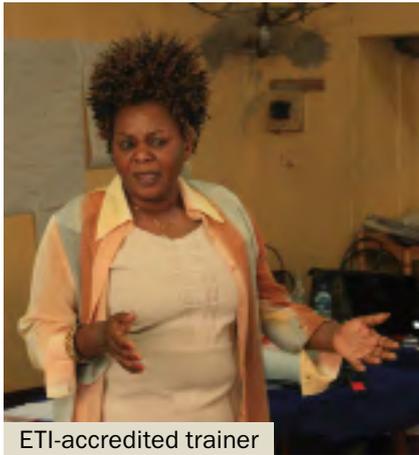
As part of the project, ETP co-financed the training of 11 ETI-accredited trainers. With ETP's African staff being among these, ETP now has in-house capacity to expand the training across the region.

Benefits to business & staff are:

- Improved working conditions
- Fairer work environments
- Increased staff morale
- More effective management
- Increased productivity

Scope of the project

From its initial scope of 10 factories, the project has grown to cover all levels of KTDA management and trained over 150 supervisors in 26 factories. A positive development is that both Rainforest Alliance and Utz Certified (two certification programmes operating in tea) have joined the partnership, thereby increasing its coverage and impact.



ETI-accredited trainer

KTDA head office management have seen the value of the training and have taken the decision to train all of their factory managers across the group. This is to ensure that each factory has the capacity to address any potential issues of harassment or discrimination.

At KTDA's request, ETP has also trained head office management staff, which has subsequently led to the establishment of gender committees within the organisation.

The Future

ETP is currently exploring partnership opportunities to expand the training to other countries in Africa, as well as to privately owned factories in Kenya.

In addition, KTDA is planning to introduce two further initiatives:

- A small representation of workers from each factory to attend training in order to help educate their colleagues
- All factory board members to attend training to increase capacity to take action

Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is a ground-breaking alliance of companies, trade unions and voluntary organisations.

They work to improve the lives of poor and vulnerable workers across the globe who make or grow consumer goods – everything from tea to T-shirts, from flowers to footballs.

ETI was established in 1998 and today they estimate that their work in the last year touched the lives of over 9.8 million workers.



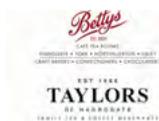
Role-playing exercises are used to train supervisors

"This training was very successful and was received very well by the participants. I look forward to the training of the gender committees that have been constituted both in the factories and KTDA on their roles, responsibilities and mode of operation and reporting.

"One KTDA Manager told me, 'this training touches on the basic human issues which as a manager you can easily dismiss and think you know, yet on attending this training, you quickly realise that what you did not know can easily harm your business.'"

Seth Agala, Head of Training, KTDA

OUR MEMBERS



BOOTHS

