

# Terms of Reference

## Invitation to Tender: Gap Analysis of a Tea Producer Organisation in Assam, India

### Introduction: Overview of the Fairtrade Foundation

The Fairtrade Foundation (FTF) is a registered charity in the United Kingdom and a member of Fairtrade International, the umbrella organization for Fairtrade globally, which brings together 27 national Fairtrade organisations and three continental Producer Networks in Africa (FTA), Latin America (CLAC) and Asia (NAPP). Fairtrade changes the way trade works through better prices, decent working conditions and a fairer deal for farmers and workers in low-income countries.

### Background: Assam Approach

The Assam Approach seeks to support a target producer while they go on a journey of continuous improvement towards compliance with the Fairtrade Standards. The target producer will need to demonstrate that they are incrementally remediating and mitigating gaps to compliance, and that they are investing in improvements that benefit workers and support progress towards achieving full Fairtrade certification.

The Assam Approach is being piloted with one producer, across three estates in Assam.

### Summary of Assignment

The gap analysis will identify the gaps between the current status of the tea hired labour producer organization and the status required to be certified against Fairtrade Standards. It will cover an assessment and scoring of 350 relevant compliance criteria according to [Flocert Compliance Criteria](#). The compliance criteria to be assessed is based on [Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour](#) and [Fairtrade Standard for Tea](#) and will be jointly agreed with the consultant and formally shared by Fairtrade during the kick-off meeting.

The analysis will focus on major compliance criteria of Fairtrade Tea Standard and Hired Labour (HL) Standard, and focus on 173 compliance criteria previously assessed in 2024. It will be done onsite in four audits in the Assam region:

- o 1 audit at the central estate
- o 1 audit at affiliate (Permanent workers: 798; Temporary workers: 1014)
- o 1 audit at second affiliate (Permanent workers: 1111; Temporary workers: 909)
- o 1 audit at third affiliate (Permanent workers: 1340; temporary workers: 1456)

The gap analysis will consist on the following stages and timelines:

- Step 1: Kick-off meeting (30<sup>th</sup> October 2025)

- Step 2: Gap analysis of the central estate and three affiliates (20-26<sup>th</sup> November 2025)
- Step 3: Final meeting with the producer organisation and Fairtrade Foundation to share results (15<sup>th</sup> December 2025)

## Objectives

This gap analysis has a dual aim: to identify improvements and/or regressions on compliance criteria assessed in 2024, and to determine the gaps between the producer organisation's current status and the status required to be certified against Fairtrade Standards.

## Deliverables

- Gap analysis in an Excel format including all assessed and scored compliance criteria, and ideally recommendations where non-conformities are identified
- A summary report on the main findings and gaps with an annex with the undertaken work, evidence considered for the scoring and consultant notes.

## Duration and Budget

Site visits should ideally be completed between 20 and 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025, with final deliverables due to Fairtrade by the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025. A maximum budget of GBP 11,000 is available for the work, inclusive of travel costs and other related expenses.

## Consultant Experience

We are looking for an individual and/or team of consultants that can provide the services outlined in the ToR. The Fairtrade Foundation is based in London, UK. Applying companies or teams are expected to have an individual or team members based in India who are able to conduct the in-person aspects of the gap analysis. The successful consultant (or consultancy firm) should have the following experience:

- At least 5 years of experience conducting audits and/or gap analysis, experience in India, and tea hired labour organisations is an advantage.
- Team members conducting the in-person visits will need to be fluent in Hindi.
- Knowledge of Fairtrade Standards and data management experience.
- Knowledge of relevant data protection regulations in the UK and India.

## Proposal Process and Deadline

The deadline for proposals is 17<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Applications (and/or questions) should be sent to [elle.harrison@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:elle.harrison@fairtrade.org.uk) with the subject: 'Assam Gap Analysis'. Your proposal should include the following sections:

- How the company or team of consultants meets the criteria set out under 'Skills and experience' section including related relevant consultancy experience.
- The outline of the proposed individual consultant and/or team and the different roles identified based on the skills/deliverables required, including their location and daily rates.
- Proposed approach including an estimate of interviews with workers and sample methods.
- A financial proposal based on the activities listed in this ToR detailing the costs for activities and time of consultants.

- Statement and policies for safeguarding and data protection.
- Please include CVs (max. 3 pages per person) of all proposed team members, including the contact details of the firm or team's representative.

The decision on the best proposal will be communicated via email on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2025.