



Get to know more about our

Auditing Services

For more information about Partner Africa's audits and assessments,
please visit our website www.partnerafrica.org or email audits@partnerafrica.org





Who We Are

Partner Africa is a pioneer in the field of ethical, responsible business solutions for global supply chains.

We work across 50 countries in Africa and the Near East to safeguard workers' rights and improve working conditions in supply chains, while facilitating access to markets.

In a nutshell Our Auditing Services

We are a leading social audit and assessment provider, trusted by global brands, ethical trading bodies and industry associations.

Partner Africa is a member of the Association for Professional Social Compliance Auditors (APSCA) and has expertise in a range of standards and certifications. We audit against leading industry standards and techniques, such as SMETA 2 and 4 Pillar, the Sustainability Initiative of South Africa (SIZA) Social Standard and the Wine and Agricultural Ethical Trade Association (WIETA) Code, and global brand standards, including the Coca-Cola Supplier Guiding Principles and the Unilever Responsible Sourcing Audit. We also have the flexibility to audit against individual supplier codes of conduct and undertake smallholder assessments. We use a combination of participatory methodologies, which enable workers to take a more active role in the audit process. Workers can freely explain the true nature of their working conditions, without the need for high levels of literacy, or from fear of reprisals from management.

Our worker-centred approach also enables auditors to understand the root causes of specific and often more sensitive issues, such as examining sexual harassment or discrimination. Our expert team of local auditors means that we are equipped with the necessary linguistic and cultural knowledge to accurately identify and rank non-compliance findings.

We develop innovative and client-specific technological solutions to data gathering, including integrating direct worker reporting technology and desktop-based documentation and questionnaire reviews. Our proprietary data allows us to map audit trends and provide clients with dashboards for supply chain non-compliance monitoring purposes. We offer various advisory services to follow on from audits, working with non-compliance data to develop proactive risk management, training and ethical reporting solutions that go beyond compliance.

Small Producer Assessments

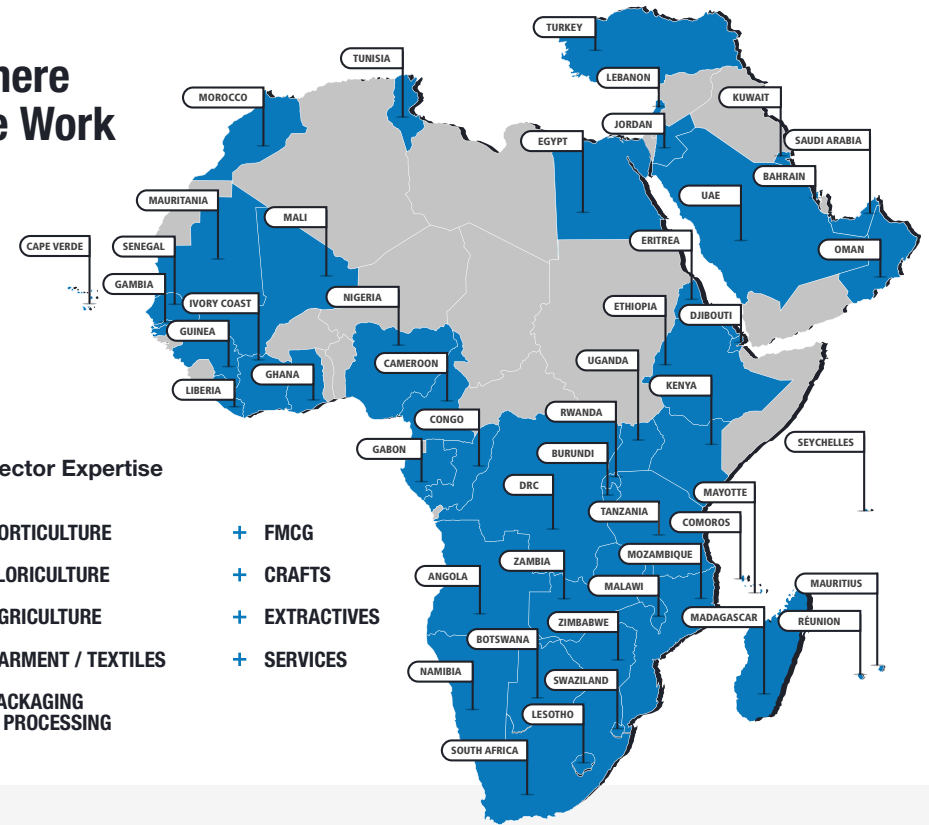
In many African countries, small-scale producers and informal sector workers feed into export supply chains. Applying codes of conduct to these small, family-run businesses is a complex process.

Partner Africa assesses the ethical standards of small-scale producers and informal workers to minimise risk to a brand. A small producer assessment seeks to establish the characteristics, needs and priorities of small producers and their workers, and outline recommendations to improve on the standards

required, with the aim of also improving their livelihoods.

Partner Africa frequently works with small-scale producers and the informal sector across Africa. We are a member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) working group, which developed the ETI smallholder guidelines, used to assist in extending ethical sourcing to smallholder farmers. We have adopted this approach to assess a number of smallholder farmers and other informal producers.

Where We Work



Sector Expertise

- + HORTICULTURE
- + FLORICULTURE
- + AGRICULTURE
- + GARMENT / TEXTILES
- + PACKAGING & PROCESSING
- + FMCG
- + CRAFTS
- + EXTRACTIVES
- + SERVICES

Audit Process

Our auditing process involves the following steps:

- 1 **Opening meeting** with worker and management representatives to review the audit process and the daily activities that will take place.
- 2 **Transect walk of the facility** and health and safety inspection.
- 3 **Group and individual worker interviews** using participatory techniques, such as Problem Ranking, to understand issues faced by workers and the severity of these in the workplace.
- 4 **Documentation review**
- 5 **Verification of information** through Triangulation of Data, where any issues arising from interviews are investigated through official documentation and discussed with management before compliance decisions can be made.
- 6 **Closing meeting** with management, where we provide feedback to the client, highlighting the positive action noted and identifying best practices, and review areas for improvement. We draw up a corrective action plan to close out any non-compliances found.
- 7 **Report writing**, including quality review, calibration and submission to the client within the agreed timeframe.
- 8 **Report upload** onto Sedex or another platform, as requested.

N.B. We offer audit preparation training to explain the audit process and prepare you to meet ethical audit requirements. It is now possible to pay for your audit by credit card through the Partner Africa website.

THE WAY WE WORK

Key Auditing Principles

Transparency: All parties involved are informed of the purpose, scope and limitations of the audit.

Inclusion: At the pre-briefing and closing feedback meetings, worker and management representatives are encouraged to be present and contribute to the meetings.

Participation: Workers and management are encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions through a variety of participatory activities throughout the audit.

Qualitative information: Audits use narrative appraisal techniques, which avoid tick-boxes or leading questions.

Confidentiality: Partner Africa audit staff ensure confidentiality to protect both the organisations and individuals involved in the audit process.

Verification: Any issues highlighted to auditors go through our process of triangulation of data before they are escalated to management in the closing meeting.

Why we are different

- + **Local People, Local Solutions:** By employing local expertise, we give our clients a unique insight into the context, culture, regulations, standards, labour laws and working practices in the countries where we work. This ensures that the services we offer our well-balanced, offering practical solutions for compliance requirements, which consider local cultures and sensitivities.
- + **Extensive Pan-African Network:** Partner Africa is operational across five regions: North Africa & the Near East, Southern Africa, East and Central Africa, West Africa and the Indian Ocean.
- + **Social Entrepreneurship:** We aim to improve the livelihoods of local workers and producers while promoting socially responsible business practices. Any surplus generated from our services is used as seed capital to access larger funds from institutional donors so that we can deliver trade development projects, supporting the livelihoods of vulnerable workers and their communities.
- + **Gender Balance:** We employ a good balance of both genders across our audit teams. This ensures that the profile of the workforce is reflected in the make-up of the team as workers are more comfortable when they engage in worker interviews and training programmes.
- + **Working in Partnership:** Developing partnerships and joining trade associations raises our profile as a credible body within the industry and enables us to develop services according to sector needs and market demand. Partner Africa is a member of the Associate Auditor Group of Sedex, Supplier Ethical Data Exchange programme that is committed to continuous improvement of ethical performance. With supplier approval, audit reports can be uploaded onto Sedex and accessed by a range of customers – reducing the need for multiple audits.
- + **Worker-Centred Approach:** We use a combination of participatory methodologies and techniques throughout all our ethical trade services. This allows the inclusion of all levels of workers in auditing activities and training programmes regardless of literacy or language barriers. Our auditing process does not give a “pass or fail” result. We engage with management and workers through participatory activities to understand the root causes of any areas of non-compliance and work with sites to develop practical tools and action plans to address any issues discovered.

OUR APPROACH TO AUDITORS

Partner Africa has been a member of the Association for Professional Social Compliance Auditors (APSCA) since 2017 and our systems and processes have been benchmarked against the APSCA Code & Standards of Professional Conduct and the APSCA Competency Framework. Below is a summary of our expectations of auditors and the processes we have in place to manage auditors:

AUDITOR QUALIFICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS:

- › Relevant tertiary qualification (for example: Human Resource Management, Social Sciences or Law) and training on at least one of the social auditing systems (SA8000, BSCI, WRAP etc.)
- › Minimum of five years’ experience in the Human Resources, Apparel, Agriculture, Manufacturing, Health & Safety or Ethical/Social Compliance sector.
- › Completed 100 social compliance audit days, detailed via audit log and signed-off by relevant audit firm OR completed 150 audit days of which a minimum of 50 are social compliance audit days OR minimum of 35 social compliance audit days and additional experience which may include, training, supervisory / managerial or previous parallel experience in social compliance programs and / or audit review OR 20 Social Compliance audit days, and successful completion of all 3 exams.
- › Detailed knowledge of national and local laws, international human rights and labour standards and collective agreements that apply to the organisation being audited, with reference to the areas listed under social compliance, depending on the audit scope.
- › Successful completion of Basic and Advanced Auditor training programme (including an assessment).
- › The Auditor should have excellent reading, writing and verbal proficiency in English.
- › Two shadow audits should be conducted by a competent Partner Africa lead Auditor/ assessor .
- › The lead Auditor must hold APSCA Auditor Membership as a Registered Auditor as a minimum requirement and preferably as a Certified Social Compliance Auditor.

AUDITOR TRAINING AND EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS:

- › Partner Africa has developed a programme to ensure that Auditors continue to develop their knowledge and technical skills. Regular calibration sessions on audit techniques, standard and legal updates and requirements are held. Attendance of a minimum of four online calibration session per year will be required. Face-to-face training will be arranged from time to time in specific areas. Calibration sessions can be online or face-to-face training.

OUR GLOBAL CLIENTS



WAITROSE



EILEEN FISHER

ABInBev



DIAGEO



MMFLOWERS



Sainsbury's



next



Partner Africa have been instrumental in supporting our responsible sourcing programme across our African supply chain. Their experience and expertise have been hugely valuable in delivering the programme management of our supplier ethical audit activity, as well as supporting agricultural supply chain assessments, and the creation of supplier capability development tools.



- Diageo



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