



PEOPLE TREE

Social Review 2019

Introduction

People Tree is a brand that is genuinely cleaning up fashion's tarnished name. The original eco warrior, putting sustainability and workers' rights on the agenda long before millennial media took it mainstream. People Tree Group was founded in 1991, our core mission has stayed the same over the past three decades.

People Tree was the first fashion company to be awarded the World Fair Trade Organisation product label, guaranteeing our dedication and compliance to the principles of Fair Trade, covering good working conditions, transparency, environmental best practice, gender equality and setting the example for conventional fashion companies to improve their supply chains.

Our products are made to the highest ethical and environmental standards from start to finish. Collections made from organic cotton, wool and TENCEL™ Lyocell are created using traditional artisan skills including hand weaving, hand knitting, hand embroidery and hand block printing. Contemporary designs and playful prints create stylish, innovative and affordable fashion, whilst respecting people and the planet.

Our Mission Statement

To support Producer partners' efforts towards economic independence and control over their environment and to challenge the power structures that undermine their rights to a livelihood.

To protect the environment and use natural resources suitably throughout our trading and to promote environmentally responsible initiatives to create new models to promote sustainability.

To supply customers with good quality products, with friendly and efficient service and build awareness to empower customers and Producer partners to participate in Fair Trade and environmentally sustainable solutions.

To provide a supportive environment to all stakeholders and promote dialogue and understanding between them.

To set an example to business and government of a Fair Trade model of business based on partnership, people-centric values and sustainability.

2018 and 2019 Social Review

People Tree conduct a regular Social Review to measure our impact in all areas of the business. We want to run our business as transparently as possible.

In spring 2019, we sent out a survey to all of our key stakeholders – e-commerce customers, wholesale buyers, Producer partners, head office staff, business partners and investors. We asked them for their honest feedback on how they think we are doing and what we can do to improve in the future.

This report is the result of that survey, and also includes some of the areas we have been working on over the last few years.

Recent Changes

Since our previous Social Review, People Tree has undergone a number of significant changes to the structure of the business. We appointed a new Managing Director, with Melanie Traub joining us in early 2017. We have moved to a new office, and recently changed our warehouse in order to improve delivery efficiency. We are working hard to modernise internal systems in order to compete in a difficult retail climate. We have strengthened design, expanded the supply chain, improved quality and fit and added new sustainable fabrics. Our wholesale team have attended more trade shows in new countries in order to reach a wider customer base. We have grown our social media following, improved the quality of our photographic imagery and are working with a new PR agency.

We will continue to develop and grow our brand, listening to customer feedback and making changes and improvements, all with the aim of increasing orders to our Fair Trade Producer partners and setting an example to the industry of how to create fashion responsibly.

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1. Our Certifications and Accreditations Make Us Authentic

Highlights

People Tree choose their certifications very carefully to verify that Fair Trade and sustainable processes are upheld throughout the entire supply chain.

It is heartening to see that our certifications are well-recognised by our customers. Our 2019 survey shows that holding these certifications positively influences the buying decision of our stakeholders. This demonstrates the importance of our certifications and that people do make informed decisions when buying their clothes.

Since 2017, our Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certified organic cotton buy has increased by **35%**.

In 2019, **91%** of People Tree's organic cotton is GOTS certified. In the last year alone our organic cotton buy, which is both GOTS and Fairtrade Mark certified has increased by **13%**.

Challenges

Holding so many third party certifications can be challenging. Certifications incur additional business costs, and the documentation can be time consuming. However, we believe it's essential to hold these certifications in order to be fully transparent and to give our customer the assurance that we are authentic in everything we do.

What our stakeholders say

As part of our social review, we asked our stakeholders which Fair Trade, social compliance and campaigning organisations they recognise, and if they influence their buying decision.

The FAIRTRADE Mark had the highest score. It was recognised by **93%** of the people who completed the survey, and **90%** said it influences their buying decision.

Coming second is the WFTO, which was recognised by **83%** of stakeholders, and influences the buying decision of **81%**.

We also asked our stakeholders the same questions for sustainable certifications and logos: GOTS came out on top, and is recognised and influences the buying decision of **83%** of people who complete the survey.

The second highest is the Forest Stewardship Council Certification (FSC), recognised by **82%** of stakeholders. However, it comes out fourth in influencing the buying decision, at **61%**.

Soil Association is third, with **76%** of stakeholders saying they both recognised it and that it influenced their buying decision.

TENCEL™ Lyocell came fourth, and was recognised by **68%** of stakeholders.

Additional Info

World Fair Trade Organisation



MEMBER

People Tree is a pioneer of Fair Trade fashion and is a Guaranteed System member of the WFTO, a global community of like-minded Fair Trade Enterprises who apply the 10 WFTO Principles of Fair Trade to their entire supply chain.

The WFTO Guarantee System verifies our commitment to Fair Trade through peer reviews and trusted independent audits.

965,700 livelihoods are impacted by the work of the WFTO, of which **74%** are women.

Fairtrade Mark



People Tree is a licensee of the **FAIRTRADE** mark. Fairtrade International is a non-profit organization focusing on the empowerment of farmers and workers in developing countries through trade. They independently check that their standards have been met by everyone in the supply chain, from farmers to factories.

FAIRTRADE is the only certifier to provide a Fairtrade Minimum Price for farmers, plus a premium that goes directly to farmers to invest back into their own communities.

All of People Tree's essential collection has the **FAIRTRADE** mark.

Cotton which is 'dual certified' organic and Fairtrade is considered the 'gold standard' for sustainable cotton.

Global Organic Textile Standard



GOTS is the worldwide leading processing standard for organic fibres. It is backed up by independent certification of the entire supply chain. The Soil Association audits and certifies People Tree.

The aim of the GOTS standard is to ensure organic status for textiles, from harvesting of the raw materials, through environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing up to labelling, in order to provide a credible assurance to the customer.

In 2006 People Tree was the first integrated organic supply chain in the developing world to receive GOTS certification.

Cotton carrying the GOTS or the Soil Association symbol has not only been grown organically, it has been processed organically too. This means that inputs such as dyes and inks have met strict biodegradability and toxicity rules, and waste water is treated before it's let out into the environment - protecting local ecosystems and communities.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity and peace and justice.

People Tree supports these goals through our mission statement, policies and through our certification partners.

Both Fairtrade International and WFTO collaborated on an International Fair Trade charter in 2018 which highlighted Fair Trade's longstanding role in addressing challenges such as inequality, gender rights, climate change and other topics of the SDG. GOTS have also stated that GOTS certification helps ensure compliance with each of the 17 SDG goals.

Other Marks and Certifications

Many of our products are also covered by other certifications and standards such as OEKO-TEX® standard, and Lenzing certified TENCEL™ Lyocell and PETA-approved vegan.

We share information and regular updates on our certifications on our website and social media.



Top row L to R : Creative Handicrafts (CH) tailor, AW19 TENCEL™ Lyocell top, CH finisher
 Middle Row L to R: Artisan Hut (AH) AW19 hand woven fabric, SS20 hand embroidered shirt, organic cotton underwear
 Bottom row L to R : Rajlakshmi hand linking knitwear, AW19 handwoven dress, Assisi quality checking yoga wear

2. As Nature Intended

Highlights

From the start, People Tree have used natural and preferable organic fibres throughout the collection. We have continued to do this, only adding in fibres that follow closed loop processes and ensuring that no harmful chemicals are used.

We do not use any polyester, viscose, acrylics or nylon fabrics. We do not even use plastic buttons.

As the processing of the yarn into finished fabric is as important as the yarn itself, we have developed fabric, trim and environmental policies for our design team to use.

All of the main fibres we use, cotton, linen, wool and TENCEL™ Lyocell, are biodegradable.

75% of our stakeholders said that it is important for them when buying clothes that natural materials are used.

Challenges

We have tried for several years to source organic wool for our hand knits in Nepal. However, we are struggling to find an organic wool that is fit for purpose. We will continue to explore options.

We would like to develop a fully GOTS certified supply chain for our organic merino wool range in the future.

Recycled fabrics are not currently part of our range, but we are considering using them in the future. In order to be in line with our environmental policy, the process must either be a mechanical or closed loop system, not a chemical process.

Kumudini is our only Bangladesh supplier to not use organic cotton, but we are aiming to source organic cotton fabrics with them in the future.

In some of our ranges, particularly essentials, activewear and underwear, we mix organic cotton with up to 5% elastane. This is necessary in order for the garment to stretch and fit, but the elastane is not biodegradable. We continue to look for other solutions.

Organic Cotton

GOTS certified organic cotton is the DNA of People Tree. We aim to source GOTS certified organic cotton and ensure GOTS certification throughout the supply chain as much as possible.

Organic cotton farming does not use toxic chemicals, pesticides, fertilisers or genetically modified seeds.

In 2019 **98%** of our cotton buy is organic.

We worked hard to get organic cotton into Bangladesh, starting from our AW16 collection. We worked with our Bangladesh Producer partners to set up a joint yarn procurement project to achieve this, and in 2019 organic cotton makes up **76%** of garment buy in Bangladesh. We are aiming for this to be **90%** in 2020.

Wool

We use New Zealand mulesed free wool in our hand knitted range, and over time have improved the quality of the wool so that it is softer.

We sourced soft mulesed free merino wool for our machine knitwear from 2018, and will use GOTS certified organic merino wool yarn in 2019.

People Tree's wool buy has increased by **56%** since 2016.

TENCEL™ Lyocell

People Tree added TENCEL™ Lyocell fabrics into our collections in 2017. It is a soft, drapey fabric and was something that was missing in the collection previously. It has been popular with our customers and in 2019 makes up **10%** of the total buy.

TENCEL™ Lyocell is a cellulose fibre derived from wood pulp in a unique system that recycles almost **100%** of non-toxic chemicals and solvents in a closed loop process. The wood and pulp comes from sustainably managed plantations, which are FSC certified.

TENCEL™ Lyocell is from the Lenzing Group. It carries the OEKO-TEX® 100 certification and has been awarded the European Community Eco-label flower for products and services with reduced environmental impacts.

Denim

In 2018, we were very happy to launch an organic denim collection. Starting with one pair of jeans in AW18, we have developed a small collection of denim and twill styles in 2019, and are building on the initial success with a larger range for 2020.

Denim manufacture traditionally uses some of the most polluting processes in the garment industry. However, we work with a great supplier, Sarp Jeans, who use organic cotton and have transformed their laundry and finishing processes. Our first production used **87.2%** less water when compared to conventional jeans production.

We asked Uraz Batur, General Manager at Sarp Jeans to talk about sustainability and what changes they have made.

Why is sustainability important to your business?

Denim is one of the most harmful manufacturing processes in the world, but it cannot continue in this manner. We want to trade in a more sustainable way, and have a better future from both an environmental point of view but also sustainable working conditions, and social standards.

Can you explain the sustainable processes that you have?

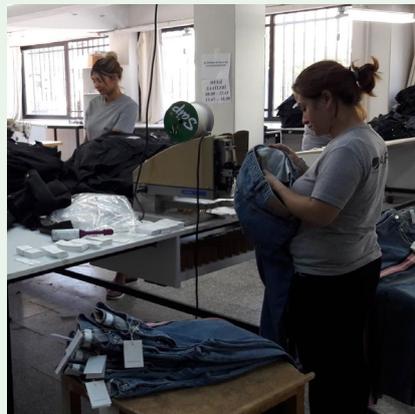
Customers want a more transparent process. We have a good relationship with our suppliers to know the entire process all the way from the cotton farm. We are continually developing new processes and materials to be as sustainable as possible.

Productivity in house is monitored and evaluated to be as effective and sustainable as possible. We partner with a local laundry facility and use advanced Jeanologia technology for the most sustainable finishes and processes, like laser finishing. This new technology allows us to use up to **95%** less water than conventional denim processing.

In regard to packaging, we use mostly recycled materials, and always looking for new ways to reduce plastic.

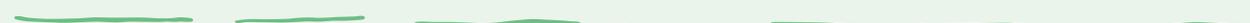
How are you reducing water usage and what is the impact on your business?

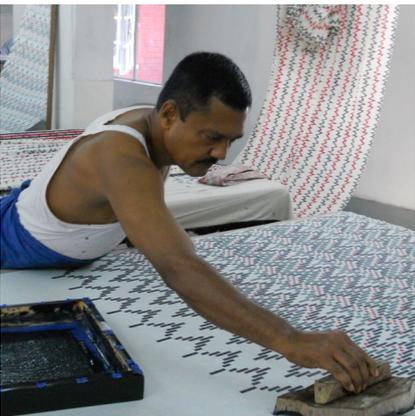
One traditional denim garment can use up to 100L of water during manufacturing. When you times this by the number of garments produced it is resulting in a huge amount of the world's water just disappearing. The future of the industry is for us along with the brands is to find a way to minimise this. We have partnered with our laundry to use the more economic Jeanologia system, such as ozone, that uses far less water during the washing phase.



'Organic clothing that is well constructed and doesn't fall apart is very important. Minimal synthetic fibres, and importantly no polyester fibre, helps preserve the ocean ecosystem.'

People Tree customer 2019





Top row L to R : Kumudini Tailor, CH AW19 printed top, Preparing the handloom at Swallows
Middle Row L to R: Organic cotton knitwear, Raw organic cotton, SS20 hand block print top
Bottom row L to R : Kumudini hand block printing, Drying dyed yarn, Fusion quality checker

3. Stable and Supportive Producer Partnerships

Highlights

86% of our Producer partners say that People Tree helps to promote their cultural identity and traditional skills.

47% of our Producer partners use traditional hand craft skills in their production.

In our social review survey, our Producer partners said that People Tree has helped them:

To build up an ethical supply chain, to improve quality, with continuous orders and long term commitment and by helping them to resolve any problems.

Since 2017, People Tree has provided training and resources to our Producer partners through the People Tree Foundation. This includes:

Health and Safety Training given to all Producer partners in Bangladesh in November 2017.

Helping one Producer partner to develop their effluent water treatment plant.

Funding the development of a table loom for Producer partners to use for sampling fabrics, in order to reduce fabric wastage.

Providing funds to Bombolulu to replace computers damaged by flooding.

Employment and creating opportunities for women has always been at the heart of People Tree. **90%** of the staff at our long term Producer partners Creative Handicrafts and KTS are women.

'Basically the Handloom fabric is our traditional and cultural Identity. People Tree using our skill and improving design and made modern garments to promote the cultural identity and traditional skills of our Producer groups and subgroups'

Prodip Gomes, the Director of DevTech

Challenges

The main challenges our Producer partners say they face are:

Competing with other suppliers who do not have the same standards and certifications. The higher costs for sustainable raw materials. Creative Handicrafts say that organic cotton costs around **60%** more than conventional cotton.

We would like to provide our Producer partners with more technical training. We are working with the People Tree foundation to work with local organisations who provide training, as well as looking at delivering training remotely via skype.

Working with smaller Producer partners with longer supply chains means more time needs to be spent checking and verifying each of the sub-contractors seasonally.

Some of our Producer partners require support via an advanced payment made at the time of the purchase order being placed. For AW19 season, we sent an advanced payment of between 20% and 40% order value to 6 of our Producer partners. For a small business like People Tree, this means very careful management of our cash flow, as we are often paying for stock many months before we are able to sell it.

In our surveys **96%** of our stakeholders said that it was very important for fashion brands to address the issue of global poverty and fair pay, but we also had many comments that our retail prices can be expensive. We work hard to ensure the price we pay for each garment is fair to the Producer partner. Our Producer partners provide an open cost breakdown to our buying team so we can see exactly what goes into making up the cost of the garment. We work hard together with the Producer partner to agree a fair price that is workable for both parties. We believe the price of our clothes gives added value to the customer in terms of knowing the garment was made in an ethical manner, using sustainable materials and with third party certifications to back that up.



Additional Info

People Tree's Producer partners are our main reason for being. The emphasis has always been to build up long term, supportive relationships, and where any issues arise they are resolved together.

We have worked with many of our Producer partners for more than 15 years. More recently, we have started partnering with a number of new Producer partners in order to develop additional product lines, including socks, underwear and denim.

People Tree works with **15** Producer partners, **5** in India, **4** in Bangladesh, **2** in Nepal, **1** in Kenya, **1** in Portugal and **2** in Turkey.

They are all monitored for ethical and social standards by People Tree and are audited either by us or by one of our nominated 3rd party certifiers. In addition, we work with our Producer partners and third party certifying bodies to record and monitor each of the sub-contractors in our supply chain.

Each of our Producer partners varies in size, from **4** people at Shaddra Handicrafts, our jewellery makers in Nepal, to **650** people at Rajlakshmi in Kolkata, India, who make our underwear. The majority of our Producer partners are small businesses that are CMT (cut, make and trim) only.

50% of our Producer partners have less than **100** staff. We like to work with small, individual factories where we can develop and grow together.

People Tree are proud to promote traditional handicraft skills and to keep textile crafts alive. In Bangladesh, we incorporate hand weaving, hand embroidery and hand block printing skills into our collections. Handmade pieces are more time consuming in production, but add a unique look to the range, as well as providing employment opportunities to artisans.

People Tree designs jewellery which is made by hand by artisans in Kenya and Nepal.

Our hand knits are made by KTS in Nepal

Creative Handicrafts (CH) is a co-operative and the women play a very important part. Johny Joseph, Creative Handicrafts' Director talks about the women, and being a smaller organisation, below:

Why is it important for Creative Handicrafts to employ mostly women?

Women are amongst the most marginalised and vulnerable groups in India. Traditionally they have been kept away from the main stream, be it education, a share in public life, wealth, etc. Then there is the most disadvantaged group among these women and they are the ones who are deserted, divorced, widowed, married to men who are irresponsible. They are also unskilled thus making them totally out of the market driven world. CH preferred to work with this group and hence, justifies its choice of working with mostly women. CH is convinced that to create a sustainable impact in the lives of a particular beneficiary group, we need to put total focus on them. Hence, it is too important for CH to work with women.

How do you train the women to be able to work in one of your sewing workshops?

CH is very well known among the slum dwellers in and around Andheri. Women in distress, mostly economical, are directed to Creative by local leaders, local NGOs and other women who work at one of our co-ops. The social worker then does a home visit and assesses the situation of the woman at home. If she fits in the criteria, disadvantaged and unskilled, then she is taken into the training centre for a period of six months to undergo the basic training of stitching and embroidery. After successful completion, (a few of them drop out during the training), of the training the woman is sent to one of the co-ops to be mentored under one of the seniors for another six months. At the end of one year, she becomes a member of the co-op earning a regular income like the others working on piece rate.

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being a small organisation?

The biggest advantage of being a small organisation is that I know each and every person working with our organization. We work as a family. There is no hierarchy and problems are sorted out fast. It is easy to manage a small organisation. However, the disadvantage is that our capacity is limited. Further, we do not have everything, like fabric manufacturing, printing, dyeing, etc. under one roof which allows for a lot of flexibility. We tend to depend on other organisations.



Bombolulu Workshops, who make jewellery for People Tree, provides training and support to help artisans that have physical disabilities overcome their physical limitations and empower them economically and socially to become fully integrated members of their communities. Syprine Agan is the quality checking supervisor and workers representative, she talks about working at Bombolulu.

What do you like about working at Bombolulu?

A person with disability in Kenya has very limited chances of getting meaningful employment, at Bombolulu I am able to compete with other equally in the job market in terms of salary and other employment benefits. I have been able to feed my family and educate them without too much struggle. I have also increased my network and have been able to relate with other institutions which offer direct benefit to me; e.g. I am currently taking a computer course at Bombolulu Workshops through the ICT Kenyan ministry at a very subsidized fee.

What changes have you made as a workers representative?

I have ensured that compliance with the WFTO principles is adhered to; I discuss and resolve staff issues and internal problems with management.

If you did not work at Bombolulu what would you be doing?

I think I would have ceased to exist, being an orphan without any source of income my extended family would not have tolerated me. I am glad Bombolulu has offered me financial independence and I am able to even assist other extended family members

What is special about Bombolulu?

It has empowered me socially and economically. I am dignified as I do not have to beg for my basic and secondary needs.

Why should people buy fair trade products?

I need to continue living a 'good life'; three meals a day (well balanced) and the ability to meet my basic needs. This is only possible through Fair Trade orders and People Tree orders, which have steadily increased over the years.



4. Protecting People and Our Planet

Highlights

We created an environmental policy in 2019, which is published on our website and outlines our commitment to sustainable environmental practices throughout the supply chain.

We have looked at every area of packaging, ensuring we use biodegradable and recyclable boxes, FSC certified swing tickets, recycled paper tape and recyclable, biodegradable and compostable paper sacks for delivery to customers.

We have changed our poly bags to be low density polypropylene LDPE4. After extensive research, we found that these are currently the most widely recycled in the UK. We support the WRAP UK Plastic Pact which aims to transform the plastics industry by 2025.

KTS, our hand knit Producer partner, has worked with Nepalese organisation HandMade Water, to find a natural way to purify their waste water after the dyeing process. They use effective micro-organisms, which are composed from bacteria, fungi and yeast, to breakdown the chemicals in the water, so that it can be reused.

We updated our comprehensive Producer Manual in 2018 which includes our ethical and social standards.

Challenges

Reducing air shipments is an area we know needs improvement. Our wholesale business is growing steadily, which means bigger orders and more employment for our Fair Trade Producer partners. However, with this growth comes increasing demands from customers to have earlier deliveries. Often this means we resort to air shipments in order to get the goods to the UK on time. Prioritising sea and road freight is important to us for a sustainable future.

25% of our Producer partners have, or are installing, solar panels. Ideally we would like **100%** of our supply chain to use renewable energy sources, but prices are still prohibitive for many.

Poly bags and the recycling of them are a real challenge and we are working to find a viable, sustainable alternative. We know that creating real change requires government legislation to amend laws, so that countrywide there are the same clearly defined procedures and for this reason we support the WRAP UK Plastic Pact. Currently using poly bags is the best way we know how to ship garments from our Producer partners to the UK without them becoming damp or damaged in transit and keeping them clean and in perfect condition when stored in our warehouse.



As part of our social review, we wanted to see which issues affecting the fashion industry globally were most important to our stakeholders.

We asked our customers, wholesale buyers and staff

Which of the following do you consider to be important when choosing to buy clothing or accessories?

The results are as follows:

94%

They are made by workers who are paid a fair living wage.

93%

They are produced in a way that is not harmful to the environment.

90%

They are produced in factories with safe working conditions.

75%

They are produced using natural materials.

74%

They are produced without harming animals.

63%

They use recyclable packaging.

42%

They are produced using recycled materials.

Under 1%

Said they thought none of these things are important when buying clothes.

It is extremely encouraging to us at People Tree that our customers, wholesale buyers and staff value so highly our core principles of payment of a fair wage, that production does not harm the environment and that working conditions in factories are safe.

96%

of our stakeholders said that it was **very important** for fashion brands to address the issue of Global poverty and Fair pay

90%

of our stakeholders said that it was **very important** for fashion brands to address the issue of climate change and protection for the environment.

People Tree aims to demonstrate best practice in sustainability throughout our supply chain. We work closely with our Producer partners to monitor everything from the environmental practices and code of conduct in the factories to the packaging used.

'I also love the quality of the clothes - they are beautifully made and last and last. I have been buying from you for around 7 or 8 year now and some clothes that I have worn and worn still look almost as good as new'

People Tree customer, 2019

Sanjay Kumar Verma, the Group CEO of Rajlaxmi Cotton Mills Pvt Ltd, India is constructing a new sustainable green factory which will open later this year. He talked to us about this great initiative.

Why is sustainability important to your business?

It comes from the conviction that we must care for the environment and not spoil it. When you are aware of these concerns, you adopt and pursue sustainable outcomes. I collaborated with Rajlaxmi as they shared same ideas and could work together to make the complex changes required.

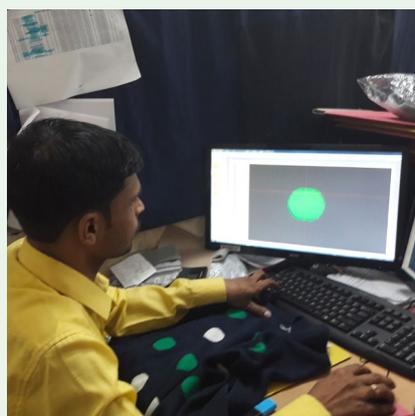
It requires a lot of hard work to set it up, working with integrity and complete transparency. It has taken a few years to find the technology needed and to make a long term plan, which has slowly created opportunities for company growth. I always had the vision for a sustainable factory from the start and convinced Rajlaxmi owners to invest in the land and build a green, sustainable, organic Fair Trade factory.

Can you explain the sustainable processes that you plan to have in your new factory?

It will be an Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) factory, which means it has been built sustainably. There will be solar energy, water recycling and rain water harvesting, environmental air flow system and we will be curating extensive landscaping by oxygen enhancing plants on the factory land and surroundings.

How are you reducing water usage and what will be the impact on your business?

The new factory will be next to the river bed and with recycling and rain harvesting there will be up to **90%** water recycling with aim of ultimately have zero water discharge in phase 2.



5. Our people are the heart of the business

Highlights

Since the start, People Tree has always been dedicated to employing women. **95%** of current staff are women, all of our managers are women and **60%** of the People Tree board are women.

25% of the staff have been working with People Tree for over 10 years, giving them great insight into People Tree's history, growth and development.

From our survey, **100%** of the staff are proud to work for People Tree and believe in People Tree's core values.

We carry out yearly surveys with our staff to see how we are upholding the 10 principles of Fair Trade in our office. This has helped us to see what improvements are required and has previously instigated an office move and improved training opportunities. In 2018, **68%** of staff attended training courses relevant to their role from external companies.

A good work life balance is important and People Tree staff finish at 3pm on Fridays so we can start the weekend earlier. It makes a real difference to the end of the week.

100% of staff surveyed said that they had a good working relationship within their team.

100% of staff surveyed said that they had a good working relationship with their line manager.

88% of staff say they do interesting and challenging work.

Challenges

Our head office space is small, with limited storage and we share it with another company. In our social review survey, **65%** of staff felt the office had room for improvement. We hope to be able to increase the office space we have in the future.

We want to make sure that every member of staff reaches their full potential and even though staff training has increased since 2017, this is an area we will be focusing on going forward.

As we grow we want to be able to offer more opportunities for growth and promotion to our staff.

'I love working for a fashion brand that benefits the lives of small Producer partners and I believe this is what makes my job interesting, the fact that I get to be part of this. I am also challenged by my job on a daily basis but this also allows me to improve and grow over time'.

People Tree staff member, 2019



'Being a small company, my role here is more varied than it would be in a traditional Retail Head Office role. This both allows me to develop skills I wouldn't necessarily have and to feel more invested in the company as I do more for it'.

People Tree staff member, 2019

6. Committed to Transparency

Highlights

At People Tree, we believe being transparent and open with our customers and stakeholders is key. We openly share as much information as we can about our business, ethics and supply chain in various ways:

Since the beginning we have shared details of which Producer partner has made each of our products on our website and swing tickets.

We keep our customers informed about the importance of our certifications and how our fabrics are sustainable, via our website, E-shots and social media.

The People Tree team join external panel discussions to share their expertise and learn from others.

We regularly visit our Producer partners and sub-groups to check their compliance with Fair Trade principles. We have an internal monitoring system, which is based on the 10 principle of Fair Trade from the WFTO and carry out Producer wage interviews periodically.

We hold monthly staff meetings where each team reports on what they are doing. These meetings give staff a chance to air their views to their colleagues, managers and the managing director.

We undertake a biennial social review, which involves sending surveys to all of our stakeholders, and publishing the results.

99% of customers who completed our survey said they would recommend People Tree to their family and friends.

94% of our customers agree or strongly agree with the following statement: People Tree communicates to me, as a customer, honestly and transparently.

94% of our customers said that they trusted that, through Fair Trade, People Tree supports workers more than other fashion brands.

94% of our wholesale customers said they found the information we provide about our production methods and Producer partners useful.

Challenges

Sustainable and ethical fashion production is very complex, and there are constantly new initiatives within the industry. It is not always easy to find the right balance of how much information to share on our website and social media channels, to give the facts without confusing our customers with too much technical detail. We try to give clear, constructive and honest information that will benefit the reader. We have had a lot of feedback from the social review survey which means we can tailor the information we share to be more relevant to what our customers want to know.

'It's great to be able to buy from somewhere and know that all your products are ethical (and not have to hunt through all the details to find which ones are). I like being able to find out about the producers and where the products actually come from'

People Tree customer, 2019

7. A final word

We would like to thank everyone who took the time out to fill in the survey and give us their valuable feedback. During the process of compiling this report, we realised just how important it is to gather information from our stakeholders and review what we are doing and where we are going.

This document is too small to put in detail everything that came out of the survey, but we have learnt so much from the information given and an action plan is being made to make the improvements required.

It is encouraging to see that we are making the right decisions. We are proud that a Fair Trade and sustainable business can be commercially viable.

We hope you enjoy reading this, please check out our website for any more information.
www.peopletree.co.uk

People Tree would not exist without the contribution of all our stakeholders, customers, Producer partners, staff, investors, shareholders and collaborators. Thanks to all the hard work and support from everyone since 2017 our total buy has increased by **44%** and we have been able to buy **32%** more traditional crafted products in the last year. This means we can continue to run our business in a sustainable and ethical way.



'A special ethical fashion brand with a very credible history. A brand empowering women and small communities. That's why we love People Tree! A fashion brand with a very unique style'

People Tree wholesale buyer, 2019



PEOPLE TREE

Truly Conscious Clothing

