

# PRODUCER PROFILE

**Name:** Thuchila Tea Association

**Product:** Tea

**Country:** Malawi

**FLO ID:** 6080

**Fairtrade Certified Since:** 2007

**Number of Certified Members:** 8,080



# Introduction

Thuchila Tea Association Trust is a 1st grade tea producer located in Mimosa Mulanje Malawi about 13 Km from Mulanje, Boma along Muloza boarder road. In 2002 small holder farmers were selling Tea individually to Eastern Produce Malawi after Small holder Tea Company was dissolved. In 2007 Eastern Out-growers Trust was formed and the same year it was Fairtrade certified and started receiving Premiums. In 2009 it changed to Eastern out-growers limited following an agreement with EPM to give the trust a factory to be processing tea on their own. In 2012 it was changed again to EOT with the advice from Tea Association of Malawi and Phunzirani after the agreement of being independent did not materialize therefore the name was conflicting with their small holder farmers status. Between 2013-2015 farmers in all blocks were consulted to change the name of Eastern Out-growers Trust as the name was in conflict with our buyers name. The name change was finalized in 2016 at an annual general meeting where it was changed to Thuchila Tea Association naming it after the Thuchila River that is in between Mulanje and Thyolo district.



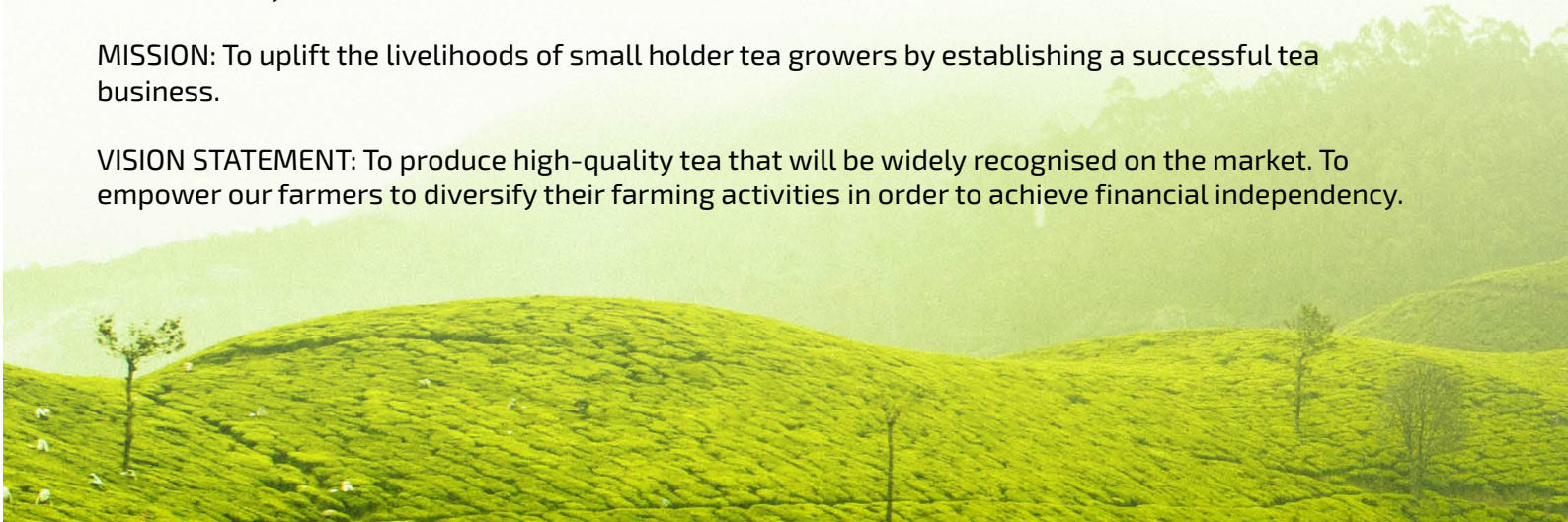
Thuchila Tea Association has about 8,080 small holder farmers in Mulanje and Thyolo and their primary buyer has been Eastern Produce Malawi Limited since 2007.

Thuchila Tea Association operates independently but gets technical support from Eastern Produce Malawi. TTA has a Group Outgrowers Manager from EPM and Extension Managers who work in Mulanje and Thyolo respectively under the supervision of the Group Outgrowers Manager. They work hand in hand with the trust in improving farming methods among small holder farmers. The trust has approximately 8,080 with more joining all the time. TTA is a non-profit organization that operates through the premiums it gets after Fairtrade Tea Sales, membership fee from farmers and 6 Tractors and 5 Trailers that it rents out to Eastern Produce Malawi.

**CORE VALUES:** Transparency, Integrity, Corporate Social Responsibility, Team-work and Accountability.

**MISSION:** To uplift the livelihoods of small holder tea growers by establishing a successful tea business.

**VISION STATEMENT:** To produce high-quality tea that will be widely recognised on the market. To empower our farmers to diversify their farming activities in order to achieve financial independency.



# Tea Production and Processing

Thuchila Tea Association small holder farmers has one primary buyer Eastern produce Malawi Limited who buys green leaf from farmers and process them in their factories. The trust does not have its own factories and relies on EPM to process the green leaf. The tea is sold on the market, and the premium from Fairtrade sales is given directly to the trust to be used in activities that benefit all the small holder farmers. Tea has its season between December-May in this period farms tend to produce large quantities of green leaf.



## TTA Management

The trust is run by Board of Directors who are elected for a 5 year term. The current board consist of 12 members 3 of which are women. It has an administration office where most of its operations are run with technical help from Eastern Produce Malawi limited. Aside from the board it has other committees like Premium committee, Environment committee and disciplinary committee.

## Technical Staff

The trust has extension managers hired by Eastern Produce Malawi to work with the trust in ensuring that farmers are following good farming methods and all Fairtrade standards.

## Challenges

The trust has been facing financial challenges and since 2019 it has not received any premiums despite being Fairtrade certified. This has affected its operations in trying to improve the livelihoods of its farmers. Most of its members are scattered all over Mulanje and Thyolo and some locations are hard to reach especially during rain seasons.

## Potential Impact Risks

- Business diversification
- Subsidizing some agriculture inputs for easy access by small holder farmers.



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### **Producer Organization**

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