



A YEAR OF INSPIRING KINDNESS

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

2019

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INSPIRING PEOPLE WHEREVER WE GO

Drinking a cup of tea always offers up a moment of genuine reflection.

Here at Ahmad Tea, we've always worked hard to ensure that everybody who helps us is treated with kindness and respect. But we don't stop there. We offer this kindness to people and communities all over the world to help make lives better. This is because we have a responsibility to do what can we can, and for us that means giving unconditionally. In doing so, we hope we'll inspire others to be kinder and more compassionate, too.

Here in this report, you'll find a collection of our latest efforts to inspire kindness all over the world. It is a task we can never really complete, of course. So we'll never rest on our laurels, and we'll never stop looking for ways we can give a little more back. But we might still stop for a cup of tea, once in a while.

Rahim Afshar

Founder & Chairman – Ahmad Tea

A MISSION TO INSPIRE KINDNESS

This is a story that began a long time ago. As a young man, the father of the founders of Ahmad Tea set out to help as many people in need as possible. So instead of studying medicine, he chose commerce – and looked for ways to make money that he could give back through charity. Over the course of his life, he donated over 90% of his wealth, leaving a legacy of unconditional kindness – a philosophy that his children and grandchildren keep alive to this day.

A LEGACY THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

It begins by doing business in an ethical way. When Ahmad Tea opened its first shop in Hampshire, England, the family aimed to run a business that was an extension of its values. Many years on, we now proudly contribute to projects all over the world.

INSPIRING KINDNESS

We sincerely hope that the work we share here inspires others to incorporate sustainability, authenticity and compassion into their working lives. On behalf of everyone here at Ahmad Tea, thank you for all your support and for being a part of the Ahmad Tea family.

OUR PURPOSE

To change lives across the world by inspiring acts of kindness. (No act of kindness is too small!)

OUR VISION

Improve the lives of communities across the world through projects to which we contribute. And to inspire others to be kind, too.

OUR MISSION

Source, blend, pack and deliver the best tea to consumers across the globe. This way, we can generate the resources needed to help and inspire as many people as possible.

THREE WAYS WE MAKE IT HAPPEN

Our business is global – and so is the work we do to make the world a better place. We focus both on the tea-growing communities in which we operate and the wider global community, providing help exactly where it's needed.

To make sure our efforts are effective, we run a programme called Inspiring Kindness, which helps us organise our philanthropic projects and assess their impact. It breaks down our work into three pillars:

*"The future has already arrived.
It's just not evenly distributed yet."*

WILLIAM GIBSON

1 COMMUNITY



2 RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

3 SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT



IMPROVING CANCER TREATMENT IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is a country with which we have a rich shared history. But its people are at a higher risk of diseases like cancer than those in many developed countries. To help address this issue, we created the Razavi project, in which we designed and financed the country's only privately funded, state-of-the-art cancer hospital: The National Cancer Institute. Throughout 2019, we continued to improve the services and facilities available at the hospital. Today, it offers some of the most sophisticated care available anywhere in the country, using cutting-edge techniques such as stem cell therapy. It makes us immensely proud to show our gratitude to the people of Sri Lanka in this way.

1 COMMUNITY

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

This first pillar includes a number of initiatives that improve the lives of people around the world. The scope of this pillar is enormous, covering everything from health projects like the creation of a new hospital in Sri Lanka, to community causes such as improving water provision in Niger and supporting orphans in Russia and Ukraine.





THE RAZAVI PROJECT: CONTINUING TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

Building the hospital was just part of the project. Among the programmes we continue to help support are:

THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

After construction was complete, we were able to provide:



Hospital Capacity

373 beds for adult patients
5 operating theatres
12 surgical ICU beds
12 ICU beds
19 paying beds



New Buildings

Neutropenic ward for children
Laundry and sterilisation department
Patients' canteen on each floor
Consultants' offices



Medical Resources

5 operating theatres
Day chemotherapy unit
Indoor and outdoor pharmacies



Oncology Nurse Training Programmes

60 nurses trained in chemotherapy,
radiotherapy and palliative care
Training-of-Trainer methodology has provided
300+ more trained nurses



Hygiene, Sanitation and Infection

Pest control
50 hygiene-trained cleaning staff
Long-term sanitation strategies in association
with the Ministry of Health



Waste Management Initiatives

Outsourcing clinical waste



FIRST EVER BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT

The National Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit forms part of the Razavi Medial Complex, through which the first ever bone marrow transplant in Sri Lanka was successfully completed to help the amazing Mrs. Gemma.

"Mrs. Gemma, a 39-year-old mother of two, sadly came to the hospital with two rare conditions, Castleman disease and POEMS syndrome, leaving her with severe leg swelling, numbness, difficulty in walking, loss of weight, skin thickening and fatigue. She had been suffering for a year and a half and could not move around without help.

On 20 November 2017, we successfully performed autologous stem cell transplantation on her, the only known cure for her condition. She bravely faced more difficulties after a complicated post-transplantation period, suffering from sepsis and engraftment syndrome.

Through a carefully managed mix of antibiotics, blood component transfusions and steroids, she recovered strongly and was discharged home on 12 December 2017.

2 years post-transplant, Mrs. Gemma has made an incredible recovery being able to move around as she pleases, being self-employed and managing a book stall inside our hospital."

Dr. Prasad Abeyasinghe
Consultant Oncologist, National Cancer Institute



*Mrs Gemma leaving
the hospital in
2017 following
her treatment*



*Mr Rahim meeting
Mrs Gemma in
January 2020*

IMPROVING ACCESS TO WATER IN NIGER

Landlocked, drought-prone and with less than 3% arable land, Niger is a country in which safe drinking water can be hard to find. Working with Oxfam in recent years, we have helped improve access to safer water in three key ways.

1. IMPROVED CLEAN WATER SUSTAINABILITY

*Creating irrigation systems enabling farmers to cultivate land.
Sponsoring students in distance-learning projects, ensuring local communities have the skills to deliver the programmes long term.
Finding ways to safely use the country's abundant groundwater.*

2. UPDATED WATER STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

*Constructing and maintaining water points for domestic and agricultural use.
Using solar technology and water boreholes to improve drinking water for over 50,000 people.
Installing electric pumps to supply water to Malian refugees.*

3. ENHANCED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

*Piloting a National Plan for water management, which includes training for government and community groups.
Increasing cooperation between key stakeholders.*

NEW YEAR, NEW FOCUS

For 2019, we embarked on a new phase of the project, building on its success with new training, construction and collaboration initiatives.

Consolidating the power of NGOs, local government and local communities to bolster water management practices.

Continuing to find new ways to access and manage groundwater safely.

Supporting students studying water management with cross-country initiatives that include:

- Distance learning
- Laptop provision
- Living allowance
- Fee support
- Fieldwork with the Oxfam team

A NEW HOME FOR ORPHANED CHILDREN IN RUSSIA

Ahmad Tea has long been popular in Russia – and we have been active contributors to good causes in the country, helping to set up the Formula Dobra Charity Foundation. Over the years, we have seen a clear need to help the country's future generations, so for more than a decade, we have supported the Ostrovskiy children's home in Kostroma, helping around 80 children each year.

When the building itself was declared unfit due to the risk of fire, we helped create an entirely new home on a nearby plot. It was designed to deliver 'family' floors containing classrooms, kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms for smaller groups of children. It would be more accessible for children with disabilities too, with wide doorways for wheelchairs, special toilets and ramp access.

In 2019, following a challenging build, we were delighted to see the new building open, which is home to 20 children.

Building a home for the children of Ostrovskiy

2016 Construction of building's outer shell

2017 Adding facing, wiring, plumbing and heating

2018 Interior decoration and land improvement

2019 House handed over to its new occupants





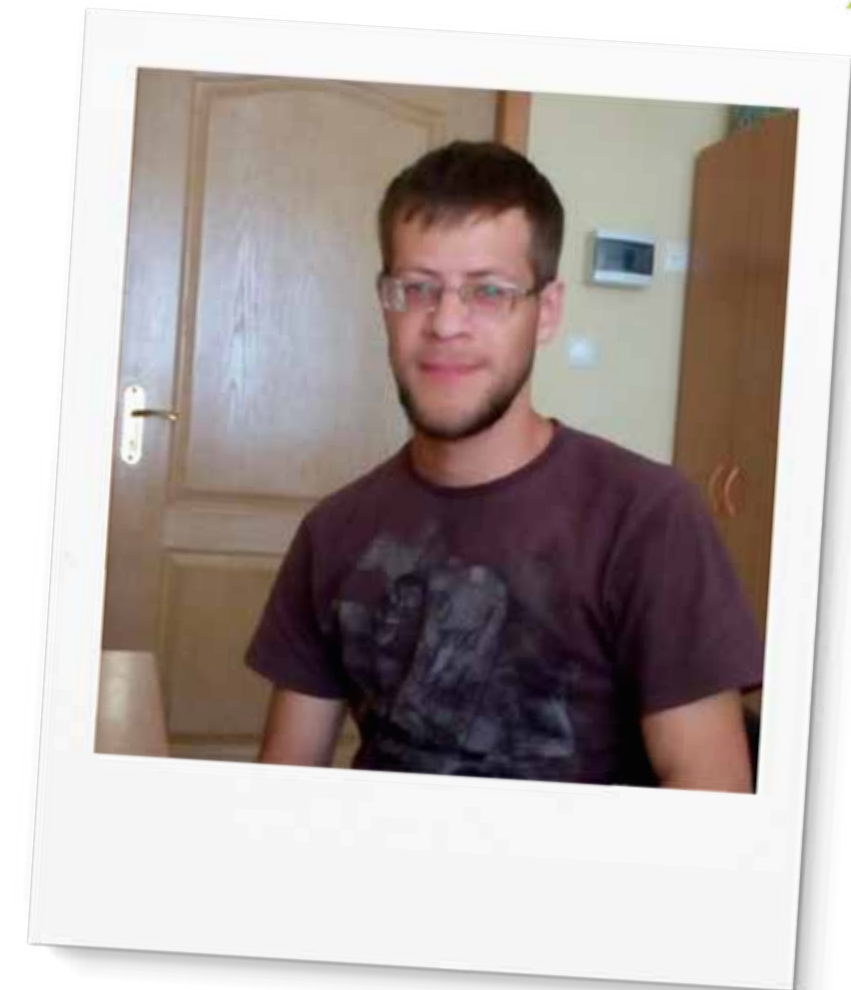
EDUCATING ORPHANS IN UKRAINE

Everyone here at Ahmad Tea believes in the power of education to change lives. But for children living in Ukraine's most remote orphanages, the nearest school or university is often simply too far away.

That's why we created our Distance Learning Programme, linking orphaned Ukrainian schoolchildren to universities in Kiev, with the aim of giving them better opportunities to learn and gain qualifications. Children were connected to classes streamed via Skype, supplying new equipment including computers, headsets and projectors. Throughout 2019, our work has continued on this project. And it works: 82 of the children we have helped have now graduated from university.


THE PROJECT IN FIGURES

8 university lecturers
40 school children
2 age groups
4 subject areas
64 hours study per student per month



SASHA'S STORY

Sasha was one of our very first distance-learning pupils. With the extra challenge of being visually impaired, through his own hard work and support from the programme, he successfully secured himself a place at Kharkiv National Construction and Architecture University. Whilst there, he graduated with a degree in Ecology and Environment Protection, and even went on to complete postgraduate study whilst working as a lab assistant at the university. Today, he owns and lives in an apartment, having secured employment in his field of study.





MAXIM'S STORY

Maxim was another of our pupils who studied English in the orphanage as part of our programme. Again, through his dedication in a supportive environment, he went on to study medicine at Kharkiv National Medical University. Afterwards, with the help of his exceptional English, he was even offered an international internship to further his education.

PUSHING THE PROGRAMME FORWARD IN 2019

In 2019, a further pillar of this project is being developed to protect its legacy. By inviting orphanage staff from remote villages to attend conferences in St Petersburg, Moscow and Sochi, we were able give them a little respite – along with training to enhance their skills.

RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

As members of the Ethical Tea Partnership, we contribute to activities that ensure we stay true to our second pillar, Responsible Sourcing.

This includes work to improve human rights, working conditions and sustainability throughout the tea value chain. Because ensuring our products are sourced in a responsible and sustainable way is not only vital for the survival of our business, but also for the long-term viability of the planet on which we all live.

THE ETHICAL TEA PARTNERSHIP

We are proud to be part of the Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP).

The Ethical Tea Partnership is a not-for-profit organisation which convenes tea companies, development agencies, governmental and non-governmental organisations to improve the lives of communities within the tea sector.

We work in partnership to tackle the deep-rooted issues that are holding back the sustainability of the tea sector. These include:

- *Improving the incomes and well-being of farmers and workers.*
- *Improving living conditions and nutrition.*
- *Improving the lives and opportunities for women and young people in tea communities and reducing gender-based violence.*
- *Improving climate change resilience.*

To find out more about the ETP and its role at the centre of tea sustainability, please go to www.ethicalteapartnership.org



SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Our third pillar requires reducing the impact our business has on the planet. Throughout the last year, we have worked to make the activities we undertake even more environmentally friendly. It's all part of our commitment to minimise our impact on the environment by:

Cutting out non-recyclable/non-biodegradable packaging.

Offsetting the environmental impact at point of product consumption.

A BIG YEAR FOR SUSTAINABILITY

We are always seeking to improve and throughout 2019, we engaged in the following initiatives:



Support for The Ellen MacArthur Foundation through examining our long term impact of production materials.

Responsible waste management processing and recycling improvements to increase material efficiency.

Awareness training empowering our staff to understand how we can all create a positive impact.

Broad process review enabling reductions in use of water, air freight and paper, as well as our commuting footprint.



Widescale lighting upgrades including LED usage and automatic lighting systems.

Harnessing the use of solar energy with panels and solar thermal systems.

Improvements in insulation through infrastructural upgrades and automatic temperature control systems.

89%

of our packaging produced from the RAK factory is already biodegradable. (Our goal is 100% by the end of 2025).

A FACTORY THAT PUTS THE EARTH FIRST

Throughout 2019, our tea production hub in the UAE has continued to set new sustainability standards for our industry. It was designed and built from the outset to be as environmentally friendly as possible. The results have been phenomenal. In 2019 alone, we have eliminated CO2 emissions totalling 836,158kg.

836,158 kg
of CO2 reductions in 2019

Solar panels power the production lines.

Aircosaver intelligent air conditioning improves energy efficiency, preventing overcooling and saving power.

The Combo roof system provides four layers of waterproofing and thermal insulation.

Special glass prevents heat loss, minimises heat transfer and reduces the need for air conditioning.

Intelligent lighting uses network-based communications to optimise performance.

Solar thermal systems convert sunlight into low-cost water-heating solutions.

Exterior insulation boosts heat retention around the whole facility.



OUR CARBON COMMITMENT FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Our UAE production hub is a major environmental success, yet it is only a part of the big picture: to reduce the overall carbon footprint of Ahmad Tea – starting with a 5% cut in CO2 emissions, from 2019.

Key components of the plan:

Reduce overall energy used (in kwh/ton of blended tea)by an average of 2.5% per year

Fuel 18% of our overall energy requirement with renewable electricity

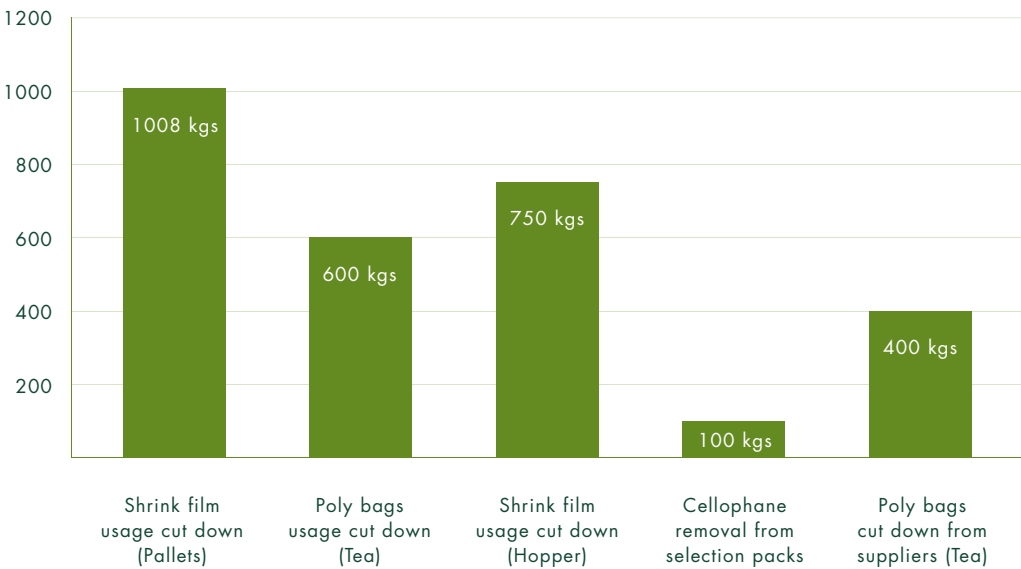
Replace all R22 refrigerant with the more environmentally friendly R410a



REDUCING OUR RELIANCE ON PLASTICS



We are continuing to make progress in the areas of energy efficiency and ethical production. But there is always room for improvement – and one important area concerns reducing our reliance on plastic. So far this year, we have reduced our plastic usage by 2,858kg – and that is just the beginning. The key areas of reduction are as follows:



Moving away from plastic is not as simple as it may at first seem and there are several factors to consider. For example, in developing countries, plastic can provide our products with vital protection against external contaminants.

This year, we have begun testing alternative materials, with the aim of ensuring our products are safe without compromising on sustainability. We are now confident that together, we will reduce our plastic usage over the years to come.

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a tea plantation. In the foreground, there are rows of tea bushes. In the middle ground, a person is visible working in the field. The background shows rolling hills under a bright, hazy sky. A white rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the title and text.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Ever since our business began life, we have strived to improve the lives of others. What started as one man's desire to do some good in the world has, over the years, evolved into the Inspiring Kindness programme – a strategy based on the three pillars detailed in this report.

Now, as we reach the end of another year, we look ahead to the next one and a future we all share. Because at Ahmad Tea, it has never been enough to spread kindness ourselves. Our aim is to inspire others to do the same.