

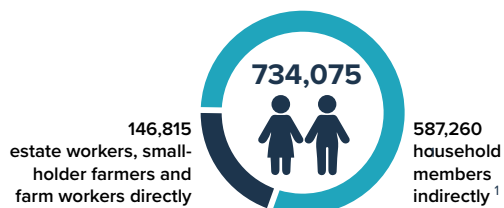


**HEALTHY DIETS
FOR TEA COMMUNITIES**

**GLOBAL PROGRAMME
RESULTS**

PROGRAMME SUCCESSES

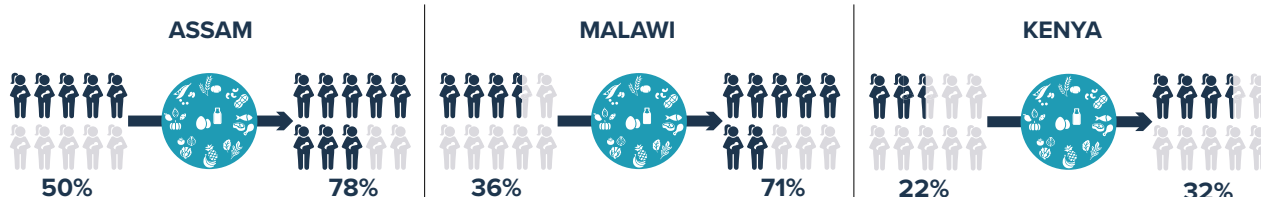
TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED



Reached **734,075** people in Kenya, Malawi, and Assam State.



Enhanced awareness of the importance of diverse diets and fortified foods: in Assam, 82 per cent of programme participants were aware of fortified cooking oil by the end of the programme, compared to 68 per cent beforehand; in Malawi, 100 per cent of smallholder farmers had heard of fortified foods, compared to 74 per cent at the start of the programme.



Improved the diet quality of tea workers. The percentage of women in the programme eating minimally diverse, nutritious diets – 5 out of 10 food groups – increased in all three countries.²



Increased consumption of fortified and biofortified foods

- In Malawi, estates provided fortified maize lunches for **23,000** estate workers.
- In Assam, 20 per cent more participants were using cooking oil fortified with vitamins A and D by the end of the programme.
- In Kenya, the percentage of smallholder farmers growing orange-fleshed sweet potato in their kitchen gardens increased from 21 per cent to 34 per cent.



The programme successfully introduced sustainable, innovative market-based solutions. Local Healthy Line Shops reached **76,000** tea workers and family members in Assam with nutrient-rich, healthy foods and hygiene products; by the end of the programme, these products were 64 per cent more available in those shops. **34,710** tea workers and family members **reached by Dharmalife Entrepreneurs**. Each entrepreneur sold on average just under 100 USD of products per month: a win-win for female livelihoods and improved nutrition.



Adapted to COVID-19 successfully, transitioning cooking demonstrations online in India, and conveying key messages through churches during COVID-19 restrictions in Kenya.



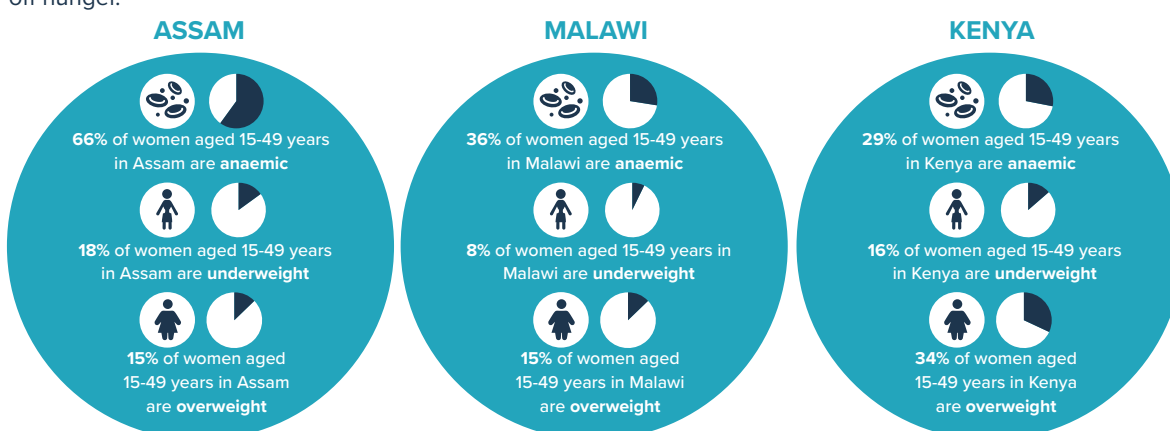
Interventions will have a sustainable impact well beyond the life of the programme: the ongoing provision of fortified lunches to workers by tea estates in Malawi; the engagement and ownership of governments in Malawi and Kenya; and the introduction of innovative market-based approaches in Assam.

BACKGROUND

Poor diets are the leading cause of global ill health, resulting in malnutrition and deficiencies such as anaemia, decreased energy levels, diminished health, and decreased productivity.³ A diverse diet containing a wide variety of food types is more likely to provide the vitamins and minerals needed for good health, to boost brain and body development, and bolster resistance to infections.⁴ However, in 2021, more than 3.1 billion people in the world – or 42 per cent of the global population – were unable to afford a healthy diet.⁵ Tea workers and farmers, predominantly women, often contend with high rates of malnutrition due to diets lacking essential nutrients. Healthy Diets for Tea Communities is a public-private collaboration between the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), the Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP), and eight leading tea companies⁶ which aims to promote healthy diets in tea supply chains in India, Malawi, and Kenya. This document summarises programme results across all three countries between 2020 and 2023.

MALNUTRITION IN TEA COMMUNITIES

Global tea production totals over USD 17 billion annually; in many countries, the tea sector contributes significantly to income and employment for millions of rural families, with smallholder farmers producing 60 per cent of world production.⁷ However, tea workers and farmers often suffer from high undernutrition rates because their diets, which consist mainly of staple foods such as rice, bread, maize, and wheat, lack foods rich in essential nutrients and vitamins needed for good health. One barrier to healthy diets is a lack of awareness, but nutritious foods are also less affordable and available to tea farmers and workers: limited access to markets and poor market infrastructure may constrain their access to nutritious food. They may also sell their most nutritious foods and opt for inexpensive starchy foods such as rice and wheat to stave off hunger.⁸



Source: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

THE HEALTHY DIETS FOR TEA COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME

GAIN and the Ethical Tea Partnership focused on **improving the availability of - and demand for - nutritious foods** in tea supply chains in Assam (India), Kenya, and Malawi. The programme aimed to increase the number and diversity of food groups that tea supply chain workers consume daily by:

- > **Increasing demand for nutritious foods** through interactive communication and education activities which improve people's food awareness and choices, such as community events, training at nutrition clubs, street theatre, or cooking demonstrations.
- > **Increasing access to nutritious food** through various methods, including vegetable gardens, providing seeds and fruit trees, providing fortified lunches at work and supporting and encouraging local retailers and door to door female entrepreneurs to supply nutritious and fortified foods.

> **Improving the enabling environment** by promoting the importance of investing in workforce nutrition programmes to businesses and governments.

> **Improving hygiene** through promoting and supporting handwashing in India and Malawi.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

MALAWI

Reach: 147,780 people: 29,556 smallholder farmers and estate workers directly and 118,224 household members indirectly.

Activities:

- Improve lunches with fortified maize.
- Support crop diversification and kitchen gardens.
- Nutrition clubs to train farmers on good nutrition and sanitation.
- Create demand for nutritious foods through training, outreach, and cooking demonstrations.
- Educate participants in hygiene and provide materials to build 'tip taps' for handwashing.

Implementing partners: GAIN, the Ethical Tea Partnership and the Tea Association of Malawi.

INDIA

Reach: 450,270 people: 90,054 estate workers directly and 360,216 family and community members indirectly.¹

Activities:

- 152 Healthy Line Shops – local shops - sell nutritious food and hygiene products to tea workers and their families and raise awareness of good nutrition and hygiene.
- 76 female Dharmalife Entrepreneurs go door-to-door, to raise awareness of the importance of good nutrition and hygiene and sell healthy food and hygiene products during home visits.
- Interactive activities within communities enhance people's knowledge of healthy food and their food choices. These activities include community street plays, cooking demonstrations, and competitions.
- Tea estates are made aware of the importance of a healthy workforce, for instance, through their involvement in community events for tea workers.

Implementing partners: GAIN, the Ethical Tea Partnership, the Dharmalife Foundation, Ecociate Consultants and the Indian Tea Association (ITA).

KENYA

Reach: 136,025 people: 27,205 smallholder farmers and farm workers directly, and 108,820 household members indirectly.¹

Activities:

- Interactive activities to improve people's food knowledge and choices: cooking demonstrations and competitions; training community health volunteers in nutrition and healthy diets and deploying them.
- Target 10,000 farm workers and smallholder farmers with intensive activities encouraging them to grow and consume more diverse crops in kitchen gardens; distribute seeds for biofortified high-iron beans and vegetables, and orange-fleshed sweet potato vines.
- Promote nutritious foods at the point of purchase: through kiosk owners.
- Reinforce programme messages through radio messages and weekly SMS messages.
- Promote the importance of investing in workforce nutrition to businesses/governments.

Implementing partners: GAIN, the Ethical Tea Partnership and the Kenya Tea Development Agency.

SCORING DIETS: MINIMUM DIETARY DIVERSITY, AND WHY IT MATTERS

A diet that includes a wide range of different foods and food groups is best for ensuring the right balance of protein, essential fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals (also known as micronutrients) for good health. Dietary diversity refers to a diet that contains a higher concentration of micronutrients. Women who consume a minimum of 5 out of 10 possible food groups are considered to have achieved the minimum adequate diet diversity. To assess this, women are surveyed about their food intake over the past 24 hours and assigned a score. A score exceeding 5 suggests that they are more likely to meet the minimum required level of micronutrients; the higher the score, the more micronutrients likely consumed. Although the minimum dietary diversity indicator is obtained by surveying individual women, it provides valuable insights into the nutritional status of a population. A key programme objective was to increase the minimum dietary diversity scores for programme participants.



Grains, white roots and tubers and plantains



Pulses



Nuts and seeds



Dairy



Meat, poultry and fish



Eggs



Dark green leafy vegetables



Other vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables



Other vegetables



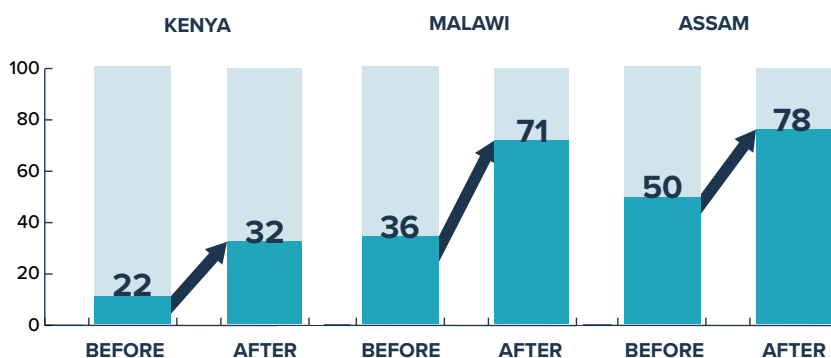
Other fruits

PROGRAMME IMPACT

Reached 734,075 people: 146,815 tea estate workers, smallholder farmers and farm workers directly with programme interventions, and 587,260 of their household members indirectly in Kenya, Malawi, and Assam State.¹

Increased understanding and uptake of diverse diets. In all three countries, the programme increased participants' understanding and awareness of the importance of consuming diverse diets and nutritious foods. The percentage of women who reported consuming at least 5 healthy food groups daily increased in all three countries. Women reported eating a greater variety of pulses, more leafy greens, and other vegetables across the programme countries.

Percentage of women meeting minimum dietary diversity (at least 5 healthy food groups daily)



* Number of food groups women consumed in 24 hours before and after programme.²

Increased awareness and consumption of biofortified foods in Malawi and Kenya. In Malawi and Kenya, farmers were trained on growing biofortified crops like vitamin-A fortified orange-fleshed sweet potato and high-iron beans and maize; the programme also provided vines and seedlings for these crops. By the end of the programme, in Kenya, the percentage of smallholder farmers who were growing bio-fortified orange-fleshed sweet potatoes in their kitchen gardens had increased, from 21 per cent to 34 per cent; in Malawi, 86 per cent of smallholder farmers who participated in the programme reported growing orange-fleshed sweet potatoes in their home gardens – an increase of 20 per cent.

Increased consumption of fortified foods. The programme also encouraged increased consumption of fortified foods, for example vitamin A and D-fortified cooking oil in Assam, and maize flour fortified with key micronutrients in Malawi. In Malawi, 12 tea estates installed dossifiers - machines which add a precise amount of premix containing critical micronutrients into maize flour. Depending on the season, this intervention benefits up to 23,000 workers daily, meaning tea workers will benefit from fortified lunches well beyond the life of the programme. In Assam, India, the use of fortified cooking oil went up by 20 per cent.

The programme successfully implemented models that reached tea workers at scale, introducing market-based solutions to bring healthy foods and hygiene products closer to tea communities on a sustainable basis.



Dharmalife Entrepreneur Lakhinayak (R) uses her phone to teach a woman about healthy diets and hygiene during one of her home visits. © Dharmalife Foundation

DHARMALIFE ENTREPRENEURS: HARNESSING THE POWER OF FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

The programme collaborated with the Dharmalife Foundation to train 78 female entrepreneurs from tea estates to sell products door-to-door such as: iodine and iron-fortified salt; oil fortified with vitamins A and D; pulses; soybean; and handwash. Their goal was to raise awareness of healthy diets and to promote handwashing. This programme was successfully implemented across 76 tea estates in Assam, benefiting 76,000 tea workers and family members. By the end of the programme, 71 per cent of Dharmalife Entrepreneur customers were eating at least 5 food groups, compared to 37 per cent at the start of the programme.

In Assam, tea workers and their families typically reside in tea estate housing located in rural areas far from main towns. They depend on shops within the tea estate and small local markets for their food supplies. If nutritious foods such as fortified items, eggs, and vegetables, are not available in these shops and markets, it becomes challenging for workers and their families to maintain a diverse diet. At the same time, local suppliers often find these healthier products expensive to acquire due to a lack of reliable linkages with wholesalers.

The programme worked with Ecociate to test a unique model addressing this challenge. They worked with local distributors to alleviate the burden and costs of sourcing healthy products from wholesalers in nearby towns. This collaboration aimed to enhance business skills such as stock management and sales tracking while also teaching retailers how to effectively promote nutritious food products to their customers. The result was the establishment of 152 Healthy Line Shops in 30 tea estates, providing access to approximately 15,200 people in Assam. As a result of this work, 67 per cent of Healthy Line Shops customers were using fortified cooking oil at the end of the programme, compared to 12 per cent at the beginning.

Gender Dynamics changed. The evaluation suggests that the programme influenced gender dynamics within households, with women reporting increased decision-making power about how household income is spent and major household purchases in all three countries. In addition to this, female Dharmalife entrepreneurs in Assam sold on average just under 100 USD of products per month each: a win-win for female livelihoods and improved nutrition.

Successful adjustment to COVID-19. The programme adapted in the face of COVID-19 implementation challenges. In Assam, digitalisation of cooking demonstrations allowed people to access them on their phones, reaching more people than in-person