Human Rights Impact Assessment
Coffee from Brazil

Final Report
May 2023

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Executive Summary

In 2021, Morrisons contracted Ergon Associates, a consultancy specialising in labour and human rights, to conduct human rights impact assessments (HRIAs) in relation to the coffee blend sold in its in-store barista bars, cafes and coffee machines under the BREW brand. This report summarises key findings and recommendations from the HRIA conducted in relation to the Brazilian supply chain. A parallel study was conducted on the supply chain in Peru.

The study looked at potential impacts across the Brazilian coffee supply chain more broadly, rather than solely Morrisons' Rainforest Alliance (RA)-certified supply chain, in order to provide a more complete understanding of challenges and issues in the sector as a whole, as Morrisons scales up its in-store coffee offer.

Summary of methodology

The methodology used was designed to identify actual and potential (positive and negative) human rights impacts arising from specific business activities and relationships and evaluate them to determine saliency. The methodology aligned with international standards and frameworks including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises.

The key stages of the HRIA are set out in the table below:

HRIA stage	Description	Timeline
Partnering with local expert	• Contracting a Brazilian partner with sectoral expertise to provide insight on the value chain context and conduct stakeholder interviews	**February 2022**
Review of business and supply chain activities and processes	• Review of relevant business and supply chain activities and relationships • Interviews with internal Morrisons stakeholders (buyers, ethical trade) • Interviews with external stakeholders (suppliers, traders)	**February – April 2022**
Scoping of potentially impacted human rights and rightsholders	• Identifying shortlist of potential rights impacted according to each business activity • Determining structure for impact assessment	**April 2022**
Baseline analysis	• Desk review of legal framework and existing situation in Brazil • Identification of underlying factors affecting enjoyment of rights	**April 2022**
Field visit and stakeholder engagement	• Mapping key stakeholders • Visits to farms and processing sites in Brazil (including suppliers of BREW and sites not in the BREW supply chain), including interviews with farmers, management and workers • Interviews with selected third-party stakeholders	**May - June 2022**

HRIA stage	Description	Timeline
Impact assessment	• Determining saliency of identified impacts • Root cause analysis and determination of Morrisons linkage • Identifying highest saliency impacts and Morrisons' leverage to address them	June – July 2022
Recommendations	• Determining appropriate actions to address impacts • Development of recommendations for a Human Rights Action Plan	August 2022

The assessment considered the different perspectives of people that are affected by activities within the Brazilian coffee supply chain. Potentially impacted rightsholders, as well as key supply chain actors – such as suppliers, traders and key Morrisons staff – were identified through desk research and early engagement. A broader selection of stakeholders with expertise on the sector and knowledge of issues facing vulnerable groups - including government institutions and civil society organisations – were also engaged.

Impact assessment

The impact assessment focused on production and processing-level activities in Brazil.

For each activity, relevant rights that might be impacted were selected from a longlist of more than 70 human rights defined by international conventions and other instruments. Assessment of relevant rights was made on the basis of background desk research and interviews with rightsholders and other stakeholders. The saliency of potential impacts was determined according to factors including its (direct or indirect) attribution to the supply chain activity, the likelihood of the impact occurring, the severity if it did, and the possibility of remediation.

A root cause analysis was then undertaken to assess the key drivers of impacts. The key root causes were clustered around:

- **Commercial, sectoral and business drivers: e.g.** price volatility; seasonal nature of work; labour shortages; informality; producer capacity; supply chain length and complexity.
- **Legal and institutional drivers: e.g.** labour law reform weak regulation; and inadequate enforcement of labour laws.
- **Other contextual social drivers: e.g.** climate change; societal gender norms; remoteness of farms; and poverty and lack of opportunity.

The root cause analysis helped to determine the level of attribution of each impact to Morrisons in line with the UNGPs – i.e. through causation, contribution and linkage.

Identified salient impacts for each supply chain activity are summarised in the table below. They include differentiation for smallholder and large farms.

Summary of impact scores by rights category and business activity	Crop development and farm maintenance (smallholders)	Harvest (smallholders)	Crop development and farm maintenance (large farms)	Harvest (large farms)	Processing
Working conditions					
OHS					
Freedom of association and collective bargaining					
Forced labour					
Child labour					
Non-discrimination and equal opportunities (labour)					
Gender-based violence and harassment (at the workplace)					
Right to health					
Adequate standard of living (housing, land, property, livelihoods, food and water)					
Right to an effective remedy					
Right to non-discrimination					

As displayed above, the most salient human rights impacts identified by this study include:

- **OHS (Smallholders - Harvest):** Informality, low awareness and limited or no training are notable risk among informal hired labour on smallholder farms. Harvest workers work without adequate shade, rest areas, or access to water. Owing to piece rate earnings, workers often choose to work excessive hours, carrying health risks.
- **OHS (Large farms - Crop development and farm maintenance):** Pesticide spraying on coffee farms without adequate PPE is linked to major health impacts, such as cancer and Parkinson's-like symptoms. Issues can relate to inadequate PPE provision or training, as well as unwillingness of workers to follow requirements.
- **Working conditions (Large farms – Harvest):** Informality is widespread among harvest workers, particularly on non-certified farms. Subsequently, workers do not benefit from legal provisions such as additional payments, paid rest periods and pension contributions. Excessive hours and

manipulation of payments are particularly common when labour intermediaries, who recruit migrant workers, are involved.

- **Forced labour (Large farms – Harvest):** Forced labour risk is an issue in relation to harvest operations – with indicators of forced labour - such as upfront payments for services, debt, isolation, unclear conditions of work – being a significant risk with the involvement of labour intermediaries. The coffee sector is often considered the highest risk sector for cases of "slave labour" – or Brazil's expansive forced labour definition - with the sector often having the highest number of forced labour cases identified by authorities.
- **Adequate standard of living (Large farms – Harvest):** Poor quality, overcrowded housing, and a lack of access to drinking water and adequate sanitation is a common issue facing harvest workers. A lack of gender segregated housing is also a serious safety concern for women. During the COVID-19 pandemic, authorities also found infected workers sleeping in the same dormitory as non-infected workers.
- **OHS (Large farms – Harvest):** Inadequate training and PPE is common. Road accidents are reportedly a risk in transportation of workers to coffee farms in rural areas - including those that result in fatalities. Farm sites can often lack adequate and accessible rest areas, toilets, shade, sufficient water access, which results in workers spending long hours exposed. Excessive hours also carry health and wellbeing risks.

The findings of the impact assessment informed recommended mitigation actions developed by Ergon, which correspond to the BREW supply chain from both Brazil and Peru. The recommendations form the basis of a human rights action plan to be independently developed by Morrisons.

Contents

1. Introduction and background

A human rights impact assessment (HRIA) is a specialist study designed to support an organisation's due diligence efforts in relation to international standards and frameworks including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises.

In 2021, Morrisons contracted Ergon Associates, a consultancy specialising in labour and human rights, to conduct HRIAs in relation to the coffee blend sold in its in-store barista bars, cafés and coffee machines under the BREW brand. BREW is sourced from Brazil and Peru, and research was conducted in both of these supply chains in the first half of 2022. This report summarises key findings and recommendations from the HRIA of the Brazilian supply chain.

These supply chains were selected as the focus for HRIAs following a risk assessment (also conducted by Ergon Associates) in 2021 across 60 commodities, which identified coffee as a high-risk product. The BREW supply chain specifically was selected for focus based on Morrisons' objective to significantly scale up sourcing of BREW coffee over the coming years, and its commitment to ensure high social sustainability standards in relation to the BREW brand.

The aim of the HRIA was to provide:

- An understanding of where and how specific supply chain relationships and activities have the potential to impact internationally recognised human rights.
- Expanded information on key risks, including any root causes.
- Engagement with relevant 'rightsholders' and incorporation of their views related to actual or potential impacts.
- Recommendations to mitigate, prevent and / or remedy identified adverse actual or potential impacts, as well as generate more positive impacts

Based on the findings and recommendations set out in this report, Morrisons is developing its own time-bound action plan for addressing identified impacts.

2. Methodology

2.1 Overview

The methodology used was designed to identify actual and potential human rights impacts arising from specific business activities and relationships and evaluate them to determine saliency. In this context, *potential* negative human rights impact refers to the *risk* of an adverse impact on the enjoyment of rights that should be prevented or mitigated – distinct from an *actual* human rights impact, which refers to situations where human rights impacts have *already occurred* and require intervention and remediation.[1] The study also aimed to identify potential positive impacts so actions could be developed to maintain or enhance such impacts.

While Morrisons requires all BREW coffee to be Rainforest Alliance (RA) certified, this study looked at impacts across the Brazilian coffee supply chain more generally (including certified and non-certified production). The purpose of this was for Morrisons to have a more complete understanding of challenges and issues in the sector as a whole as it intends to scale up its sourcing of BREW.

2.2 Key stages of the HRIA process

The key stages of the process for this HRIA are summarised below.

HRIA stage	Description	Timeline
Partnering with local expert	• Ergon partnered with a Brazilian consultant selected for their experience in the Brazilian coffee sector, and broader experience of conducting interviews with workers, producers and additional stakeholders.	**February 2022**
Review of business and supply chain activities and processes	• Desk research and engagement with supply chain actors identified the key supply chain activities for coffee sourced from Brazil for BREW. This process included: • Interviews with internal Morrisons stakeholders (buyers, ethical trade, technical) • Interviews with external stakeholders (suppliers, traders) • Review of Morrisons' policies, governance documents and procedures related to procurement and supply chain management (including human rights standards and due diligence processes, along with information and plans related specifically to BREW coffee).	**February – April 2022**
Scoping of potentially impacted human rights and rightsholders	• A scoping process was carried out to identify a shortlist of rights and corresponding rightsholders potentially impacted by each supply chain activity to determine the structure for the impact assessment	**April 2022**
Baseline analysis	• A desk-based 'baseline analysis' was carried out to provide context for the rest of the study.	**April 2022**

HRIA stage	Description	Timeline
	• This process involved a review of key national legislation and regulations for the protection of rights and research on the situation regarding the enjoyment of rights in practice, at both the national and sectoral level. • This research aimed to capture research reports, industry analysis, and relevant news items. • The analysis was framed around the shortlist of rights and rightsholders in scope and used as the framework for identifying research questions and areas of focus for the field visit and stakeholder engagement stage.	
Field visit and stakeholder engagement	• Visits were conducted in the states of São Paulo and the south of Minas Gerais in June 2022. The fieldwork included visits to: 1 integrated coffee exporter; 1 Fairtrade association; 3 large farms (2 RA-certified, 1 non-certified); 3 smallholder properties (2 Fairtrade certified, 1 non-certified) and 1 large, commercial processing site. The entities included during the visits included entities within the BREW supply chain, as well as those that currently do not supply BREW (e.g. Fairtrade and uncertified farms). This provided a mixed and broad sample for an improved understanding of the Brazilian coffee sector. • Key external stakeholders were identified through desk research and expert input from the local consultant. Organisations and individual experts with relevant knowledge and expertise provided valuable input on wider issues affecting rightsholders in the coffee supply chain in Brazil (see 'Stakeholder list' below) • Semi-structured interviews were conducted with exporters / associations / farm management and human resources and technical staff, as well as smallholder producers and farm workers, and their families. The visits were scheduled to coincide with harvest to ensure engagement with harvest workers, as well as year-round permanent staff.	**May - June 2022**
Impact assessment	• Information gathered during the stakeholder engagement phase, as well as background desk research, was used to identify impacts and / or potential impacts and rank them according to their saliency. • The saliency ranking was based on an assessment of the likelihood of the impact occurring, severity or magnitude of the impact, the potential for remediation if the impact occurred, and whether the impact is directly or indirectly linked to the supply chain activity. • Analysis was undertaken to identify underlying drivers or root causes of salient impacts and to understand the extent to which Morrisons might *cause*, *contribute to* or be *directly linked* to impacts through its business practices and relationships – in line with the UNGP framework.	**June – July 2022**
Recommendations	• Following the impact assessment, Ergon developed a series of preliminary recommendations for Morrisons to mitigate identified negative impacts and create or enhance potential positive impacts. These recommendations were then workshopped with Morrisons staff, including representatives of the ethical trade team and the buying team, to understand their feasibility in relation to Morrisons' existing and planned policies and activities. Based on this	**August 2022**

HRIA stage	Description	Timeline
	workshop, Morrisons is developing a time-bound human rights action plan.	

2.3 Structure of the impact assessment

The initial scoping phases of the project identified core supply chain activities in Brazil and a shortlist of relevant human rights and rightsholders on which to focus.

2.3.1 Core supply chain activities

The detailed impact assessment focused on the core activities related to primary production (among smallholders and large farms) and processing: *year-round crop development, farm maintenance and light processing activities*, *harvesting* and *processing*. These activities were prioritised after initial assessment of the full supply chain identified primary production and processing as highest risk in terms of actual and potential human rights impacts. Although there are known risks associated with several other mid-and downstream activities – such as domestic transport, international shipping, and logistics and distribution in destination markets – these are not considered specific or unique to the coffee supply chain and are better assessed through wider sectoral or business activity assessments.

2.3.2 Shortlist of rights

The following shortlist of relevant rights associated with the supply chain activities in scope was developed from an initial list of more than 70 human rights articulated in international covenants and conventions. The shortlist formed a starting point and was updated as appropriate throughout the development of the HRIA.

Labour rights	• Working conditions • Occupational health and safety (OHS) • Freedom of association and collective bargaining • Forced labour • Child labour • Right to non-discrimination and equal opportunities • Gender-based violence and harassment
Economic and social rights	• Adequate standard of living (food, water, housing, land, property, livelihood) • Adequate standard of living (health)
Civil and political rights	• Right to life and physical integrity • Freedom of opinion and expression (including access to information) and non-corruption
Cross-category rights	• Right to an effective remedy • Right to non-discrimination

2.3.3 Shortlist of rightsholders

The following list of rightsholders represents the groups and individuals assessed to be potentially impacted by supply chain activities. As with rights categories, this list was updated as appropriate throughout the development of the HRIA. Few categories of rightsholders are fully distinct – and there may be some overlap between different categories, for example women / migrant workers. It is also important to note that different categories of rightsholders might be impacted by the same activity in different ways.

Smallholder farmers

Harvest workers

Children

Factory workers

Communities

Women

Migrant workers

2.4 Stakeholder engagement

As well as direct input from rightsholders, the perspective of a broader range of stakeholders with knowledge of the supply chain and / or issues facing vulnerable groups, formed a key part of the assessment.

Stakeholders and rightsholders engaged included:

- 1 UK-based roaster (the first-tier supplier of BREW to Morrisons)
- 2 traders / importers (second-tier suppliers of BREW)
- 2 Brazilian integrated exporters supplying BREW coffee
- 1 Fairtrade association
- 3 large farms (2 RA-certified, 1 non-certified)
- 6 smallholders, with visits to 3 smallholder properties (2 FT certified, 1 non-certified)
- 1 large processing site
- 54 workers (incl. women and migrant workers)
- 1 labour contractor
- 4 farm managers
- 1 rural employers association
- 1 sectoral coffee association

- 1 women's coffee association
- 1 local government labour authority
- 1 local government agricultural technical support provider
- 1 INGO
- 2 certification organisations / MSIs

Several other national stakeholders (government, trade unions, NGOs, sectoral associations) in Brazil did not respond to requests for interviews on this occasion. However, these stakeholders, along with others, provided input to a similar study conducted by Ergon in 2021, providing valuable insights that also served to inform this HRIA.

Ensuring meaningful engagement

Several measures were taken to ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement:

- Issues and priorities for engagement were tailored to the stakeholders and rightsholders. Topics for consultation and the resulting interview questions for remote stakeholder engagement were tailored for each organisation based on their knowledge areas and experience.

- Measures were taken to create safe spaces for stakeholders to express their views. The confidentiality of the engagement process was explicitly communicated to all participating stakeholders.

- Steps were taken to secure informed participation of all participating stakeholders. All prospective stakeholders received a Portuguese -language introduction letter that outlined the HRIA process and its objectives, as well as the objectives of stakeholder engagement.

- Data collection and stakeholder engagement aimed to ensure an effective capture of diverse views and experiences. Targeted engagement with specialist knowledge of issues facing women and migrant workers strengthened the focus on vulnerable groups throughout the impact assessment.

- The HRIA findings will be communicated to all participating stakeholders. Morrisons will be available to respond to any questions concerning the HRIA or next steps to be taken.

2.5 Limitations

The methodology followed for this HRIA is considered to provide an effective means for identifying potential impacts and developing recommendations for action areas. However, some limitations should be acknowledged:

- Visits were intended to include additional producers supplying BREW coffee in the *Cerrado* region of state of Minas Gerais. However, the relevant producer withdrew from the study. An additional Brazilian producer currently in the supply chain, but based in southern Minas Gerais, declined participation at the outset of the study. As a result, a more limited number of sites in the current BREW supply chain were included than anticipated. Furthermore, the field work was subsequently limited to the regions of northern São Paulo and southern Minas Gerais – which has a distinct coffee production context in comparison to the *Cerrado*. Including two different regions and would have provided broader insights and points of comparison.

3. Country and value chain context

3.1 Sector and supply chain overview

3.1.1 Key facts and figures

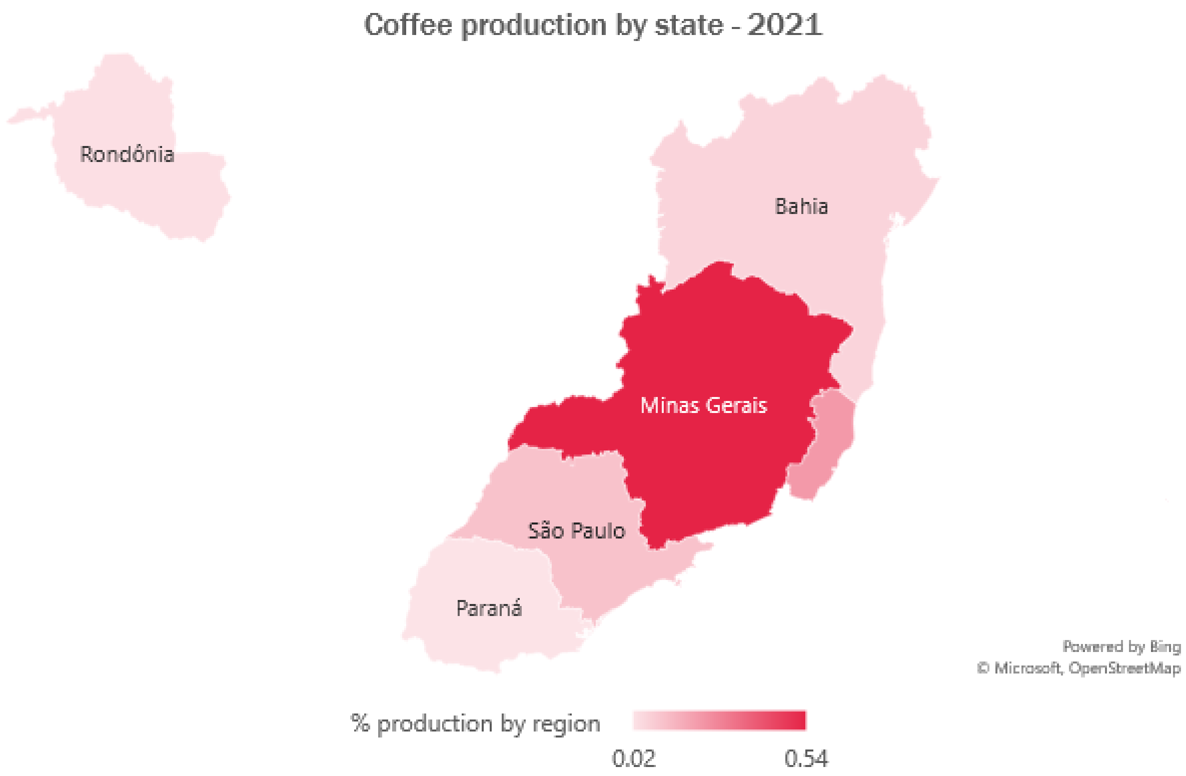
Economic importance	• Coffee is traditionally one of Brazil's key exports. However, during 2021, a poor harvest meant coffee was not one the leading exports (in terms of value), which instead included soya, beef, iron, petroleum and sugar.[2]
Social importance	• According to the last agricultural census (2017), more than 8.4 million workers are engaged in the Brazilian coffee sector directly and indirectly. This includes 533,048 workers (including family labour) engaged in production activities on coffee farms – including year-round farm and crop maintenance activities and harvest (the latter accounting for around 50% of the workforce). Of these, around 30% are estimated to be migrant workers.[3] • Smallholder, family production accounts for 48% of the total value of coffee production and around 54% of all coffee farms.[4] • There are approximately 264,000 coffee farms (of all sizes) and around 50 coffee cooperatives in Brazil.[5]
Production volumes	• Brazil is the world's largest producer of coffee – accounting for 32% of global sales in 2021.[6] • In 2021, Brazil produced 47.7 million bags of coffee – a considerable decline from the record year of 2020 in which 63.3 bags of coffee were produced. The decline in recent years has primarily been owing to droughts and cold weather affecting arabica production.[7] • The vast majority of coffee produced is exported - 42.4 million bags in 2021.[8] • It is projected that the 2022 harvest will see a 16.8% increase compared to 2021 – promising 55.8 million bags of coffee (60kg each).[9] • Arabica coffee comprises around 70% of Brazil's coffee production (and is the dominant variety globally).
Price	• Coffee is a commodity crop, meaning base coffee prices are generally determined by global commodity exchanges: ICE Futures (NY) for Arabica and London (LIFFE) for Robusta. The price per pound of Arabica coffee is called the "C" price. The C price is used to give traders a starting point for price setting. Prices may be expressed as C+5 for a higher-grade coffee, C-10 for a lower grade, or C+10 for coffee with a certification.[10] • In theory, the C price is determined by supply and demand, but in reality, the price is largely determined by speculation (based on short-term projections), often removed from real market conditions. This is illustrated by the fact that, in spite of significant shorter-term fluctuations, average long-term prices have barely changed for nearly 25 years – despite rises in costs of production and living. • In addition, the low base price, the coffee market experiences high volatility due to external factors, such as currency exchange rates, and the relative strength or weakness of the Brazilian real against the dollar, and changes in climatic conditions that may lead to over or under supply. • Prices can fluctuate significantly from year to year - the price for a 60 Kg bag of coffee during the 2021 harvesting season was BRL 1000-1500 (US$ 194 – 290) - around double the average 2020 price – owing to extreme weather, fears of a

	significant reduction in the 2022 crop and a possible global coffee deficit in the coming years. Prices in 2022 are expected to remain high, with global coffee stocks remaining low.[11] In March 2022, prices reached a 25-year high.[12]
Sales and export	• In 2021, Brazil exported 40.6 million bags of coffee – with the vast majority - 32.7 million bags - being arabica coffee.[13] • The USA is the main destination market of (green) coffees from Brazil, with 7.8 million bags exported to the USA in 2021. Germany was second largest destination 6.5 million bags, followed by Italy (2.9 million bags), Belgium (2.8 million bags) and Japan (2.5 million bags). China is a significantly growing market.[14] 2021 was a record high year for Brazilian coffee exports.[15] • The domestic market absorbs around 23 million bags of coffee, per year (around 40% of total production), making Brazil the second largest coffee consuming market in the world, behind only the United States.[16]

3.1.2 Sectoral overview

Geography and types

Coffee is grown in 14 states of Brazil, with 1,515 million ha of Arabica production and 371,000 ha of Robusta/Conilon. However, the main growing states are Minas Gerais (54%), Espírito Santo (22%), São Paulo (11%), Bahia (6%), Rondônia (3%) and Paraná (2%).[17]



- **Minas Gerais**: the largest coffee producing state with diverse soils, climatic types and producer types – from large farms (some mechanised) to smaller family farms. The state produces almost solely Arabica coffee and the south "Sul de Minas" is Brazil's largest producing area of Arabica.
- **São Paulo**: the second largest producing state, with a strong history of production. Exclusively produces Arabica coffee.
- **Bahia**: an equally diverse state with a variety of climatic conditions, producer types and degrees of mechanisation. Medium-large farms tend to be concentrated in the *Cerrado*, and smallholders in the *Planalto* – both producing Arabica. Conilon (Robusta) is produced in the south of the state on large farms.

Although the total cultivated area has decreased in recent years, yields have increased significantly owing to mechanisation, improved agronomical practices, and research advances introducing more productive crop varieties.

Arabica coffee comprises around 70% of Brazil's coffee production (and is the dominant variety globally). There are around 130 Arabica coffee cultivars (including Mundo Novo, Catuaí, Bourbon, Catucaí, Obatã and Arara), developed by Brazilian research institutions, and registered in the Brazilian National Registry of the Ministry of Agriculture. Robusta and Conilon are Brazil's only varieties of Coffeea canephora (a species of coffee that contains more caffeine and results in a more bitter taste – more often used in instant coffee).[18]

The coffee harvest season in Brazil generally runs from May until October – with slight variations between Arabica and Conilon/ Robusta. Arabica coffee trees follow a biennial production cycle, whereby a high yield harvesting is followed by a lower yield harvest. There is less variation in yields with Robusta trees. Productivity of the crop depends on coffee type and area. In Minas Gerais and São Paulo, Arabica has a yield of 40 bags/ha, much higher than the national average of 25 bags/ha.[19]

Producer profile

While large farms play a crucial role in the Brazilian coffee sector, over half of Brazilian coffee farms are smallholders. Of Brazil's 264,000 coffee farms, over 50% - 143,078 - are smallholder farms (<10 ha) and 30,766 are large plantations (> 50 ha). However, data indicates that the majority of coffee (52%) is produced by large, non-family farms.[20]

Cooperatives play an important support role for smallholder farmers. Key activities include disseminating information to growers and providing technical assistance and training. Larger cooperatives also offer support for member-farmers in areas like purchasing inputs (fertilisers, machinery and equipment), providing credit, coffee quality "cupping" labs, storage, dry processing and sales. There are around 50 cooperatives active in the Brazilian coffee sector.

Farm ownership is male dominated, with women comprising an estimated 13% of farm owners. There has been considerable effort in recent years to provide greater visibility and support to women coffee farmers. On women-run farms, women comprise an estimated 43% of the workforce, on average, compared to 24% on male-run farms.[21]

Workforce profile

Labour needs are most intensive at farm level and during the harvest season. On larger farms a smaller number of workers are required for maintenance tasks throughout the year. On smallholder farms non-harvest activities are generally undertaken by the smallholder or their family with informal labour supporting the harvest – primarily extended family and neighboring producers.

Harvesting of most types of coffee remains largely manual and this reliance on manual harvesting accounts for most of the labour demand in coffee and up to 50% of production costs. It is estimated that 315,000 workers were needed during the 2020 coffee harvest in Brazil.[22]

Overall, it has been calculated that there are around 533,048 coffee production workers – of which approximately 50% are harvest workers. Internal migrant workers, often from northern MG or poorer north and north-eastern states of Brazil, play a crucial role in the harvest[23] - as do the labour intermediaries, or "*turmeiros*", responsible for organising groups of migrant workers, acting as an intermediary between the harvest workers and the farmers. It is in this recruitment context where there is the highest risk of negative human rights impacts.[24]

Informality is common in the coffee sector[25] – particularly during the harvest season – when it is calculated that around 67% of harvest workers are informal. Men make up the vast majority of workers in the sector and are much more likely to occupy formal or higher-paid skilled or supervisor roles than women workers. Over half of rural workers in Brazil are classified as "black" or "brown".[26]

Political and policy context

Given its size, history and importance, the institutional environment of the Brazilian coffee sector, and the legal and policy framework that underpins it, is more developed than many other coffee producing countries.

Key sectoral institutions include the CDPC (Deliberative Council of Coffee Policy), a council comprising government and private sector representatives that devises sectoral policy; the CNC (National Coffee Council), a private sector organization representing the sector; and Cecafé, which represents the country's coffee exporters. In terms of commercial actors, all the major global coffee traders have a strong presence in Brazil, in addition to the leading national coffee exporters and large coffee cooperatives, which have their own integrated exporting operations, making them of some of the largest coffee exporters in the world.

The coffee sector is further supported by a range of other entities, including research institutions; public and private agri-extension service providers; inputs and equipment manufacturers (including a significant agro-chemicals sector); financial services and logistics & distribution companies.

The Brazilian government sets minimum prices for a number of commodities, including coffee, which take into account production costs and minimum profit for producers. If market prices fall below the minimum price, the government can intervene through purchasing coffee or paying premiums.[27]

Sales and export

Producers take green coffee to cooperatives or exporters / traders where it is "graded" according to size and quality / characteristics (e.g. colour, appearance) and separated into "lots". Following this process, farmers may enter a process to find the best price for their coffee: they are not obligated to sell their coffee to the cooperative or trader that initially graded it. For large farms that belong to full-integrated traders, this process is simpler.

Traders and some cooperatives employ professional "cuppers" who roast small batches of coffee lots and assess its taste and aromatic features, grading it accordingly. Following this process, different coffee lots may be blended to fulfil a specific flavour / quality profile for buyers (usually roasters).

For export, coffee is mostly transported to the port (Santos, SP) in containers loaded on trucks. Usually, transport of is outsourced by traders and cooperatives to an external logistics provider. Generally, lower quality Brazilian coffee is sold on to roasters for the domestic market.

National exporters / traders are responsible for most of the coffee exported from Brazil, with larger cooperatives also increasingly seeking "direct-trade" and exporting directly to larger, international clients.

Certification

Certified coffee is generally considered by stakeholders to provide some guarantee of higher social standards than that of non-certified in Brazil. Specific benefits reported include improved management systems, higher rates of compliance with legislation, particularly OSH and labour contracting, as well as more frequent audits and the potential for higher prices for producers. Furthermore, Fairtrade's projects and minimum price system reportedly make a significant difference to the quality of life of small producers, particularly when prices are low.

However, some stakeholders are more sceptical of certification's impact, highlighting cases of workers being found in conditions analogous to slavery on certified farms.[28] It was also reported that auditors can sometimes have insufficient time and knowledge to effectively identify non-compliances, as well as sometimes have existing personal relationships with farm owners, affecting their impartiality.

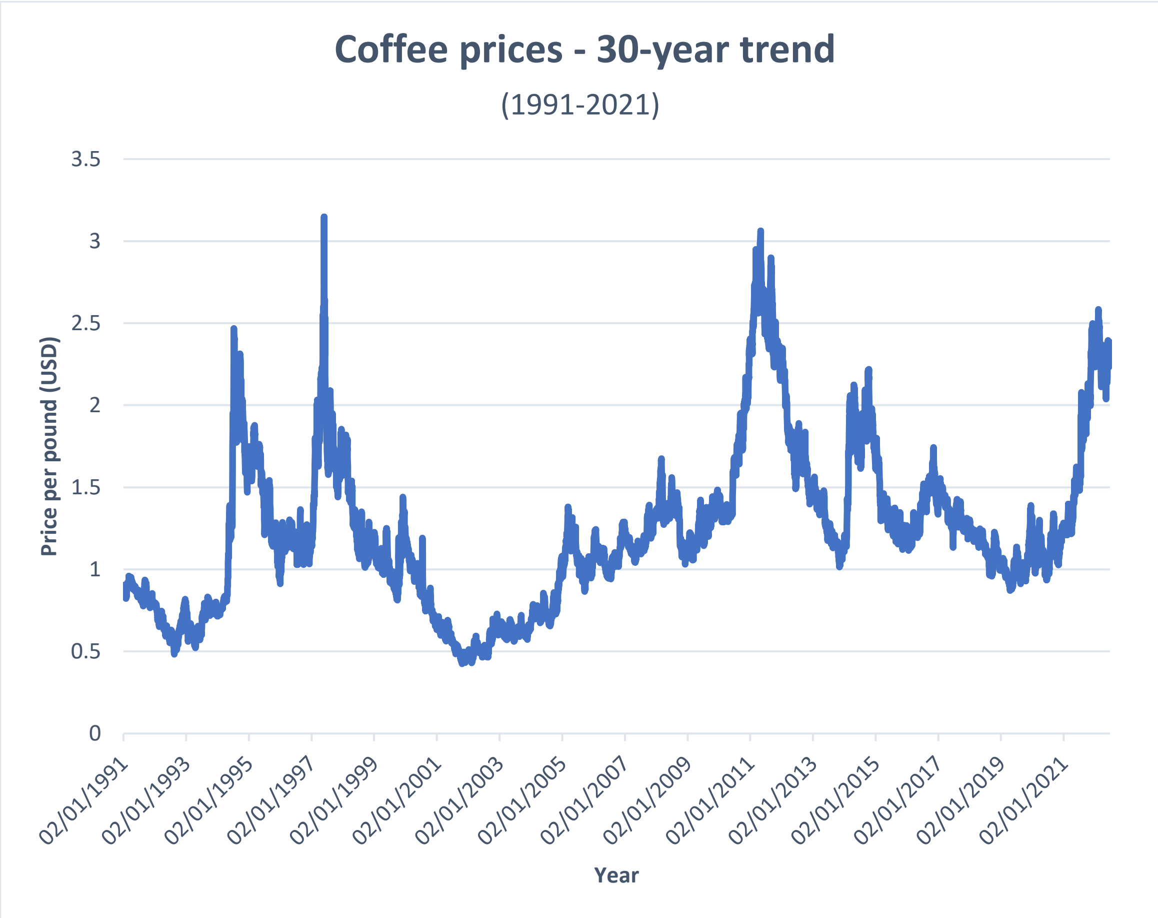
Demand remains a major constraint for scaling up certification in Brazilian coffee. Only 10% of the possible Fairtrade production volume is sold as Fairtrade due to lack of demand, meaning the premium is not having the impact that it could. As production of certified coffee generally exceeds demand, this pushes down certification-related premium prices, and it has been found that workers' wages are little different between certified farms and non-certified.[29] The new RA 2020 standard may lead to improvements in producer earnings in the coming years, but it is too soon to assess the potential impact definitively.

In addition to international certification schemes, there is a local certification scheme - Certifica Minas – in Minas Gerais, where more than 50% of Brazil's coffee is produced. Certifica Minas is administered by a public institution and aims to support good agricultural practices, with environmental and labour standards. It targets smallholders, and the barriers to entry are reportedly lower than for international schemes.

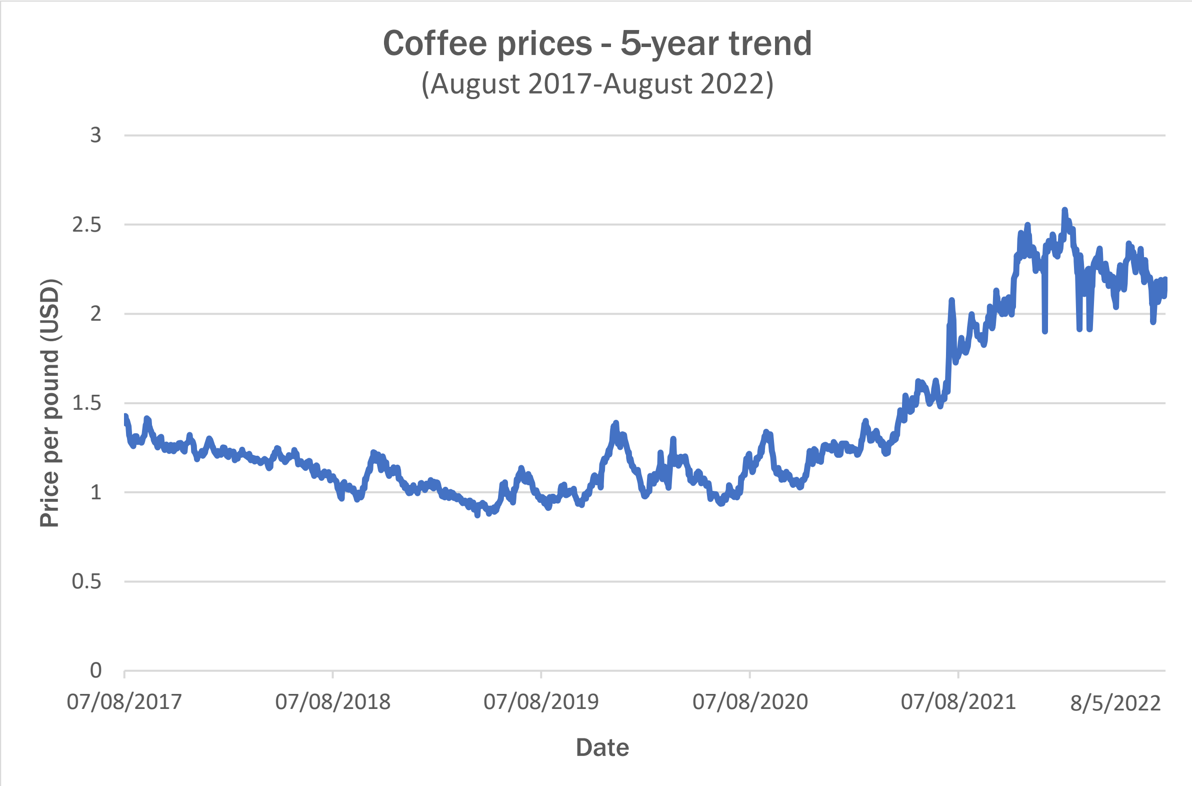
Pricing and demand

The ICE Futures "C" price is the world benchmark for Arabica coffee. Base prices for Arabica coffee are determined by the ICE Futures (NY) commodity exchange in New York. This global benchmark is known as the 'C' price and provides a starting point for traders to set a price for the actual coffee they buy. Other factors such as certification and grade of coffee are then factored in, often expressed as C+/-X. As with all commodities, the setting of a base or reference price relies on the assumption that one unit of production is interchangeable with another – i.e. that coffee can be sourced from any coffee-producing country, region or farm, and that a drop in supply from one country (for example because of drought) can be compensated for by increase in supply from another. When the biggest producing countries (such as Brazil) experience a drop in production, this has an impact on the global supply, pushing up global prices for coffee – as has recently occurred. The fact that the base price for coffee is determined by global supply and demand, as well as speculation by traders (often based on short-term projections that are not reflective of real market conditions), means that producers have little ability to raise their prices in line with rising costs of production and living, or to negotiate prices with buyers[30].

Average long-term prices have barely changed for nearly 30 years (see chart below) – meaning coffee production has become less profitable. While increased production costs are a notable challenge for Brazilian farmers currently, particularly owing to energy and fertilizer costs, coffee prices are currently favorable: Arabica prices reached USD 254.38/bag in April 2022 as opposed to US$107.65 in April 2020.[31]



ICE Futures C price – 1991-2021. Data from Macrotrends, [2022]



ICE Futures C price – August 2017- August 2022. Data from Nasdaq, 2022.

In addition to price challenges, the global coffee market is volatile, and producers are vulnerable to external factors over which they have no control such as currency exchange rates and production trends in other producing countries. Currently, a global coffee deficit in part related to extreme weather reducing yields in Brazil during 2021, is pushing up international prices to the benefit of producers. However, between 2017 and 2020, world coffee prices traded about 30 percent lower than the prior 10-year average, pointing to the overall volatility of the market, which puts producers in a vulnerable position.[32]

Key challenges faced by the sector

- **Low prices and high market volatility.** Despite current highs, low prices and a highly volatile market are traditional challenges for the sector. Producers have little leverage to negotiate prices and are vulnerable to the impacts of economic and geopolitical factors outside of their control. For most growers – large and small – coffee is their sole crop and income, meaning producers cannot compensate for low prices or shocks in the coffee market with alternative income sources. Low market prices are passed on by producers to workers, with piece rates for coffee harvesting in Minas Gerais reportedly barely changing over the last 13-15 years, according to workers' representatives. For reference, a living wage is estimated to be 1.5x the average wage for formal coffee workers in Minas Gerais and 2.3x less for informal workers.[33]
- **Logistical challenges.** The industry reported that during 2021, Brazilian coffee exporters struggled to secure containers and vessels for international exports, as well as have faced frequent postponements from shipping companies. There is intense competition among exporters to secure containers and loadings, and this also has costly financial consequences. Supply chain disruption has also been a common challenge in many destination countries.[34]

- **Climate change and environmental challenges.** Coffee production is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – as seen during the periods of extreme weather in Brazil in 2020-2021. Coffee trees require specific weather conditions to thrive, which are threatened by increasingly extreme and unpredictable climatic conditions (e.g. drought, frosts). Climate change can also contribute to increasing prevalence of diseases such as coffee leaf rust, which further impact yields. The land suitable for coffee production is estimated to reduce significantly over the coming decades - with the potential for shifting coffee production to other regions very limited.[35]
- **Challenges for smallholder farms.** Several challenges particularly affect family farmers. In general, smallholders are older and have more limited educational levels, which can lead to resistance to adoption of new methods and technologies. In this context, the ongoing viability of family farms is a concern, despite a growing interest of more educated younger generations in smallholder specialist coffee farming. Limited technical knowledge also means that smallholders can find it more difficult to adapt when affected by external factors such as climate change.
- **Labour shortages.** Labour shortages are seriously affecting many coffee areas in Brazil, especially with regard to harvest workers. Urban areas increasingly attract workers from rural areas, combined with the reputation of coffee harvesting as physically arduous and undesirable – despite the potential for higher wages than in comparable occupations in urban areas (e.g. cleaning). Producers report a widespread disinterest in coffee among young and local workers, particularly in more socially-economically developed parts of the country with greater opportunities. Labour shortages lead producers to rely on temporary migrant workers from poorer states in the Northeast of Brazil.
- **Labour law reform.** The controversial reform of Brazilian labour legislation in 2017 received a mixed reception. It has resulted in a reduction in union membership and collective bargaining agreements and is considered to have increased informality and vulnerability of rural workers.[36] Contrastingly, some stakeholders have also welcomed the amendments to certain regulations – for example relating to occupational health and safety - arguing that simplifying a complex regulatory framework has enhanced employer compliance with standards and supports good practices. Some stakeholders also argue that the reform brings greater flexibility that is welcomed by workers, though this is disputed by worker representatives – in particular in the case of the most vulnerable workers (e.g. harvest workers). In 2022, unions continued to call for a reversal of the reform.[37]

3.2 Key supply chain activities

The table below provides an overview of the key activities in the lower tiers of the supply chain that were the focus for this study.

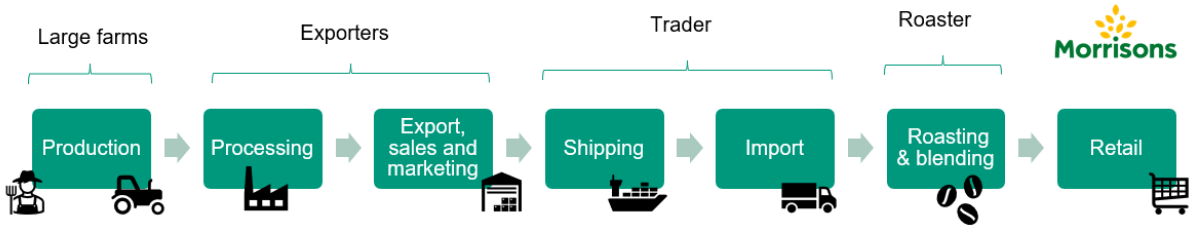
Activity	Description
Production	

Activity	Description
Farm maintenance and crop development	• Key activities at farm production level include soil preparation, fertilisation, planting, pruning and other general year-round farm maintenance tasks, depending on the size and capacities of the property. Year-round activities are when workers are most likely to be exposed to pesticides. 
Harvest	• Harvest is the most labour-intensive time, during which workers pick coffee cherries from trees and gather into 60 Kg sacks - manually, with the use of small hand-held machines, or, with large, complex machinery. Levels of mechanism depend on the geographic region and coffee type. However, the majority of Brazilian coffee (67%) requires manual harvesting. 
Initial processing	• Post-harvest “wet processing” usually takes place on coffee farms: even smallholder farms generally have good infrastructure, including small wet mills or processing equipment and sometimes mechanised coffee dryers.  • Brazilian coffee growers largely follow the “natural” system, whereby coffee is sun-dried on cement patios, with the need for regular (manual) revolving. In this case, the cherry is dried with the pulp, mucilage and skin. The second most common processing method used in Brazil is the “pulped natural/semi-washed” (honey) system, whereby unwashed cherries are de-pulped before being dried.
Processing	
Secondary processing	• After drying, coffee beans undergo further processing (“dry processing”). During the dry-processing stage, coffee beans are cleaned and husked, to become “green coffee”. This process can take place on large farms and smallholder farms, and less commonly, this process will take place at dedicated warehouses for secondary processing and sorting for export. These warehouses are often run by traders / exporters. 

4. Morrisons' business practices

4.1 BREW supply chain from Brazil

The graphic below shows the key stages of the BREW supply chain and the relevant actor at each stage.



4.2 How Morrisons purchases BREW coffee

4.2.1 Morrisons' and supplier buying practices

Overview	• BREW coffee is currently sold in in-store cafés, barista bars and front-of-store self-serve machines. • BREW is sourced from Brazil (70%) and Peru (30%). Coffee from these two origin countries is generally blended for BREW, but there is also a single-origin Peruvian BREW coffee. • There is currently one first-tier supplier of BREW coffee – and related equipment and training – a UK-based roaster, which in turn buys through traders. • Another supplier provides a different blend of coffee (not branded as BREW) for cafés and barista bars. This currently comprises the majority, but Morrisons is in the process of scaling up sourcing of BREW with the long-term aim of phasing out non-BREW coffee from its cafés and barista bars completely.
Tendering and contracting	• Tenders are issued to existing suppliers and potential additional suppliers, stipulating price, volume, product specifications (according to a pre-determined profile) and any certification or sustainability requirements. Before on-boarding new suppliers, Morrisons carries out site visits, audits and product tests (these are mostly focused on technical standards (e.g. food safety) rather than ethical trade or human rights). • All suppliers must, however, agree to meet the requirements of Morrisons Ethical Trading Code and cascade this throughout their supply chain. Tier-one, own-brand suppliers must additionally share information with Morrisons via the Suppliers Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex) and demonstrate compliance with Morrisons Ethical Trading Policy.
Contractual arrangements with suppliers	• Morrisons prioritises long-term, stable partnerships with suppliers and has been working with its BREW supplier for several years.
Volumes	• Morrisons has scaled up sourcing of BREW coffee from 25 tonnes to 300 tonnes since BREW's inception.

Pricing	• Coffee prices are determined by a number of factors, including the reference price from global commodity exchanges, currency exchange rates, freight and shipping costs and local variables (such as harvest quality and volumes). On the basis of these (and other) factors, prices are agreed between Morrisons and the first-tier roaster every six months.
Visibility	• Morrisons has no direct commercial relationships with producers and cooperatives. Both the roaster and traders have good visibility to the level of cooperatives, processors and exporters.
Supplier buying practices	• Morrisons' BREW supplier has a direct commercial relationship with traders, who in turn buy from large, integrated exporters in Brazil. These exporters have their own farms and also purchase coffee from other third-party farms. All the farms currently in the supply chain are large and RA-certified. Exporters are responsible for final stage processing and packing of the coffee before shipment. • Morrisons' BREW suppliers aim to work as much as possible with the same traders and producers (while remaining flexible to ensure stability and consistency of supply). It has been working with its biggest supplier – a UK-based trader / importer – for more than 40 years. • Both Morrisons's BREW supplier and its traders are less experienced in the Brazilian market than other origins. • Awarding of contracts is based on a consideration of quality, reliability and price, while the importance of maintaining strong relationships with traders and cooperatives, and balancing supply between different suppliers, is also taken into account. • Generally, coffee is bought on a futures basis, aggregated for all customers, rather than bought 'on spot' (i.e. in direct response to a specific customer order at the time). Volumes are determined by the previous year's orders, as well as an analysis of current market conditions (for example, conditions affecting production in sourcing countries or customers' planned growth). • Morrisons' BREW supplier aims to secure contracts early in the year for the length of the harvest. This is mutually beneficial as it provides cooperatives and producers with some security (which makes it easier for producers to secure loans and financing) and means the roaster can obtain a more competitive price.

4.2.2 Morrisons' and supplier ethical trade considerations

Morrisons' requirements for BREW coffee	• In addition to the onboarding checks undertaken by their primary supplier, Morrisons uses certification to provide assurances regarding social standards in the BREW supply chain - all BREW coffee must be RA-certified.
Morrisons' supplier evaluation	• The Ethical Trade team was not directly involved in the selection of the incumbent supplier but all Morrisons suppliers must review and agree to comply with the requirements of Morrisons Ethical Trading Code. • They are also in the process of developing systems (such as a supplier scorecard) to better integrate ethical trade considerations into the supplier selection process for their café and barista bar operations. • Given the direct incumbent supplier is UK-based, ongoing monitoring from an ethical trade perspective is limited. However, regular meetings are scheduled to discuss risk mitigation and improvement.

Projects and collaborations	• Morrisons has recently established a human rights working group, focusing on four pillars of activity over four years: worker representation, living wage, forced labour and gender. • The working group makes up part of Morrisons' overarching ESG improvement programme - Sustain.
Supplier ethical trade standards	• Morrisons' first-tier supplier of BREW requires traders (i.e. direct commercial relationships) to fill out a self-assessment questionnaire, and requests completion of a risk assessment that goes to producers or exporters (i.e. the next tier of the supply chain) to provide as much detail as possible about the supply chain. • Over 90 percent of coffee sourced by Morrisons' first-tier supplier is certified as RA, Fairtrade, or Organic. A previous target to source 100% RA-certified coffee as a minimum requirement (even if it could not all be sold on as RA-certified) is on hold due to challenges related to COVID-19, and a drop in RA-certified production following the introduction of the 2020 standard. • The ethical trade standards (including certification requirements) of second-tier suppliers, as importers, are driven largely by their end clients – their role is to pass requirements and policies down the supply chain. However, the biggest supplier to Morrisons' first-tier supplier sources more than 50 percent certified coffee and is active in a number of industry-wide initiatives and groups focused on sustainability and social conditions in the coffee supply chain.

5. Impact assessment

This section sets out the key findings arising from the impact assessment, which was based on information gathered through the baseline assessment, fieldwork and additional stakeholder engagement. The impact findings are separated into sections relating to each supply chain activity in scope – with a differentiation between smallholder and large farm production contexts.

The impacts are rated according to saliency. This assessment takes into account whether the impact is positive or negative, whether it is directly attributable to the activity in question, whether it is remediable, the likelihood of the impact occurring, and its magnitude.

Where both a positive and negative impact associated with an activity was identified, the negative impact prevailed – for example, the positive impact of the coffee sector in supporting rural economies was outweighed by the negative impact of farmer incomes being too low to sustain a decent standard of living (as reported in some cases). As a result, no positive impacts are recorded in the impact assessment findings, but the potential for Morrisons to drive or enhance positive impacts is reflected in the recommendations made by Ergon to inform Morrisons' independent action plan. Impacts were assessed on the basis of general supply chain conditions (i.e. without considering Morrisons' RA-certification requirement as a mitigation). Where certification was identified to have a notable effect on mitigating adverse impacts or enhancing positive ones, this has been flagged in the description of impacts below.

5.1 Summary of impact saliency by rights category and supply chain activity

The table below displays only the most salient impacts identified as part of this study to enable prioritisation of impacts and related mitigation actions. Each box represents an impact finding in relation to the supply chain activity (columns) and the rights category (rows). The highest scores (orange) reflect the most salient impacts identified by this study.

Most salient impacts

Other salient impacts

Summary of impact scores by rights category and business activity	Crop development and farm maintenance (smallholders)	Harvest (smallholders)	Crop development and farm maintenance (large farms)	Harvesting (large farms)	Processing
Working conditions					
OHS					
Freedom of association and collective bargaining					
Forced labour					
Child labour					
Non-discrimination and equal opportunities (labour)					
Gender-based violence and harassment (at the workplace)					
Right to health					
Adequate standard of living (housing, land, property, livelihoods, food and water)					
Right to an effective remedy					
Right to non-discrimination					

5.2 Impact findings by activity

5.2.1 Smallholders: crop development, farm maintenance, processing

This activity concerns the year-round (i.e. non-harvest related) tasks carried out on coffee farms. This includes planting and cultivation (incl. pesticide application), maintenance of buildings and initial processing of the coffee. Impacts in relation to this activity have been assessed on the basis a smallholder farmer carrying out these tasks, occasionally with the assistance of neighbouring farmers or family, if required. In exceptional circumstances additional labour may be engaged for these tasks but this is not the norm.

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
OHS (Smallholders)	Limited training and awareness, as well as insufficient PPE, among some smallholder farmers may result in negative impacts from the use of agrochemicals and machinery during year-round activities.	
Adequate standard of living (Smallholders; Communities)	Two different issues were assessed under this rights category. The impact rating reflects the most salient impact – farmer livelihoods – but other identified impacts are covered below. 1) Livelihoods: Many smallholders make a decent living out of coffee farming, however there is increasing interest in crop diversification. Unpredictability in global coffee prices, worsened by climatic issues, create insecurity and difficulties to consistently make living incomes. Smallholders have little bargaining power. 2) Wastewater: Wastewater from coffee processing can affect chemical balance in local water suppliers and this is reportedly an issue in some communities. This situation may have an impact on food systems (though no specific reports).	
Non-discrimination (Smallholders; Women)	Women are taking an increasing visible role in coffee farming, particularly as smallholders of specialist coffee. However, traditionally, there has been some resistance to their equal participation in male-dominated environments, with a tendency for male household members to assume responsibility for more external tasks e.g. negotiation prices, selling coffee, participating actively in cooperatives or associations.	

5.2.2 Smallholders: harvest

Harvest involves the picking of coffee cherries from trees - manually or with the help of hand-held machinery. Farmers generally rely on additional labour to conduct harvest activities – either migrant workers or neighbours who are also smallholders. Migrant workers often travel from poorer states or regions independently for the harvest season. Workers are mostly engaged informally (i.e. without written contracts or social benefits), given the short, periodic nature of the work – with harvest on small farms often lasting only a couple of weeks to a month. Harvest workers are expected to provide their own equipment and are generally paid a piece rate (according to ‘litre’ of coffee picked), which they negotiate with the smallholder – who also provides accommodation. In the case of neighbours and friends, an informal system in which smallholder farmers exchange “days” of harvest at each other’s farms takes place. Less commonly, smallholders will renumerate other farmers with a daily rate.

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
OHS (Harvest workers)	Informality, low awareness and limited or no OHS training are notable risk among hired labour on smallholder farms. Hired labourers often bring their own PPE, such as boots and gloves, if they chose to use them. The informal context means many harvest workers work without adequate shade, rest areas, or access to water. In order to collect more coffee and earn more, workers often choose to work excessive hours (up to 12 hours) in the heat of the day, up to 7 days a week - which has health and wellbeing implications.	
Working conditions (Harvest workers)	Larger smallholders rely on hired labour for harvests each year, in addition to neighbours and friends. Given the short duration of the work (e.g. several weeks max), the vast majority of employment is informal. The informal nature of the contracting has negative impacts for workers' social contributions, working hours, and related rights. In this way, workers will not be protected by legal minimums or local collective agreements, if in place. However, as harvest workers often negotiate their piece rate directly with the smallholder farmer, they have greater bargaining power and more transparency over their pay, than perhaps is the case on larger farms.	
Freedom of Association (Harvest workers)	While there are no reports of smallholders actively engaging in anti-union activity, the informal nature of the hiring of harvest workers on smallholder farms inhibits harvest workers accessing these rights, and coverage under relevant collective agreements.	
Forced labour (Harvest workers)	Forced labour in the internationally recognised sense (as opposed to the Brazilian definition) is unlikely in a smallholder context, but possible, particularly given the informality and isolation of harvest workers who often migrate for the work in rural areas. Accommodation is provided by smallholders.	
GBVH (Harvest workers; Women)	Female hired labourers are uncommon on smallholder farms, but there is a potential risk of GBVH owing to gendered power dynamic and isolation.	
Adequate standard of living	Smallholders often provide some form of accommodation to harvest workers. Food may also be provided. There is a risk of poor-quality housing owing to the informal, temporary and isolated nature of the work.	

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
(Harvest workers)		
Right to an effective remedy (Harvest workers)	Given the informal nature of smallholder production, formal grievance mechanisms at farm level do not exist. On farms that make up part of a certified co-operative or association, mechanisms may be available, but they are often poorly publicised among temporary harvest workers. In general, harvest workers lack awareness about their rights and characteristics of the farm (i.e. whether it's associated, certified etc).	

5.2.3 Large farms: crop development, farm maintenance, processing

On large farms, year-round non-harvest related activities, such as planting and cultivation, farm maintenance and light processing, is carried out by a small group of permanent, local workers. These workers will either live in nearby towns or villages, or live on the farm, in houses provided by management. In the case of the latter, it is not uncommon for whole families to live on the farm property. Outside of the harvest period, work is much less labour intensive, meaning that excessive hours are unlikely. However, high-risk activities, such as the application of pesticides, take place during this period.

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
OHS (Workers)	Pesticide spraying on coffee farms without adequate PPE is linked to major (incl. fatal) health impacts, such as cancer and Parkinson's-like symptoms. Issues can relate to inadequate PPE provision or training, as well as unwillingness of workers to follow requirements.	
Working conditions (Workers)	Year-round workers more likely to be permanent, salaried and formally registered than harvest workers which mitigates some vulnerability. However, some farms also engage day labourers who are not normally registered. Non-compliance with labour law regarding paid leave and wages has been reported. Furthermore, it is unlikely for work outside harvest to earn more than minimum wage. One study estimated living wages to be 1.5x the average wage for formal coffee workers in Minas Gerais.	

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
Freedom of association (Workers)	Reform to the labour law has led to a reduction in collective agreements nationwide, and specifically in the coffee sector. There has been a significant decline in rates of unionisation also, as union fees became voluntary rather than mandatory. It has been reported that some coffee farm owners deliberately encouraged workers to cancel their union membership	
Forced labour (Workers)	Forced labour is a possible impact, owing to the isolation of some coffee farms, and the dependency that year-round staff can develop (e.g. living on site). However, generally, forced labour risk is much lower for these workers compared to harvest workers – as the roles tend to be more formal and salaried.	
Non-discrimination (Workers; Women)	Research found that the real average income for men in coffee is 16.2% higher than for women, both due to direct pay discrimination and women's lack of access to higher-paid roles such as tractor driver, supervisor or administrative roles – despite women generally having higher levels of education. Stakeholders highlight that women sometimes may not recognise discrimination in certain rural contexts, like coffee farming.	
GBVH (Workers; Women)	Harassment of women by employers and colleagues is a contextual risk owing to gender misbalance on farms, which are male dominated, as well as the remote locations, which increase vulnerability. However, many women present on farms year-round will live in family units which will somewhat mitigate risk.	
Right to health (Communities)	Community health impacts from pesticide spraying are reported in Brazil – particularly owing to a more liberal regulatory environment for the application of pesticides than many countries. No direct link to solely to coffee, but agriculture more broadly. Wastewater from coffee processing can affect chemical balance in local water suppliers and this is reportedly an issue in some communities.	
Adequate standard of living (Communities)	Cases of substandard housing are a risk - although less likely among permanent all year-round workers, rather than harvest workers. Poor housing provision and lack of access to drinking water and toilets reportedly characterises most cases in which workers have been rescued by authorities from coffee farms in recent years - meeting Brazil's definition of forced labour, but not the internationally recognised standard.	

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
Right to an effective remedy (Workers; Communities)	Non-certified farms often do not have effective grievance mechanisms in place. Low awareness of rights among workforce may also hamper accessibility, even on certified farms. Impact is mitigated to some extent by higher levels of unionisation among formal workforce - meaning some representation and access to remedy is likely. In 2020, the Brazilian government introduced a hotline to report workplace-level grievances.	

5.2.4 Large farms: harvest

On large farms, coffee can be harvested manually, with hand-held machinery, or be somewhat or fully mechanised. The approach used will depend on several factors, including the geography and the age of the coffee plants (younger plants require manual picking). Harvest is the most labour-intensive time for farms and they increasingly struggle to find young, local workers during this period. This creates a reliance on migrant workers that often come from poorer regions or states in "*turmas*" or groups. These groups are managed by "*turmeiros*" or labour intermediaries that recruit the group of workers in their hometowns, organising transport to coffee regions and finding work for the group of harvesters. While harvest workers should be contracted formally, informal recruitment is common. Workers are paid a piece rate per litre of coffee collected – and in some case collective agreements should provide minimum earnings about minimum wage. The intensive nature of harvest work and the presence of labour intermediaries are additional risk factors that can lead to exploitative conditions.

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
Working conditions (Harvest workers)	Informality is widespread among harvest workers. For example, in 2017 it was found that only 16% of harvest workers had contracts lasting the duration of the harvest and informality has risen since. Subsequently, workers do not benefit from legal provisions such as additional payments, paid rest periods and pension contributions. They are also not covered by relevant collective agreements. Excessive hours (12-hour days) are common owing to piece rate nature of work – which also leads workers to want to work longer hours. Manipulation of payments is particularly common when labour intermediaries "*turmeiros*" are involved - resulting in underpayment of workers and a considerable lack of clarity about payment rates, timings and calculations. While some report that coffee harvesters can earn well during the harvest (significantly over	

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
	minimum wage), one study found that the living wage in Minas Gerais was 2.3x the average wage received by informal coffee workers. Informality is generally considered to be less common on certified farms but is still a notable risk.	
OHS (Harvest workers)	Inadequate training and PPE (e.g. gloves, boots, leg protectors to prevent snake bites) is a risk, and somewhat fuelled by worker reluctance to follow guidance, as well as employer negligence. Road accidents are reportedly a risk in transportation of workers to coffee farms in rural areas - including those that result in fatalities. Farm sites can commonly lack adequate and accessible rest areas, toilets, shade, sufficient water access, which results in workers spending long hours exposed. Excessive hours during harvest (12-hour days) also carry health and wellbeing risks.	
Forced labour (Harvest workers)	Forced labour risk is an issue in relation to harvest operations, particularly when considering Brazil's expansive legal definition of forced labour or “slave labour"- i.e. "degrading living and working conditions" as well as conditions analogous to slavery. Indeed, the coffee sector is often considered the highest risk sector for this, based on cases identified by authorities. Indicators of forced labour (upfront payments for services, debt, isolation, unclear conditions of work etc) is a significant risk with the involvement of labour intermediaries.	
Adequate standard of living (Harvest workers)	Poor quality, overcrowded housing, and a lack of access to drinking water and adequate sanitation is common in most cases in which workers have been found by authorities on coffee farms - meeting Brazil's definition of forced labour, but not the internationally recognised standard. A lack of gender segregated housing is also a serious safety concern for women.	
Freedom of Association (Harvest workers)	High rates of informality and temporary nature of the work means that harvest workers are much less likely to be unionised than the permanent workforce. Labour law reforms have reduced unionisation in the sector and more broadly. Some reports of proactive anti-union behaviour on the part of coffee farms.	

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
Child labour (Children)	Child labour is not prevalent on larger farms but can occur. This risk primarily relates to the possible hiring of adolescent boys under the age of 18 - which would be possible owing to the informal, undocumented nature of work particularly among migrant workers. To a lesser extent, there may be cases of older children accompanying parents (local works) to work. All work related to coffee production is legally classed as "hazardous" for under 18s.	
Non-discrimination	Gender discrimination in hiring is a reported risk. However, some stakeholders claim that some employers prefer women harvesters, due to belief they're more "reliable". Overall, harvest work is considerably male dominated.	
GBVH (Harvest workers; Women)	Harassment of women by employers and colleagues is reportedly a risk at work, in transport to and from work and in workplace accommodation. Reportedly, a lack of separate facilities for men and women (including housing) heightens this risk. Informality and greater social vulnerability among harvest workers exacerbates risk.	
Right to an effective remedy (Harvest workers)	High levels of informality among harvest workers significantly affects right to remedy. Many non-certified farms do not have grievance mechanisms in place and when labour intermediaries are used, harvest workers may have limited to no contact with farm owners. Low awareness of rights among workforce is also a key issue, as well as poor connectivity on remote farms.	

5.2.5 Processing

Processing, grading and packing of coffee for export is undertaken at large plants operated by exporters (which can be large cooperatives). Workers on site are formally contracted, often on permanent contracts, and are generally local to the area. In some cases, collective agreements will be in place providing conditions above legal minimums. Potential negative impacts are owing to the physical nature of the work and the use of heavy machinery.

Rights issue and rightsholders	Description of impact	Impact rating
OHS (Workers)	There is an intrinsic risk of accident and injury with the use of heavy machinery and loading of trucks at plants, as well as peripheral risk of serious accidents. Back problems are common and there is a potential risk of inadequate training or PPE provision in some workplaces.	
Adequate standard of living (Workers; Communities)	Wastewater from processing is reportedly an issue for surrounding communities in some coffee regions. Wastewater from coffee processing contains large amounts of organic matter which can affect the chemical balance - and therefore aquatic life, which can an impact on food systems, if not managed properly.	

6. Understanding root causes, linkage and scope for action

6.1 Root causes and drivers of impact

To further understand the human rights impacts (actual and potential) identified in this HRIA, a root cause analysis was undertaken. Root causes are underlying structural or contextual factors that are considered to drive human rights impacts and affect the enjoyment of human rights by rightsholders. The root cause analysis is important for the development of appropriate actions to mitigate or remedy impacts.

This analysis demonstrated that each human rights impact is frequently driven by multiple root causes, and these root causes often contribute to multiple impacts. Where there are multiple root causes, this may also compound or exacerbate specific impacts.

The root causes are categorised under three main categories: (e*.g. commercial sectoral and business drivers, legal and institutional framework and other contextual social drivers).*

Commercial, sectoral and business drivers

Root cause	Description
Supply chain length and complexity	Coffee supply chains are generally quite complex with many actors and intermediaries. Unless specified by the end buyer, certified and non-certified coffee can be sourced from various farms depending on availability and price at the time. This creates challenges for implementing standards and monitoring conditions, and ultimately weakens relationships and dilutes responsibility, which can contribute to various human rights impacts, particularly at production level (e.g., labour rights, working conditions, OHS, living conditions)
Price volatility	While prices are currently high, historically this is not the case – and coffee prices are notably volatile - bearing no relation to costs of production or living income needs. The continual volatility creates uncertainty for producers, in turn creating prices pressures, which may be passed on to the workforce in terms of their working conditions, as well as affecting farmer livelihoods.
Seasonal nature of work	Coffee production has a high demand for labour during harvest periods and reduced demand at other times. This results in a prevalence of temporary and seasonal employment that is inherently precarious in nature. Both employers and workers can perceive registration as complex, costly and unnecessary for work of a few weeks or months, resulting in many harvest workers working informally. This precarious employment directly affects working conditions.

Root cause	Description
Labour shortages	In some key coffee-growing areas, producers report that labour shortages are one of the main challenges they face. Local workers tend to be more attracted to other sectors, and those local workers that continue in coffee are aging. This situation leads farms to rely on labour intermediaries who bring migrant workers from other areas – which in turn heightens the risk of exploitation.
Producer capacity	Producer capacity or willingness to comply with law or standards can result in inadequate provision of PPE and training or inadequate human resource capacity or commitment to ensure compliance with broader working conditions requirements. Lack of capacity may be especially relevant in the case of smaller producers (including smallholders) who may lack the necessary financial and technical resources and awareness.
Informality	High levels of informality are a feature of the rural labour market in Brazil, and it has reportedly increased following the labour law reform. It is also a root cause that is driven by other root causes, such as inadequate enforcement or seasonality of work. While there are employers who prefer informal hiring as a cheaper option, there are also cases of harvest workers preferring informal contracting as to potentially earn more and not lose social benefits, as well as providing flexibility to move between farms if they so wish. Informality contributes to multiple impacts related to labour rights and working conditions, as informal workers are more vulnerable to abuses on the part of employers, with very limited recourse to effective remedy.

Legal and institutional framework

Root cause	Description
Labour law reform and weak regulation	The reform of Brazil's labour legislation in 2017 took steps to create greater flexibility within the labour market. However, this is reported to have resulted in significant increases in informality, according to many stakeholders.[38] One controversial element of the reform was the elimination of mandatory union fees and some collective bargaining requirements – leading to a rapid drop in collective bargaining agreements in place, and in overall levels of unionisation, creating greater vulnerability of workers. The trend towards deregulation also has impacts relating to OSH and right to health. Some regulations relating to OSH have been made more flexible, and in 2019, the health protection agency introduced "risk of death" as the only criterion

Root cause	Description
	for classifying a pesticide as toxic. In 2022, further legal changes providing greater flexibility in the use of pesticides is with the legislature. Various stakeholders highlight the risk to communities and rural workers.[39]
Inadequate enforcement of labour law	Brazilian labour legislation is generally considered robust, despite the 2017 reform. However, inadequate enforcement – which has reportedly worsened significantly under the current administration - limits the effectiveness of the law in practice. Underfunding of the labour inspectorate limits its reach, especially in more, high-risk, remote areas. Moreover, labour inspectors and prosecutors can only apply civil penalties, which means labour law violations generally do not result in criminal prosecution. This contributes to a sense of impunity among employers, according to trade unions.

Other contextual social drivers

Root cause	Description
Poverty and lack of opportunity	Brazil has historically been a country of significant inequality and poverty. This situation has worsened in recent years. Almost 13% of Brazilians reportedly live under the poverty line (28 million people)[40], and almost 40% of workers (formal and informal) earn minimum wage or less – with real incomes continually decreasing owing to inflation.[41] This context of poverty leaves poor rural workers with limited employment options and limited education, or awareness of their rights. These workers are subsequently vulnerable to exploitation in terms of working conditions, living conditions and at greater risk of forced labour. The most vulnerable workers are often those from poorer areas or states, such as NE Brazil. The lack of economic opportunities drives many workers to migrate to coffee producing states for harvest season. They are highly vulnerable to exploitation by "*turmeiros*" (labour intermediaries), and to a lesser extent farmers– and there is a risk of debt bondage where workers have had to pay advances for services such as transport to the region, food or accommodation.
Climate change	Climate change is an increasing issue, making production cycles more unpredictable. Climate change is also a driver of pests and diseases, such as coffee leaf rust. These further fuels unpredictability of yields, and subsequently

Root cause	Description
	earnings of farmers, which can create downward price pressures of workers' conditions and farmer incomes.
Societal gender norms	Societal gender stereotypes and norms may fuel discrimination against women who may be considered less physically able or as having more of an economically supportive role. Contributes to multiple potential human rights issues, including in relation to working conditions (e.g., low pay due to informal or lesser roles), discrimination (access to fair treatment in employment), and access to effective grievance mechanisms (e.g., concerning sexual harassment).
Remoteness of coffee farms	Coffee farms can be found in remote areas, where the state services can be less present – both in terms of inspection and provision of services. The absence of the state in these areas may contribute to a sense of impunity among employers, making impacts related to working conditions more likely. The remoteness can also increase the vulnerability of workers – given the limited visibility of the conditions and poor connectivity in some areas.

6.2 Attribution of impacts to Morrisons

The UN Guiding Principles outline three ways that a human rights impact can be attributed to a company:

- Causation
- Contribution
- Linkage

Understanding a company's relationship to impacts is important for determining its leverage, or the capability of a company to influence conditions, positively or negatively, in the supply chain. This understanding helps prioritise the impacts to be addressed and helps identify the most effective actions that can mitigate impacts or prevent potential impacts on rightsholders in the shortest timeframe. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that a relationship to an impact through causation, contribution or linkage are not pre-requisites for action by companies, which should consider ways in which they can address all impacts or potential impacts identified.

In order to develop and prioritise recommended actions for Morrisons, Ergon undertook an internal analysis to identify the nature of Morrisons' relationship – through prices paid, supplier selection and requirements and other sourcing and purchasing decisions - to each of salient impacts identified in this HRIA (e.g. causation, contribution, linkage). This process was central to the development of the subsequent recommendations.

As an end buyer with no direct contractual or investment relationships to the lower tiers of the supply chain (i.e. production and processing activities in Brazil), Morrisons' activities alone are not sufficient to *cause* an impact to occur. Its connections to impacts are therefore through *contribution* or *linkage* – as set out in the examples below. In some cases, there is no attribution.

Contributions can be positive as well as negative, and in many cases Morrisons is contributing positively to an extent through their requirement for all BREW coffee to be purchased as Rainforest Alliance certified, which has the potential to mitigate negative impacts.

Large farms: Crop development, farm maintenance and processing

Rights issue	Attribution	Description
Occupational health and safety	Contribution	Issues relating to OHS are somewhat driven by weak regulation and enforcement, especially relating to the use of pesticide in Brazil. Producer capacity issues are also a driver. Certification does appear to have positive effect on OHS compliance to some extent, including tighter restrictions on pesticide use. Subsequently, Morrisons' and decision to purchase certified coffee can contribute positively to this impact.
Freedom of association	Linkage	The labour law reform has significantly affected these rights. However, there are reports of coffee farms actively encouraging deregistration of workers from unions. While Morrisons does not encourage this and there is little more it can do as a retailer to prevent this, it is a decision made by an actor in a supply chain, creating a link.
Right to an adequate standard of living	Contribution	Cases of inadequate housing are generally driven by producer capacity and inadequate enforcement of labour law. However, stronger relations between retailers and producers, through certification or direct trade can provide better visibility, including on housing, and would serve as a partial mitigator in this case.

Large farms: Harvest

Rights issue	Attribution	Description
Working conditions	Contribution	There are a number of root causes that drive poor working conditions at harvest – including inadequate law enforcement, seasonality and labour shortages that lead to the use of intermediaries. Greater traceability to farms, through certification or direct trade, can provide greater oversight and somewhat mitigate this risk. Low prices can also drive poor working conditions and labour outsourcing that facilitates this.

Rights issue	Attribution	Description
Forced labour	Contribution	Similarly, to working conditions, low prices from retailers can drive labour outsourcing and increased risk of forced labour. While conditions are generally considered to be better on certified farms, forced labour cases persist. Direct trade, certification, and ensuring fair and stable prices can contribute positively to mitigate this impact.
GBVH	Linkage	This impact is driven by societal gender norms, and while mitigating steps can be taken, it is hard to conclude that purchasing and procurement decisions taken by Morrisons would alone be enough to have a material effect. However, because the impact could be perpetrated by a supply chain actor, such as a producer, to whom Morrisons is directly linked by its business relationships, the attribution is one of linkage.

Processing

Rights issue	Attribution	Description
Occupational health and safety	Linkage	Risks are somewhat inherent to the nature of the activity (use of machinery, heavy lifting). It is difficult to conclude that supplier selection, prices paid, or other decisions made by Morrisons would alone be enough to mitigate the risks. The attribution is therefore one of linkage rather than contribution.
Right to health	No attribution	Root causes largely relate to weak regulation surrounding the disposal of wastewater from coffee processing and are beyond the scope of supply chain actor responsibilities – therefore there is no attribution.

Based on the findings of this impact assessment, recommended mitigation actions were developed by Ergon in relation to the BREW supply chain from both Brazil and Peru. As they correspond to both HRIAs, the recommendations have been published in a separate document.

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