

Unilever's response May 25, 2017

[From an email]

Since the issues were brought to our attention last year we have engaged with Wilmar and the rest of the industry to find prompt solutions.

Whilst all issues are not yet resolved, we do see some progress and believe Wilmar is moving in the right direction by engaging experts such as Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) and Verite, to carry out objective and independent reviews of their own operations and conditions in plantations. We welcome that Wilmar have stepped up transparency by publishing grievances raised on their website.

The issues raised are industry-wide and we continue to meet with our palm oil suppliers, both in Asia and in the UK, to review how they are addressing these in their own and extended supply chains.

Long-term, sustainable change across the industry is vital. We continue to drive this within the Consumer Goods Forum Palm Oil and Social Sustainability Working Groups, for example working to eliminate forced labour within the palm oil sector and focusing particularly on the three core principles of freedom of movement, employer pays for recruitment and no coercion to work/no debt to repay. We are also members of the Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment, a collaboration between leading global companies and expert organisations working towards best practices in the responsible recruitment of migrant workers.

We remain committed to a constructive path forward and believe that collaborative efforts remain the most effective approach to affect real change. We are opposed to and we do not tolerate any form of labour abuse in our supply chain.