

Ugandan Fairtrade Tea Producer In Devon for Fairtrade Fortnight (23rd Feb-9th March)!



Martin Odoch

Martin is currently studying for an MSc in Agricultural Production Chain Management at Van Hall Larenstein University in The Netherlands and also holds an MSc in Food Science & Technology.

Martin has extensive experience in tea production, achieved by working his way up over the past 5 years from Assistant Factory Manager to Field Manager at Mpanga Grower's Tea Factory Limited in Western Uganda. This organisation's core activities are cultivation, transportation, manufacturing and marketing of smallholder tea growers. Mpanga has been a supplier of tea to the Café Direct Tea Label, Tea Direct (part of the UK's largest Fairtrade hot drinks company) since its inception. It is also a Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) certified member. Mpanga Grower's Tea Factory Ltd is 100% owned by the 570 small holders who supply it with tea green leaf, and is one of only 4 factories in Uganda who are managed by the growers themselves.

Martin's most senior role at Mpanga included:

- managing the logistics of delivery of tea for processing
- planning, monitoring and evaluation of development activities aimed at improving smallholder productivity and quality of life
- compilation and analysis of field progress reports, annual work plans and field extension activities
- Responsibility for the financial planning of all field activities
- Overall supervision of field staff relating to field operations and personal development
- Regular liaison with development partners

Martin has a range of other achievements which compliment his work at Mpanga. These include successful establishment of a tea nursery with a capacity of 300,000 plantlets under the Smallholder Tea Expansion Program in 2007, and being co-author to the Mpanga Internal Control Systems (ICS) Fairtrade Monitoring Manual.