



# Cotton made in Africa

## Aggregated Verification Report 2018

### Content

1. Introduction .....	3
2. CmiA criteria for standard volume 3.1.....	4
2.1 Exclusion Criteria.....	4
2.2 Sustainability Criteria.....	5
3. Overview of verifications in 2018 .....	6
4. Performance Results.....	7
4.1 Farm Level Sustainability Criteria.....	7
4.1.1 Overall results of the farm level verifications in 2018 .....	8
4.1.2 Realized improvements .....	9
4.1.3 Remaining Challenges .....	10
4.2 Ginnery Level Sustainability Criteria .....	11
4.2.1 Overall results of the ginnery verifications in 2018.....	12
4.2.2 Realized improvements .....	12
4.2.3 Remaining challenges .....	12
5. Cotton production of verified cotton companies in the 2017/18 season .....	13
6. Farmer trainings provided by CmiA Cotton Companies .....	15
7. Implementation Support by AbTF.....	17
8. AbTF Verification Management Activities .....	18

**Figures:**

Figure 1: Number of verification missions in 2018.....	6
Figure 2: Overview of verifications 2018 per audit type and region.....	6
Figure 3: Overview of performance results per criterion of the 12 farm level verifications in 2018.....	7
Figure 4: Aggregated results for farm level sustainability criteria assessment over the last 3 years.....	7
Figure 5: Overview of performance results per criterion of the 14 ginnery level verifications in 2018 (Rating according to Traffic Light System).....	11
Figure 6: Aggregated results for ginnery level sustainability criteria assessment over the last 3 years....	11
Figure 7: Contracted farmers by CmiA certified cotton companies in 2018.....	13
Figure 8: Gender differentiation of farmers contracted by CmiA certified cotton companies in the 2017/18 season.....	14
Figure 9: Training topics and the number of participants in the 2017/2018 season.....	15
Figure 10: Percentage of female and male participants in farmer trainings.....	16
Figure 11: Female participants in trainings per topics.....	16

**Tables:**

Table 1: Comparison of farm level sustainability criteria ratings in 2017 and 2018 (according to traffic light system).....	8
Table 2: Comparison of ginnery level sustainability criteria ratings in 2017 and 2018 (according to traffic light system).....	12
Table 3: CmiA smallholder cotton production in 2017 and 2018.....	14

**Annex:**

Annexe A: Map of Verified Partner Cotton Companies (CmiA and CmiA Organic) in 2018.....	20
Annexe B: List of Verified CmiA Cotton Companies with respective Sales License Status in 2018.....	21

## 1. Introduction

Cotton made in Africa (CmiA) is a well-recognised standard that follows a continuous improvement approach for a sustainable development of the cotton economy in Sub-Saharan African countries. Compliance with the standard requirements are regularly monitored by third-party verifiers to give independent feedback to cotton companies on their performance and to ensure CmiA remains a credible standard brands and retailers, and ultimately consumers can have confidence in. The verification is a tool which at the same time checks if the cotton companies comply with the standard requirements, and independently assesses the success in continuously improving the sustainability performance, thus motivating the individual companies to further advance. By comparing verification results across the different certified cotton companies, Cotton made in Africa can analyse remaining challenges and jointly act with all relevant stakeholders to overcome those hurdles.

This report gives an overview of the verification missions and results of the previous year (here: 2018) and shows the progress in improved knowledge and application of learnings both from cotton companies and contracted smallholder farmers.

Independent and qualified third-party auditors regularly check the performance of cotton companies participating in CmiA, on farm level – i.e. related to the contracted smallholder farmers - and at the ginnery level – i.e. in one or more ginning factories - against the requirements of the Cotton made in Africa standards (CmiA and CmiA Organic). They check full compliance with all CmiA *exclusion criteria* and monitor continuous improvement concerning the implementation of the *CmiA development criteria*. Every cotton company (“managing entity”) must complete one *full verification cycle*. According to the CmiA verification system, a verification cycle consists of two separate missions – one farm level audit, to verify if the farmers contracted by the respective cotton company respect the exclusion criteria and adhere to the CmiA sustainability criteria on farm level, and one ginnery level audit, to verify if the work in the respective cotton company’s ginnery/ies is compliant with the CmiA exclusion and sustainability criteria outlined for the ginnery level. That means to obtain a CmiA certificate, two necessary verification missions are carried out, usually in two different calendar years.

This process ensures that CmiA's value proposition is observed: supporting African smallholder farmers achieve better living conditions for themselves and their families and continuously improve performance according to the CmiA sustainability criteria.

The CmiA certified cotton companies offer different trainings to smallholder farmers to continuously improve their cultivation methods in a sustainable way, to enhance their social conditions and to advance the capacity as an important economic actor (people, planet, profit).

The annually published aggregated verification report provides information on the results of the last years’ verification missions, serves as a reference to monitor future verifications and helps to continuously revise and improve the work on farm and ginnery level according to the sustainability criteria of Cotton made in Africa. The following chapters hence comprise an overview of the 2018 performance results of verified cotton companies, the verification management activities conducted by the Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) as well as the implementation support offered.

## 2. CmiA criteria for standard volume 3.1.

The **CmiA Criteria Matrix** gives an exact description of every criterion and defines which level of achievement is required to receive a “green”, “yellow” or “red” rating (**traffic light system**). The Matrix is the basis for the verification and performance assessment.<sup>1</sup> Based on the findings and recommendations of a verification, the Managing Entity (usually a cotton company) defines its own Management Plan where it outlines priority areas and activities for further improvement. The overall objective is to stepwise achieve a better ranking on those criteria which have not yet reached the “green” level, with a vision to perform on best practice level for a sustainable cotton production in the long term.

### 2.1 Exclusion Criteria

CmiA contributes to preserving human health and livelihoods as well as the natural environment. CmiA demands the use of less hazardous pesticides by African smallholder cotton farmers. Under Exclusion Criterion 9, CmiA is prohibiting the use of all pesticides listed on the **Stockholm and the Rotterdam Conventions** as well as of those classified as extremely and highly hazardous by the **World Health Organisation** (WHO categories Ia and Ib).

Regarding the social aspect of the exclusion criteria all CmiA cotton companies and the farmers must fully respect the **ILO Core Labour Conventions** on field and ginnery level. These include:

- ILO Conventions 138 and 182: prohibition of worst forms of child labour and definition of the minimum age for work (Exclusion Criterion 3)
- ILO Conventions 29 and 105: prohibiting bonded or forced labour (Excl. Criterion 5)
- ILO Convention 87: guaranteeing Freedom of Association, meaning the right of foundation and/or membership of/in institutional structure (Excl. Criterion 6a)
- ILO Convention 98: the right to collective bargaining and its outcomes (Excl. Criterion 6b)
- ILO Convention 100: Non-respect of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value (Excl. Criterion 16)
- ILO Convention 111: against discrimination in the workplace (Excl. Criterion 17)

In addition, CmiA prohibits human trafficking as defined by **UN Palermo Protocols** (Excl. Criterion 4). The CmiA standard as shown in the Matrix includes in total 17 exclusion criteria which, beyond to the above-mentioned criteria, include also environmental principles the farmers and the cotton companies have to follow. While exclusion criterion 1 ensures a focus on smallholder farmers, exclusion criterion 2 ensures only rain-fed cotton cultivation is compliant with CmiA, and the ambition of the initiative to ensure cotton grown is in an environmentally sound manner.

**All exclusion criteria must be met by the verified cotton companies in order to have a CmiA certificate issued.**

<sup>1</sup> The Matrix is accessible here <http://www.cottonmadeinafrica.org/en/materials/cmia-standard/cmia-standards-documents>

## 2.2 Sustainability Criteria

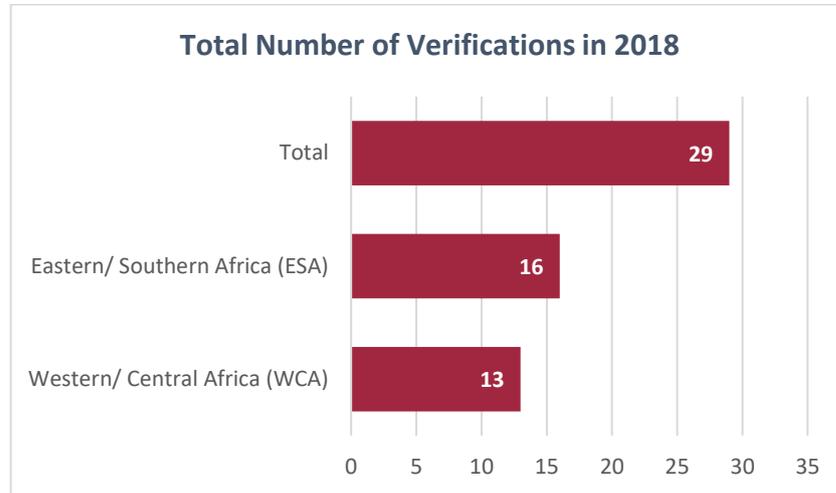
The Sustainability Criteria are guidelines for continuous improvement. To produce cotton according to Cotton made in Africa standards, cotton companies need to consider these so-called sustainability criteria and meet them progressively. They are defined for the farm level as well as for the ginnery level.

The farm level covers 6 different intervention areas with 16 sustainability criteria, while the ginnery level includes 5 sustainability criteria.

Farm Level Criteria		Ginnery Level Criteria	
<b>1</b>	Social welfare programs	<b>1</b>	Labour contracts in ginneries
<b>2a</b>	Written Contracts	<b>2</b>	Working hours in ginneries are regulated and overtime work is remunerated
<b>2b</b>	Equal rights regarding gender	<b>3</b>	Wages in ginneries comply with national law or sector agreements
<b>3a</b>	Soil and water conservation	<b>4</b>	Employer assures proper occupational health and safety conditions in gins including and not limited to dust and noise reduction measures and PPE for dust protection and noise reduction
<b>3b</b>	Crop rotation	<b>6</b>	Environmental management plan
<b>4a</b>	Pesticide management		
<b>4b</b>	Storage and transport of pesticides		
<b>4c</b>	Spraying of pesticides and health protection		
<b>4d</b>	Disposal of empty plant protection chemical containers		
<b>4e</b>	Integrated Pest management/ pest threshold		
<b>5</b>	Training to improve farmers skills and capacities		
<b>6a</b>	Pre-financing of inputs		
<b>6b</b>	Transparency of input and cotton seed prices for farmers		
<b>6c</b>	A transparent system to grade seed cotton		
<b>6d</b>	Maximising fibre and lint quality through improved harvesting and post harvesting techniques		
<b>6e</b>	Payment of cotton farmers		

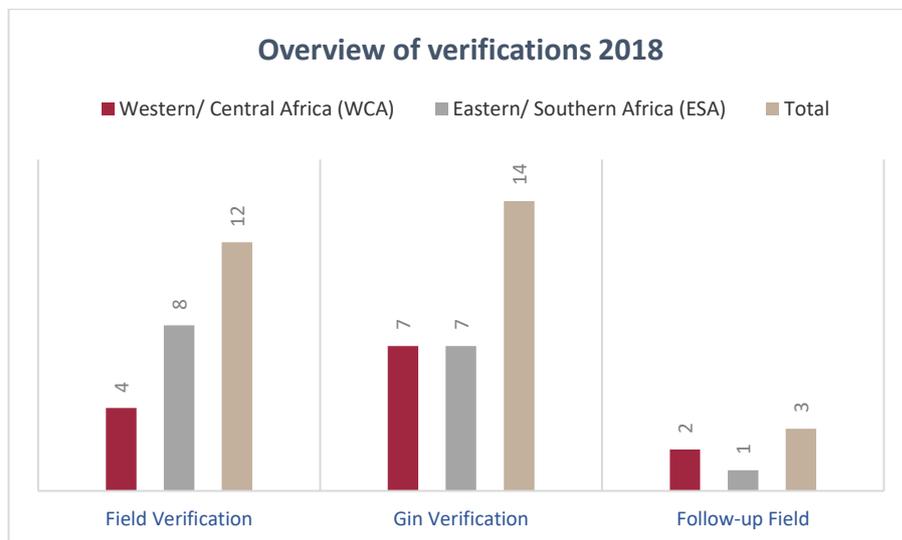
### 3. Overview of verifications in 2018

In 2018, 29 verification missions were carried out; 16 of them were conducted in Eastern and Southern Africa, 13 of them in Western and Central Africa.



**Figure 1: Number of verification missions in 2018**

Of these 29 verification missions, 12 were field verification missions, 14 were ginnery verification missions (covering 29 verified ginneries in 2018) and 3 were follow-up missions on field level.<sup>2</sup> In Western and Central Africa 7 ginnery and 4 farm level verifications were executed. In Eastern and Southern Africa 8 field verification missions and 7 ginnery level verification missions were conducted. (see Figure 2)



**Figure 2: Overview of verifications 2018 per audit type and region**

<sup>2</sup> A follow-up verification is always done on request of the CmiA partner and at its own charge. It serves for the subsequent check of individual sustainability criteria that have not been met according to the companies' own expectations during the past regular verification.

## 4. Performance Results

### 4.1 Farm Level Sustainability Criteria

The overall results of farm level verifications were satisfactory in 2018. 12 farm level verifications were carried out. From the 12 cotton companies that were subject to a farm level verification in 2018, six showed no single “red” rating in any of the 16 Farm Level Development Criteria. In total, out of the 16 Sustainability Criteria assessed for each of the 12 companies, almost two thirds (62,5%) were ranked to meet the green level (see Figure 3). This is a slight improvement of 5,1% compared to 2017. After a minor decrease of performance results in 2017, 2018 results are at similar levels compared to 2016 (see Figure 4).

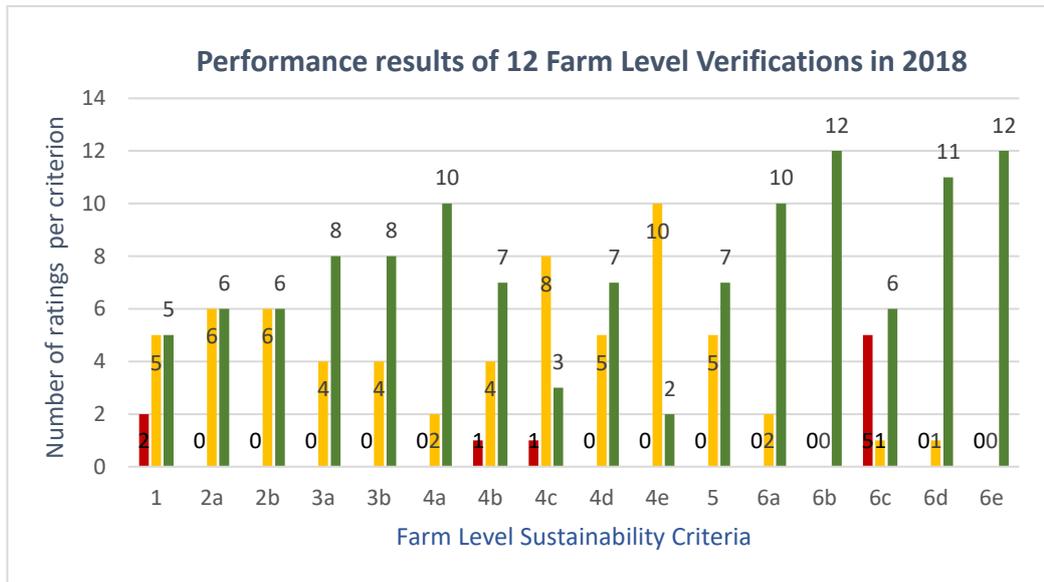


Figure 3: Overview of performance results per criterion of the 12 farm level verifications in 2018

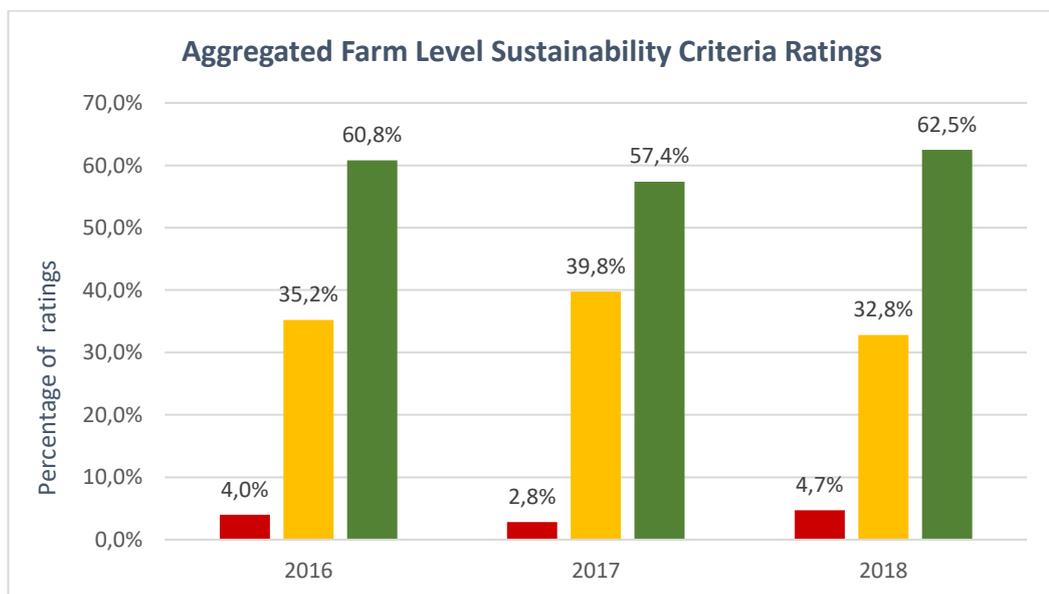


Figure 4: Aggregated results for farm level sustainability criteria assessment over the last 3 years

### 4.1.1 Overall results of the farm level verifications in 2018

A 2017 to 2018 comparison on the level of compliance for the farm level sustainability criteria gives the following results for each criterion (as per the traffic light system).

Farm Level Criteria	2017	2018
<b>1 Social Welfare Programs</b>	36,4% 45,5% 18,2%	41,7% 41,7% 16,7%
<b>2a Written contracts</b>	81,8% 18,2%	50% 50%
<b>2b Equal rights regarding gender</b>	45,5% 54,5%	50% 50%
<b>3a Soil and water conservation</b>	36,4% 63,6%	66,7% 33,3%
<b>3b Crop rotation</b>	36,4% 63,6%	66,7% 33,3%
<b>4a Pesticide management</b>	81,8% 18,2%	83,3% 16,7%
<b>4b Storage and transport management</b>	45,5% 54,5%	58,3% 33,3% 8,3%
<b>4c Spraying of pesticides and health protection</b>	9,1% 90,9%	25% 66,7% 8,3%
<b>4d Disposal of empty containers</b>	45,5% 54,5%	58,3% 41,7%
<b>4e Integrated Pest Management</b>	9,1% 81,9% 9,1%	16,7% 83,3%
<b>5 Training to improve farmers skills and capacities</b>	63,6% 36,4%	58,3% 41,7%
<b>6a Pre-financing Input</b>	100%	83,3% 16,7%
<b>6b Transparency of input and cotton seed prices for farmers</b>	81,8% 9,1% 9,1%	100%
<b>6c A transparent system to grade seed cotton</b>	81,8% 9,1% 9,1%	50% 8,3% 41,7%
<b>6d Maximising fibre and lint quality through improved harvesting and post harvesting techniques</b>	63,6% 36,4%	91,7% 8,3%
<b>6e Payment of cotton farmers</b>	100%	100%

**Table 1: Comparison of farm level sustainability criteria ratings in 2017 and 2018 (according to traffic light system)**

#### 4.1.2 Realized improvements

- *Best level performance amongst all verified partners for 6b, transparency of input and cotton seed prices, and 6e, payment of cotton farmers:*

An important aspect to tackle poverty amongst farming communities is to enhance their business skills and ensure farmers do not have to wait for a long period of time to get paid after delivering their harvest. It is a noteworthy development that all cotton companies under audit were acknowledged to perform on best practice level. Audits confirm for criterion **6b, transparency of input and cotton seed prices** for farmers, 100% of cotton companies under audit comply with the “green” performance level. This means prices for seed cotton and inputs are well communicated from the Management Entities (or the relevant bodies providing these inputs, such as national cotton boards or cotton federations) AND the terms and conditions are well understood by the farmers. Extension agents as well as lead farmers play an important role here in knowledge transfer.

Farm Level Sustainability Criterion **6e** covers the **payment of farmers** and requires that all farmers get cash payment for their cotton at the latest 30 days after delivery. In fact, as in previous years, the audit missions confirm for all cotton companies to fully comply with this criterium. Most farmers are even paid immediately upon delivery or in the following week.

- *Good progress, in comparison to the 2017 results, is observed for criteria 3a and 3b, both with approx. two third of verified cotton companies performing on a “green” level:*

**3a, soil and water conservation** and **3b, crop rotation**, are very important and relevant for the farmers under the given circumstances of declining soil fertility, reduced availability of farm land and irregular rainfalls. Achieving the best practice level (green rating) indicate that training of these aspects as well as the adaption rate amongst farmers for the training content have reached a quite satisfactory level.

- *Additional improvement has been noticed for criteria 6d, where more than 90% worked on best practice (“green”) level:*

The intent of criterion **6d, maximising fibre and lint quality**, is to improve the harvesting and post harvesting techniques. This includes the non-use of polypropylene bags as well as the minimizing of the trash in seed cotton. Better quality is linked to better prices, thus better income for farmers.

- *Criterion 4a remains at a very good level of compliance, with more than 80% of ratings achieving compliance on best practice level*

For Farm Level Criterion **4a, pesticide management**, there is an equivalent satisfactory level of green ratings in 2017 and 2018. This indicated that the training approach concerning the use and application of pesticides is successfully transferred and adapted by farmers in their farming routine.

### 4.1.3 Remaining Challenges

Improving farming practices to become truly sustainable is a long-term process. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that cotton companies and farmers are still facing challenges in the transition of knowledge and application of trained practices on the fields.

The following bullet points highlight some topics that need further attention:

- For criterion **1, Social Welfare Programs**, only 41,7 % of the ratings complied to the “green” level. This is partly explained by the fact that four new cotton companies joined CmiA in the course of 2018. Opportunities to start projects targeted towards the cotton farming communities needed to be identified, and the new partners get prepared to support rural communities linked to them.
- Criterion **4c, spraying of pesticides and health protection**, especially the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), remains challenging, with hesitations to wear appropriate gear, even when available, due to the heat. In most cases also, the cost of buying protective clothing is too high for farmers. A number of farmers are requesting the Managing Entities to provide them on loan as part of inputs. However, continued effort to raise awareness of the necessity of proper protection remains a key task.
- Criterion **4a, Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**, is an important training topic, however, the proper application of threshold spraying on field level – i.e. the adaption of training content into field practice – is still not rising to a level where auditors assess their finding to be compliant with a “green” rating. More than 80% of ratings remain at the “yellow” level.
- Criterion **6c, a transparent system to grade seed cotton**, is a challenging demand for those companies working in a very competitive environment. Especially in countries without concession zones or a clear areal allocation for ginners, market competition often leads to a long-term market derogation for the short-term benefit of one market player. In order to purchase high volumes of cotton, farmers are paid the negotiated price for A-grades independently from the actually delivered grade. To avoid side-selling by farmers, the cotton company is often ‘forced’ to follow this route. This is important context to better understand the significant increase in red ratings for this criterion, which is basically related to current market situation in Zambia.

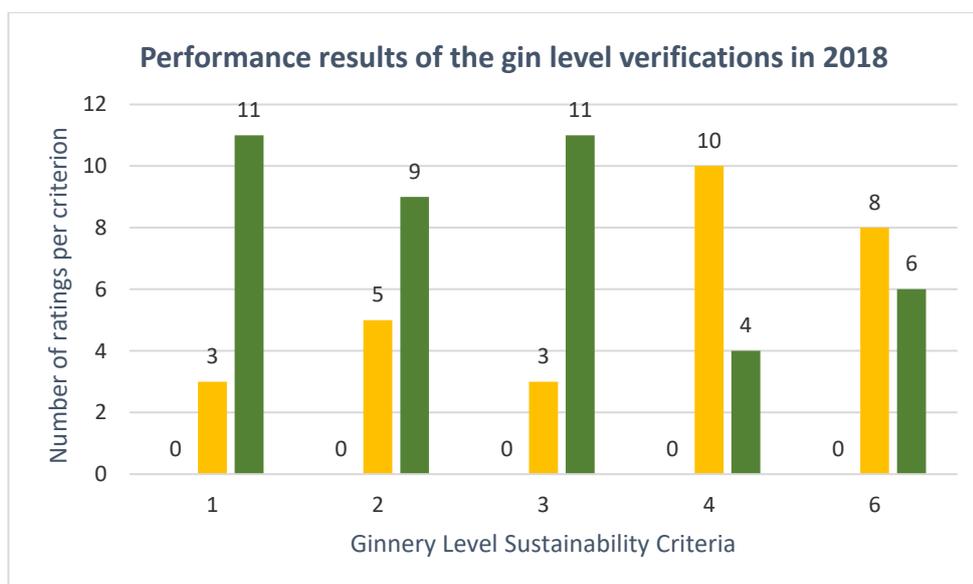
Looking specifically at the results of those cotton companies that just joined CmiA, audit findings indicate that storage and transport of pesticides as well as the spraying of pesticides and health protection are the main challenges for the contracted farmers. However, experience from previous years shows that regular training on these topics lead to the intended outcome. With support from AbTF and the Cotton Expert House Africa (CHA)<sup>3</sup> the new cotton companies are in a good position to progress.

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<sup>3</sup> More about the Cotton Expert House Africa and its role and responsibilities is outlined on page 17 of this Aggregated Verification Report.

## 4.2 Ginnery Level Sustainability Criteria

The gin level verifications in 2018 showed quite satisfying results. Fourteen ginnery verifications were conducted. All cotton companies that were subject to a ginnery level verification did not receive a single “red” rating in any of the five ginnery level sustainability criteria (see Figure 5). Looking at the aggregated results for the sustainability criteria on ginnery level over the past three years, a positive development towards more sustainable management practices can be observed. A ranking on green level was achieved for 58,6% of the criteria in 2018. This is a slight improvement of 1,9% compared to 2017 and 5,3% compared to 2016 (see Figure 6). It has to be noted that in 2016 ten cotton companies were under verification at ginnery level, in 2017 twelve cotton companies and 14 cotton companies in 2018.



**Figure 5: Overview of performance results per criterion of the 14 ginnery level verifications in 2018 (Rating according to Traffic Light System)**



**Figure 6: Aggregated results for ginnery level sustainability criteria assessment over the last 3 years**

### 4.2.1 Overall results of the ginnery verifications in 2018

A 2017 to 2018 comparison on the level of compliance for the ginnery level sustainability criteria gives the following results for each criterion presented in table 2.

Ginnery level criteria	2017	2018
1 Labour contracts in ginneries	83,3% 16,7%	78,6% 21,4%
2 Working hours/ overtime is regulated	50,0% 50,0%	64,3% 35,7%
3 Wages in ginneries	91,7% 8,3%	78,6% 21,4%
4 Proper occupational health and safety conditions/ PPE	8,3% 91,7%	28,6% 71,4%
6 Environmental management	50,0% 50,0%	42,9% 57,1%

**Table 2: Comparison of ginnery level sustainability criteria ratings in 2017 and 2018 (according to traffic light system)**

### 4.2.2 Realized improvements

**Criterion 1, labour contracts**, and **criterion 3, wages in ginneries**, achieved reached a very good ranking and 11 of the cotton companies obtained a green grade. Wages of the permanent workers are mostly above the national minimum wage. However, in some cotton companies who only reached a yellow rating for criteria 3, staff responsible for cleaning, cooking and security did not yet receive the minimum wage.

For **Criterion 2 on working hours and overtime regulation** ca. two thirds (64,3%) of cotton companies under audit received a green rating, which means the respective national labour laws are taken as reference for the remunerations. For the cotton companies who only reached a yellow rating, improvements are required in a comprehensive documentation of working hours, breaks and overtime. Problems with overtime and/or lack of rest days were identified for security staff at the ginning facilities.

### 4.2.3 Remaining challenges

**Criterion 6, environmental management** needs further attention of the cotton companies. This concerns mostly the installation of a cyclone system to reduce dust, a proper disposal of waste and the recycling and re-use of empty plastic bottles (oil). The task is to formulate a plan and ensure its implementation.

**Criterion 4, proper occupational health and safety conditions/PPE** is still a challenge for a number of cotton companies and requires several different interventions from the ginnery management. It includes, for example, regular training of first aiders and fire-fighter teams, up-to-date first aid kits, or PPE to protect workers from noise and dust, to an independent noise survey. Managing entities are mostly aware of the safety requirements, but auditors still identify gaps to fully respect and implement them for all workers, including all casual workers.

## 5. Cotton production of verified cotton companies in the 2017/18 season

At the beginning of 2018, 18 cotton companies from 9 Sub-Saharan African Countries were certified against the CmiA and CmiA Organic Standards. By the end of 2018, the number increased to 22 cotton companies in 10 Sub Saharan African Countries.<sup>4</sup> By then four new cotton companies had successfully completed the entire verification cycle: Olam (Mozambique), Highland Cotton Trading (Zambia), CIDT (Cote d'Ivoire) and AREWA Cotton (Nigeria). For CIDT and AREWA Cotton, the 2018/19 harvest will be the first cotton to be available as CmiA cotton, while Olam Mozambique and Highland Cotton Trading Zambia already passed the verification cycle in time for the 2017/18 harvest. All reported production data for the 2017/18 season therefore refers to 20 cotton companies, without AREWA and CIDT. For the 2017/18 season, there were almost 1 million farmers contracted by CmiA certified cotton companies and they have produced a total volume of 578.562 mt lint cotton.

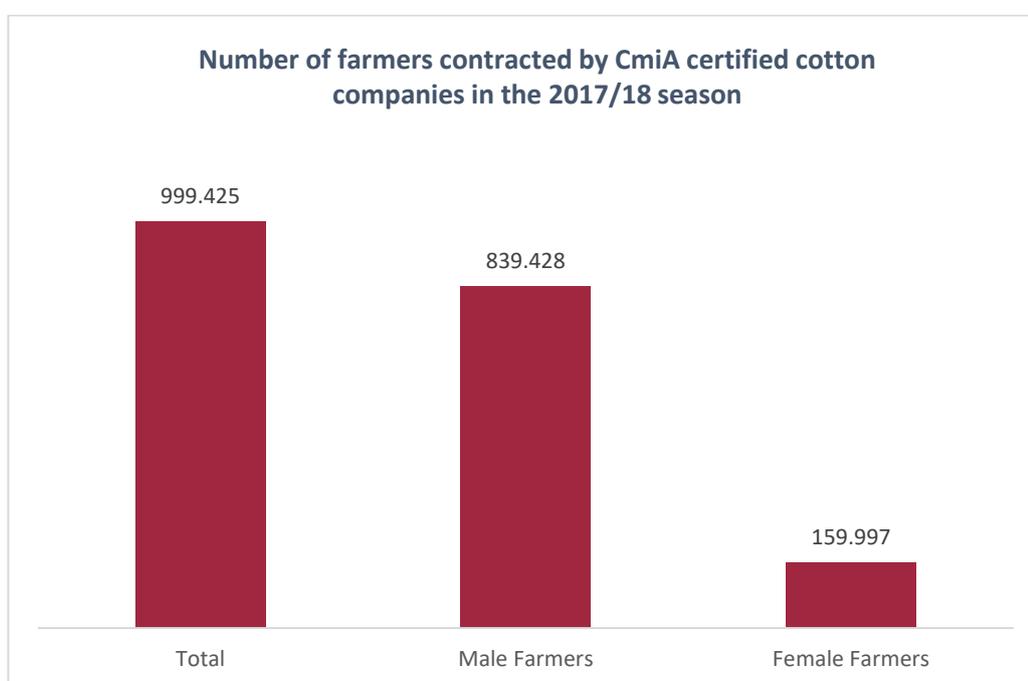
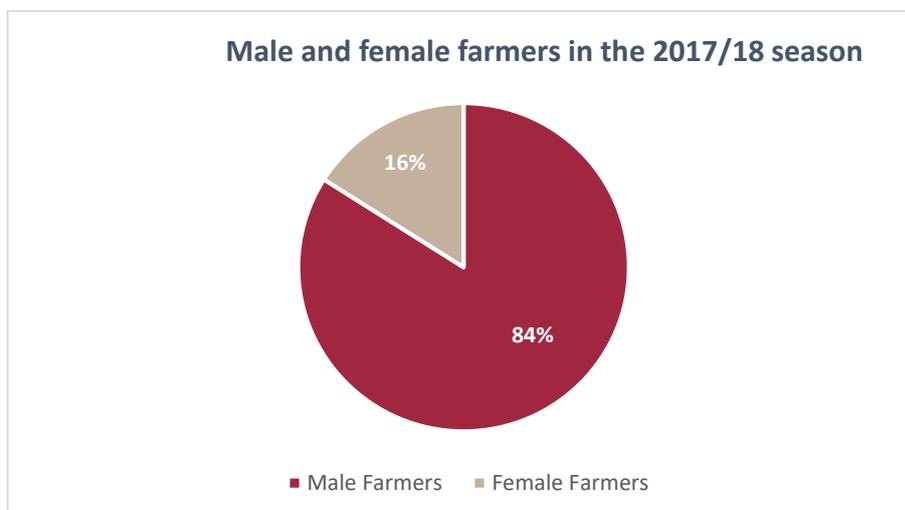


Figure 7: Contracted farmers by CmiA certified cotton companies in 2018

<sup>4</sup> See also Annex A and B for a detailed list and map of all certified CmiA and CmiA Organic cotton companies with their corresponding sales licence status.

Among the 999.425 cotton farmers, 16% were female farmers with direct contractual relationship to the cotton companies (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8: Gender differentiation of farmers contracted by CmiA certified cotton companies in the 2017/18 season**

In the 2017/2018 season, CmiA verified cotton companies operated a total of 67 ginning facilities. 20 Cotton Companies employed a total of 1.856 permanent workers and 10.506 seasonal workers. A total volume of 1.376.031 metric tons (mt) seed cotton was processed in the ginneries to a total volume of 578.562 mt lint cotton. The area under cotton cultivation covered 1.779.583 ha.

	2017 (harvest 2016/2017)	2018 (harvest 2017/ 2018)
<b>Companies</b>	18	20
<b>Farmers</b>	1.033.500	999.425
<b>Area (ha)</b>	1.620.000	1.779.583
<b>Seed cotton (mt)</b>	1.183.880	1.376.031
<b>Lint cotton (mt)</b>	496.000	578.562

**Table 3: CmiA smallholder cotton production in 2017 and 2018**

## 6. Farmer trainings provided by CmiA Cotton Companies

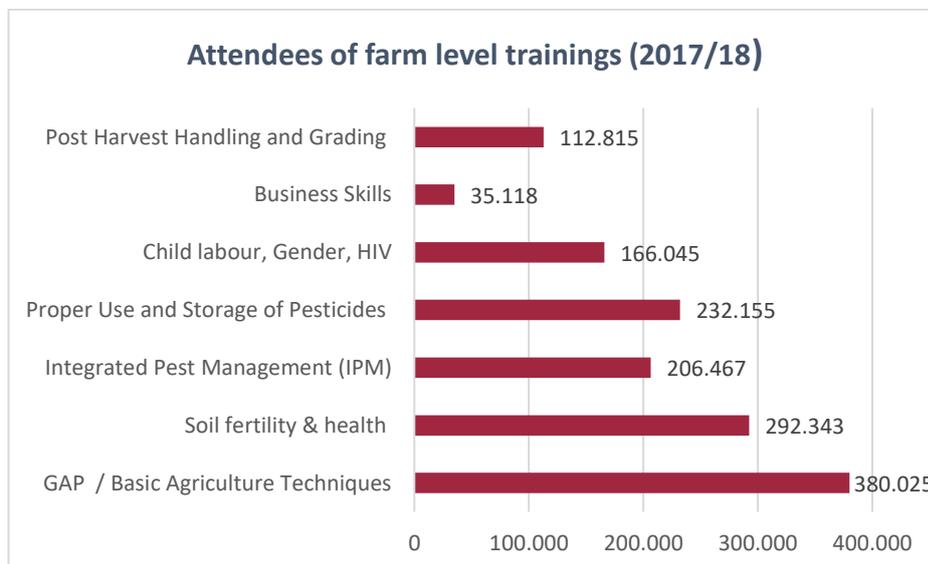
In the season of 2017/18, a total of 1.424.968 attendees participated in farmer trainings offered by CmiA verified cotton companies.

Trainings are organised and planned by the managing entities and take the results of the verifications into account.

Farmer trainings are key to success, to ensure proper implementation of the CmiA standard and to guarantee a sustainable development. Topics regularly trained include all the three aspects of sustainability (economy, ecology and social issues):

1. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), including early land preparation, planting, thinning, gap filling, etc.
2. Conservation techniques to improve soil fertility and soil health
3. Integrated Pest Management (IPM), with special focus on scouting and threshold spraying
4. The proper use and storage of pesticides as well as the disposal of the empty chemical containers
5. Harvest and post-harvest handling techniques and grading of seed cotton
6. Child labour, Gender and HIV
7. Business skills, like the Farmer Business Schools concept and cotton agronomy topics in general

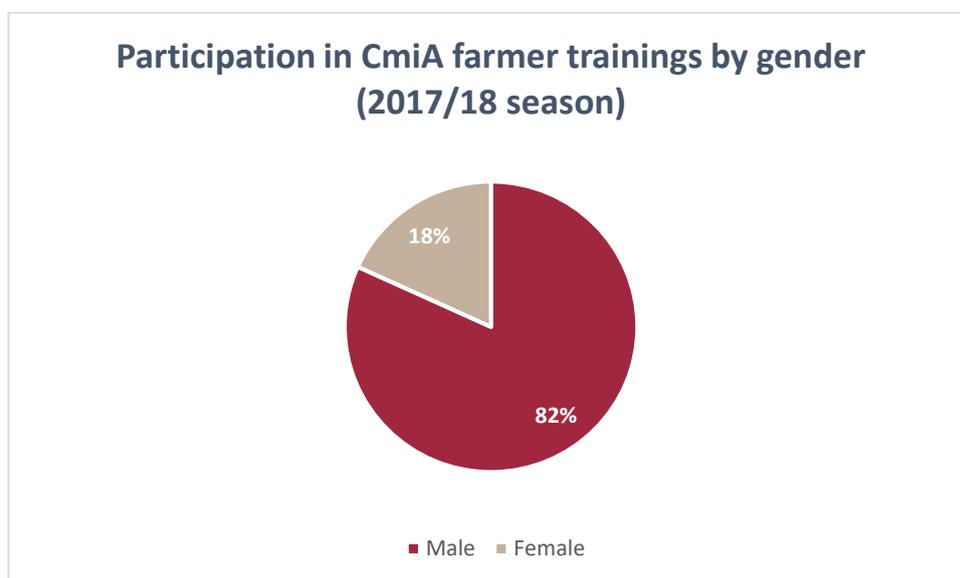
The chart below indicates the training topics in which CmiA farmers participated in the 2017/18 season:



**Figure 9: Training topics and the number of participants in the 2017/2018 season**

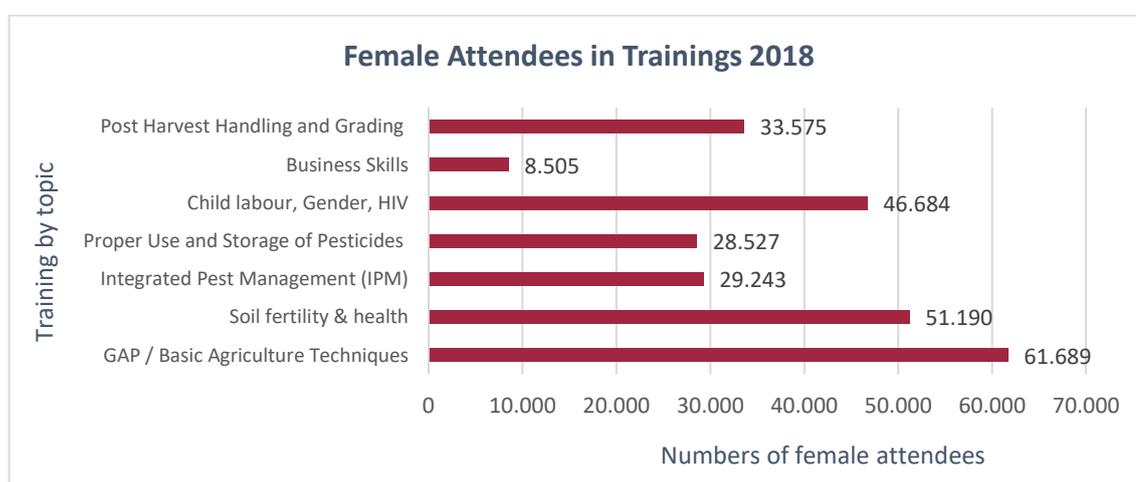
It is important to point out that some trainings (like GAP) consist of several training sessions that are conducted in accordance with the activities on the field throughout the season. Some trainings, on the other hand, for example on child labour, Gender and HIV, are usually integrated into other agronomic training sessions and transferred together.

With the given share of 16% of female farmers amongst the total CmiA farmer base, training data indicates a slight over-representation of women in training session (see Figure 10). This is a positive sign with regard to a gender-balanced support for farmers, though still a lot can be done to further strengthen the role of women in the cotton sector and in society in general.



**Figure 10: Percentage of female and male participants in farmer trainings**

Figure 11 shows the different training sessions women participated in:



**Figure 11: Female participants in trainings per topics**

## 7. Implementation Support by AbTF

The Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) supported the implementation of activities that contribute to a more sustainable cotton production in different ways:

- As the majority shareholder of the Cotton Expert House Africa (CHA), the AbTF substantially supported their activities to cooperate with cotton companies in Sub-Saharan Africa. The CHA's headquarter is located in Hamburg, while the on-ground work is coordinated by two regional hubs, one based in Nairobi, Kenya, and the other in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. A centre-piece of CHA activities is the provision of a [knowledge management platform](#), where **training materials** on various topics related to sustainable cotton cultivation are accessible for any interested party. A broad variety of stakeholders, from government bodies, researchers, public and private actors, amongst them 21 cotton companies in 11 African countries, used the platform since it was established. With additional funds provided by the German Ministry for Development Cooperation (BMZ), CHA established a total of 14 co-financing **projects** in 8 African countries with a reach of more than 410.000 farmers. These projects covered various aspects of **sustainable cotton production**, with an emphasis on enhancing good agronomic practices through climate smart agriculture (planet), increasing female farmers participation (people) and improving productivity and quality (profit).
- After a three-year funding period for a project on bio-pesticides in Tanzania and Zambia ended 2017, minor remaining project funds were invested in the co-financing of technical equipment provided to one cotton company in Zambia to dry plant material (fruits of a wild shrub), thus to facilitate access to locally available, inexpensive natural pest control. To increase dissemination both of knowledge of and access to bio-pesticides contributes to enhance activities with regard to **Integrated Plant and Pest Management (IPPM)**. AbTF is pleased to see long-lasting effects of this project indicated by high adaption rates of farmers and increasing interest by the cotton companies to further expand the use of bio-pesticides among their farmers base. The drying of a large amount of the needed plant material (fruits) was a challenge to effectively scale-up these activities. Farmers collected a more than quadrupled volume of fruits to be dried, and with the provided machine, the cotton company was in a much better position to manage the processing. The cotton company planned to reach ca. 4.000 farmers (10% of the farmer base) with this specific bio-pesticide (dried solanum powder), and further up-scaling is envisioned.
- Based on the idea to establish a joint "Training of Trainers" (ToT) approach for extension staff of cotton companies in Zambia with the objective to a) streamline the messages (training content) sent to contracted farmers and b) to reduce the costs for ToTs, the AbTF sent an acknowledged agri-technical expert to give a series of ToTs on the vital **role of extension staff and didactical methods** for the officers to run impactful farmer trainings. For the first time, extension officers from four ginneries were trained under one roof. The trial was very well received and resulted not only in 100 extensionists trained on this specific module, but for the Zambian Cotton Ginneries Association (ZCGA) to embrace the approach and (in 2019) to have a set of training series for extension agents of their members with the aim to establish "Regional Trainer of Trainers".

## 8. AbTF Verification Management Activities

In the CmiA standard system, **all cotton companies are assessed by independent third-party verifiers on farm and ginnery level in order to be able to sell their cotton as “CmiA cotton”.**

AbTF takes over the role of the verification management and the overall verification monitoring (oversight). In 2018, the AbTF verification management has been responsible of the following activities:

### a. Coordination, organization and communication of verification missions

- As outlined in chapter 3, **29 verification missions** have been coordinated, 12 on farm level, 14 on ginnery level and 3 follow-up missions on farm level.
- In 2018, **four new cotton companies** successfully completed their verification cycle and obtained the permission to trade their lint cotton under the CmiA label (see chapter 5). While the verification cycle was ready in time for the 2017/18 harvest for the two new companies in the Southern Hemisphere (Highland Cotton Trading, Zambia and Olam, Mozambique), the two new partners from the Northern Hemisphere (CIDT, Côte d’Ivoire and Arewa Cotton, Nigeria) will bring the 2018/19 harvest as the first CmiA-labelled cotton to the market.
- In Ethiopia, **four new ginneries** are candidates for CmiA certification in 2019.
- AbTF offers continuous support and guidance to existing partners and on-boarding candidates to meet the CmiA standard requirements.
- AbTF works to support the facilitation of the CmiA verification missions. The verifiers confirmed that they could conduct all verifications without any significant limitations.

### b. Data Management

- Collection and quality control of the annual **self-assessments** from all **cotton companies**. Due to the seasonal cycle the Western African countries have to submit the self-assessment latest on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July. The Southern and Eastern African Countries are required to submit them latest on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January every year.
- Performance analysis and communication based on data both from self-assessments and verification reports.
- AbTF is in the process of introducing a new web-based data management software solution which at a later stage will enable the online submission of self-assessments and verification reports. The process took longer than anticipated, but the system is ready by end of 2019.

### c. Verification Quality – Monitoring and Training

- Cooperation with two independent verification organizations (EcoCert, AfriCert) and their pool of **18 trained verifiers**.
- Regular conduction of initial and refreshing **trainings** for all verifiers on the CmiA verification criteria for farm and ginnery level. Additionally, monitoring missions are undertaken by AbTF to evaluate the auditors. Such monitoring missions are regularly conducted in order to ensure a high audit quality and consistent interpretation of the CmiA standard.

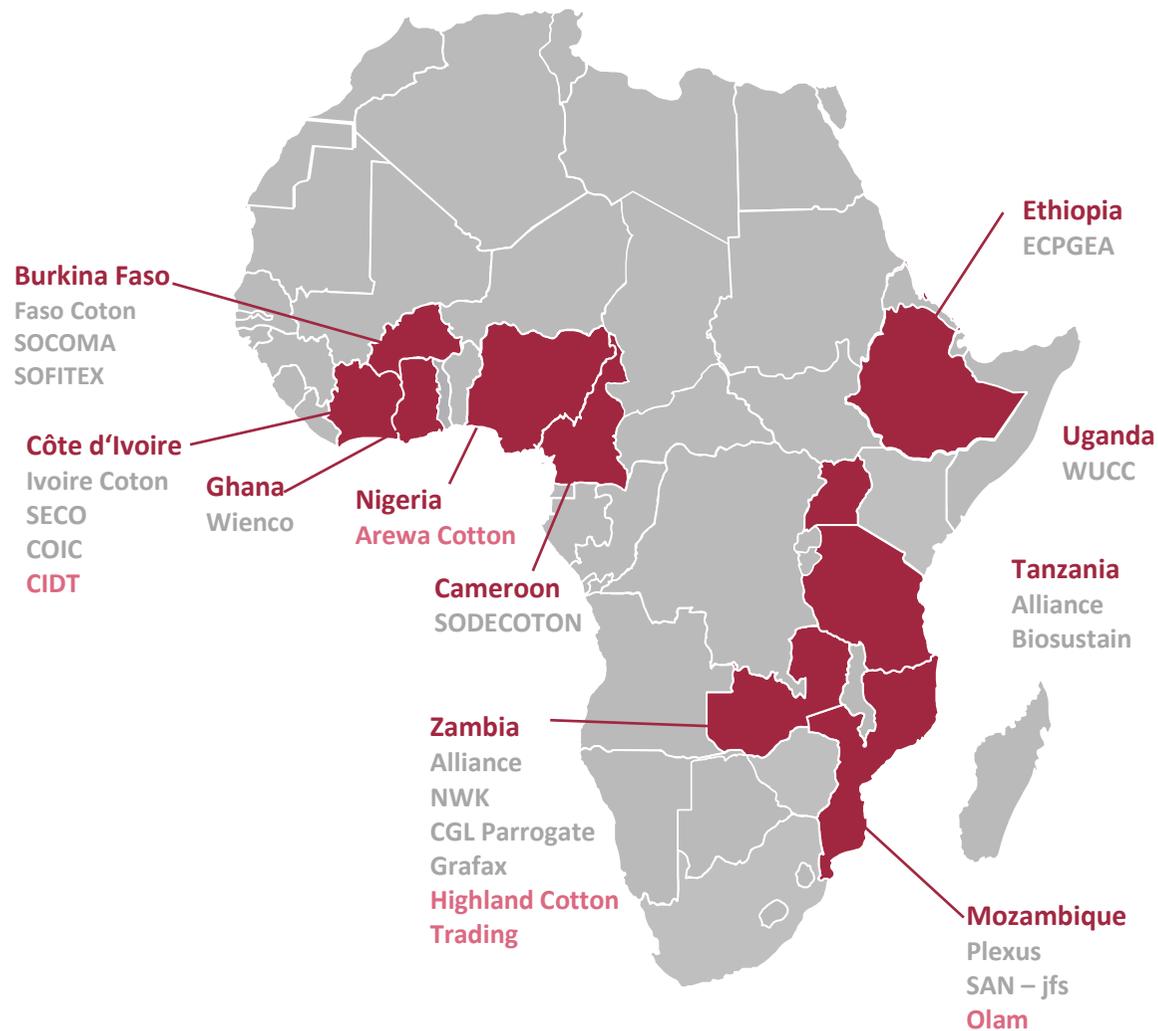
- Quality control and follow-up on **29 verification reports** and corresponding management plans for continuous improvement.

**d. Standard Development, Interpretation and Guidance**

During 2018, the AbTF was still in an on-going revision process of the CmiA, CmiA Organic and SCS standards. The development of the standards follows several objectives:

- To update the standards' requirements, especially with regard to water and soil management, which are two subjects of increasing importance in combatting climate change and in increasing yield.
- To increasingly reward the engagement of managing entities, especially when it comes to farmer trainings in basic economic skills, bio-intensive integrated plant and pest management, and grievance mechanisms for farmers and at ginneries.
- To comply with ISEAL Codes of Good Practice for Standard-Setting, Assurance and Impacts.

**Annexe A: Map of Verified Partner Cotton Companies (CmiA and CmiA Organic) in 2018**



New since 2018

**Annexe B: List of Verified CmiA Cotton Companies with respective Sales License Status in 2018**

Country	Cotton Company	CmiA Certificate	BCI Benchmark	CmiA Certificate
Burkina Faso	Faso Coton	yes	yes	31.12.2019
Burkina Faso	SOCOMA	yes	yes	31.12.2019
Burkina Faso	SOFITEX	yes	yes	31.12.2019
Cameroon	SODECOTON	yes	yes	31.12.2020
Cote d'Ivoire	CIDT	yes	yes	31.12.2020
Côte d'Ivoire	COIC	yes	yes	31.12.2020
Côte d'Ivoire	Ivoire Coton	yes	yes	31.12.2019
Côte d'Ivoire	SECO	yes	yes	31.12.2019
Ethiopia	ECPGEA (Metema Union)	yes	no	31.12.2019
Ghana	Masara N'Arziki (Wienco Cotton)	yes	yes	31.12.2019
Mozambique	Plexus	yes	yes	30.06.2020
Mozambique	OLAM	yes	yes	31.12.2020
Mozambique	SAN jfs Holding	yes	yes	30.06.2019
Nigeria	AREWA	yes	yes	31.12.2020
Tanzania	Alliance Ginneries Ltd.	yes	yes	30.06.2019
Tanzania	Biosustain	yes (Organic)	yes	30.06.2020
Uganda	WUCC	yes	yes	31.12.2020
Zambia	Alliance Ginneries Ltd.	yes	yes	30.06.2019
Zambia	NWK Agri-Services	yes	yes	30.06.2020
Zambia	Continental Ginneries Limited/ Parrogate	yes	yes	30.06.2020
Zambia	Grafax Cotton Limited	yes	yes	30.06.2020
Zambia	Highland Cotton Trading /Parrogate	yes	yes	31.12.2020