



# AID BY TRADE FOUNDATION

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2021  
ANNUAL REPORT



**COTTON**  
MADE IN  
**AFRICA**



**THE GOOD  
CASHMERE  
STANDARD**  
by AbTF

# COTTON MADE IN AFRICA

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# THE GOOD CASHMERE STANDARD

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# FOREWORD

BY PROF. DR  
MICHAEL OTTO

We live in difficult times, with a war in Europe, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, and the growing impact of climate change all posing challenges. How can the Aid by Trade Foundation make a difference in these trying circumstances?



“Making sure that trade in these goods is fair and using it as a catalyst for change in commodity-producing countries has been the Aid by Trade Foundation’s guiding principle for more than 15 years.”

Current events highlight just how closely connected all societies in our global village are. The war in Ukraine has been wreaking havoc in the international order since February. Its implications reach far beyond Europe. For example, it has interrupted Ukrainian grain exports to Africa, where people living thousands of kilometres away from the conflict may soon be unable to find enough food to feed their families. Climate change exacerbates these problems, especially in regions already suffering from extreme droughts. It is causing extraordinarily severe weather conditions with no respect for borders, so we have to face the reality that climate crises strike people indiscriminately, regardless of their own contributions to greenhouse gas emissions.

These facts call attention to the relevance of the work of the Aid by Trade Foundation and of its initiatives: Cotton made in Africa® (CmiA) and The Good Cashmere Standard® (GCS). Making sure that trade in these goods is fair and using it as a catalyst for change in commodity-producing countries has been the Aid by Trade Foundation’s guiding principle for more than 15 years. In light of recent events, help for

self-help through trade is more important than ever before, especially at the global level, making it imperative that we remain committed to our work and to supplying global textile value chains with sustainable raw materials. Together with our new and existing partners from the continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia, we are grappling with the challenges we face in innovative ways to make things better for people, animals, and nature.

The results of our latest impact studies in Zambia and Côte d’Ivoire show how positive the impact of CmiA’s work can be. Training for small-scale farmers, funded by licensing fees, has been proven to increase cotton yields and thereby improve living conditions. As the war in Ukraine threatens rural food security in project countries in Africa, agricultural training is of crucial importance. For example, once small-scale farmers have become acquainted with effective cultivation methods for cotton, they can apply their new expertise to increase the yields of their staple crops as well. This can save families from having to endure a season of hunger when food stores are exhausted prior to the next harvest, enabling them to reduce their dependence on European

imports and to become more resilient to shocks.

The question of how we, as a foundation, approach the effects of climate change on people in project regions was another area of intense focus for us in 2021. We worked with atmosfair to develop and launch a new initiative, CmiA Carbon Neutral, which aims to decarbonise the textile supply chain as a whole by producing CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral cotton. We are also developing strategies that enable small-scale farmers to adapt to climate change.

By launching The Good Cashmere Standard two years ago, we established the world’s first independent standard for sustainable cashmere. Despite travel restrictions put in place to combat the coronavirus pandemic, a good co-operative relationship with our Chinese partners enabled us to successfully complete the second round of audits. This marks an important milestone on the path to establishing new norms for animal welfare and for social and environmental sustainability in cashmere production. Encouragingly, high demand for textiles bearing the label of The Good Cashmere Standard shows that the market is now ready for such change. Cotton made in Africa is in

a similar position; around 600 million CmiA-labelled textiles were brought to market in 2021, more than doubling the previous year’s figure. As these quantities expand, the reputation of our sustainability standards also grows, and people are increasingly interested to know where the products they purchase are from as well as how the production process affects both our climate and the people living in the areas where goods were produced.

This all goes to show that trade can be successfully leveraged to achieve global sustainability if all stakeholders throughout the value chain assume responsibility and choose to make a contribution. Looking back on 2021, it becomes clear that we can make a difference if we work together with our partners in project countries, with a growing number of companies, and with more and more consumers who choose to buy products made from sustainable raw materials. Seeing how strong we are together encourages us to continue putting our all into our work, and so, in 2022, we will press on to meet our objectives of supporting small-scale farming communities in cultivation regions and of conserving the Earth for future generations.

# CONSOLIDATED RESULTS FOR 2021

## The Foundation's Total Revenue Rose by 37 Percent, to EUR 5.9 Million

In 2021, the Aid by Trade Foundation's revenue and results continued to grow significantly, with total revenue rising by 37 percent to reach EUR 5.9 million. Most of this, EUR 5.2 million, was generated through private-sector market activities undertaken by Cotton made in Africa and The Good Cashmere Standard. Despite pandemic-related restrictions, expenditure on programmes implementing the two sustainability standards and on co-operation projects increased by nearly 30 percent, to EUR 3.1 million.

In the financial year of 2021, the Aid by Trade Foundation was able to increase its total revenue by 37 percent, to EUR 5,937 thousand. Sales under the labels of Cotton made in Africa and of The Good Cashmere Standard earned licensing revenue of EUR 3,879 thousand, representing a 40 percent increase.

Marketing the rights to the Cotton made in Africa brand through ATAORA Fördergesellschaft GmbH generated licensing revenue of EUR 2,304 thousand, and the sale of CmiA-verified cotton under the BCI label brought in EUR 1,082 thousand in revenue. Proceeds from licensing The Good Cashmere Standard to retailers and brands amounted to EUR 493 thousand in 2021, reflecting a sharp rise in demand for the sustainable cashmere standard, which previously brought in EUR 100 thousand in 2020.

Global networks within textile value chains continued to grow, as companies that were part of demand alliances asked for greater quantities of raw materials verified through AbTF standards. Also contributing to the growth of the initiative were African cotton companies, a steadily rising number of international cotton traders and spinning mills, and other manufacturers in the CmiA value chain that joined Cotton made in Africa as partners for the first time. New partners' contributions totalled EUR 899 thousand (37 percent more than in the previous year). In addition, corporate partners of The Good Cashmere Standard made contributions totalling EUR 425 thousand in the financial year of

2021. This revenue was used primarily to fund further development of the standard and of the comprehensive verification process that protects this valuable commodity in Inner Mongolia. Training schemes and materials to address key issues were also put together and scheduled for roll-out in 2022.

Donation revenue, which was used primarily to cofinance co-operation projects with CmiA cotton companies, totalled EUR 666 thousand (for more on this, see → pp. 28–30).

The relationship between revenue from donations and grants in 2021 (twelve percent of total revenue) and revenue generated from commercial activities (88 percent of total revenue) again reflects the foundation's success in meeting its objective of providing help for self-help by harnessing market forces.

In 2021, AbTF—through its marketing association, ATAORA—invested nine percent of its total expenditure in marketing, communications, and sales, thereby helping to promote CmiA cotton and GCS cashmere to new and existing licensees.

It was possible to significantly increase expenditure on implementing CmiA programmes and The Good Cashmere Standard to EUR 2,688 thousand in 2021, which is around 41 percent higher than the previous year's figure.

The programme service expense ratio, which measures the relationship between total expenses and expenses that directly further the foundation's objectives, continued to rise in 2021, from 75 to 78 percent. This is cause for celebration because this

figure indicates how effectively our resources are being used.

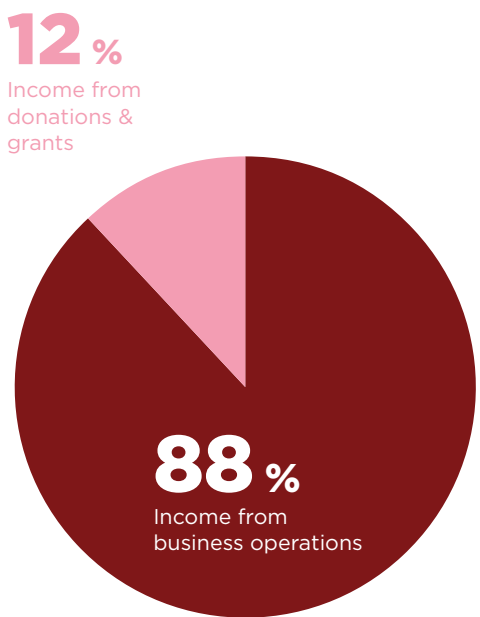
Excellent revenue growth combined with an effective use of funds produced a consolidated annual surplus of EUR 1,947 thousand before taxes in 2021. This surplus strengthens the organisation's capital

structure by allowing unrestricted reserves to be formed, for example, and it also makes it possible to significantly expand the activities and programmes of Cotton made in Africa in African partner countries and of The Good Cashmere Standard in Inner Mongolia.

## REVENUES IN 2021

	kEUR	in %	2020 kEUR
License fee income	3,879	65 %	2,769
Partnership contributions	1,324	22 %	787
Donations	666	11 %	606
Grants	29	0,5 %	26
Private subsidies	0	0,0 %	32
Other income	39	1 %	105
<b>Total income</b>	<b>5,937</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>4,325</b>

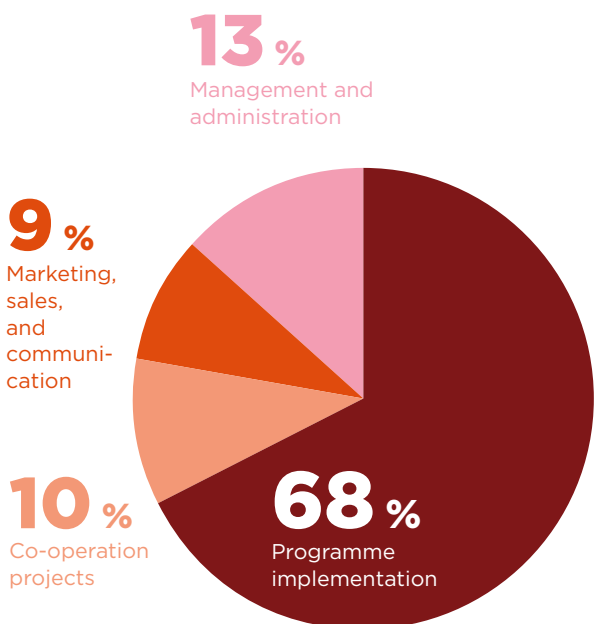
	kEUR	2021 in %	2020 in %
Income from business operations	5,242	88 %	85 %
Income from donations and grants	695	12 %	15 %



## EXPENSES IN 2021

	kEUR	in %	2020 kEUR
Management and administration	529	13 %	454
Programme implementation	2,688	68 %	1,898
Co-operation projects	408	10 %	501
Marketing, sales, and communication	365	9 %	326
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>3,990</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>3,179</b>

	in %	2020 in %
Programme service expense ratio = (Programme service expenses) / (Total expenses)	78 %	75 %



# 2021 IN FIGURES

## IN THE FIELD

22



COTTON COMPANIES

40%

OF AFRICAN COTTON PRODUCTION IS CMIA VERIFIED



1,705,000

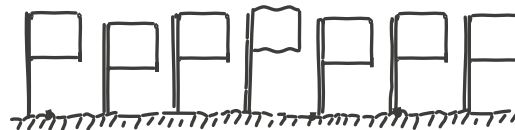
OVERALL ACREAGE (IN HA)



1,000,000

CMIA COTTON FARMERS

10



GROWING COUNTRIES

1.84

AVERAGE HECTARES PER FARMER



690,000

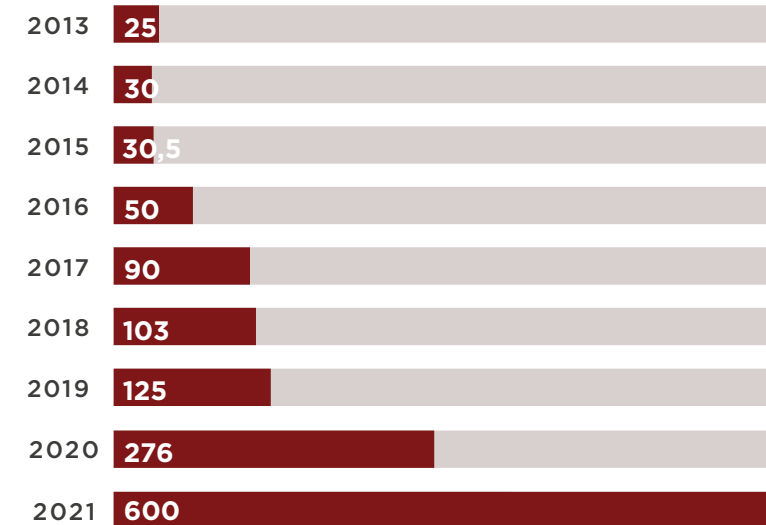
TOTAL CMIA COTTON HARVEST (GINNED, IN T)



950

AVERAGE YIELD (RAW COTTON) OF SMALLHOLDERS (KG/HA)

## ALONG THE TEXTILE VALUE CHAIN



LABELLED TEXTILES ON THE MARKET (IN MILLIONS)

All figures are rounded and pertain to CmiA and CmiA Organic



600,000,000

LABELLED TEXTILES ON THE MARKET



8

TEXTILE PRODUCTION MARKETS IN AFRICA



240

REGISTERED SPINNING MILLS



27

COTTON TRADERS



60

CMIA RETAIL PARTNERS AND BRANDS



51

TEXTILE PRODUCTION MARKETS WORLDWIDE





# CMiA IN THE FIELD



## INVESTIGATE, ANALYSE, IMPROVE

**AbTF undertakes studies and evaluations to regularly assess how fully the Cotton made in Africa initiative meets its goal to improve the living and working conditions of African small-scale farmers, and how it contributes to environmental protection.**

Key metrics for continuously monitoring CmiA's activities include regular assessments of the number of small-scale farmers reached and of the quantity of verified cotton produced. However, more information is needed to understand what kind of impact CmiA's activities have in cotton fields, ginneries, families, and village communities. The initiative, therefore, regularly conducts surveys and assessments to measure its impact. The facts and figures collected serve to offer insights into important trends, provide a deeper understanding of how the standard is being implemented, and help identify potential challenges, such as market developments in cotton-growing countries or the impact of climate change on ecosystems and on small-scale farmers' yields. Based on these insights, CmiA continues to develop its standards, update its training programmes, and work with village communities in cultivation regions through the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme (CCCP).

In 2021, AbTF commissioned several consulting firms to review Cotton made in Africa's impact. They assessed the initiative's social and economic effects on small-scale farmers' living conditions and evaluated the environmental footprint of CmiA-verified cotton for the second time. To better assess the impact of CCCP projects, especially those centred on education, a case study focussing on school projects in Tanzania was also commissioned.

### IN NUMBERS

**2 litres of freshwater**

are used per kilogram of CmiA cotton compared to the global average of 1,563 litres

**13 % lower greenhouse gas emissions** than the global average are generated for each kilogram of CmiA cotton

**18 % higher incomes** than in 2015 are earned from CmiA cotton sales by the average farming family in Côte d'Ivoire

**23 % greater yields** were obtained by CmiA small-scale farmers who participated in at least three training modules compared to those without any training

**3,318 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral CmiA cotton** were realized as part of the CmiA Carbon Neutral initiative and corresponding certificates offset

CmiA helps small-scale farmers build resilience through digital knowledge transfer, new partnerships, and climate-smart agriculture. Improving small-scale farmers' living and working conditions while protecting nature are absolute priorities for Cotton made in Africa. CmiA pursues these objectives in concert with a strong network of cotton companies, agricultural and environmental experts, and other stakeholders in Africa and throughout the world. In 2021, these efforts were once again successful, with around one million small-scale farmers in ten countries in Sub-Saharan Africa producing some 690,000 tonnes of ginned cotton certified under either the CmiA or CmiA Organic standards.

The initiative is increasingly shifting its focus to address how global warming affects cotton cultivation, so that farmers can continue profiting from their cotton crops into the future. Small-scale farmers already suffer a great deal from devastating droughts or torrential rain, which are symptomatic of the climate crisis. These problems are compounded by reduced soil fertility and shrinking biodiversity. CmiA therefore prioritises innovative measures to strengthen small-scale

farmers' resilience and to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fields and ginneries. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic had major implications for partnership activities in Africa in 2021, CmiA remained dedicated and flexible, steadfast in its pursuit of ventures such as promoting digital knowledge transfer, building new partnerships despite travel restrictions, or introducing measures for climate-smart agriculture, like the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative.

IN THE FIELD

IN THE FIELD





## UNDER REVIEW THE IMPACT OF CMiA TRAINING AND VERIFICATION

**How do CmiA's training programme and its verification process affect farmers' living and working conditions? CmiA closely examined this question as part of a study.**

A quantitative and qualitative evaluation was conducted between October 2019 and June 2021. To ensure that the study would be representative of CmiA cultivation regions in both the northern and the southern hemispheres, Côte d'Ivoire was selected as a site for investigation in western Africa and Zambia was chosen from southern Africa.

The results of the study confirmed Cotton made in Africa was a success. CmiA positively affects cotton farmers' living and working conditions on several levels. It has been proven that regular training for

small-scale farmers leads to higher cotton yields and to positive cultural changes in village communities, such as greater awareness of the importance of education, gender equality, and children's rights, as well as resulting in better pesticide-handling practices that protect people's health and the environment. Furthermore, the CmiA verification process was found to support the continuous improvement of cotton companies' management abilities by pushing them to meet the standard's requirements on issues like workplace safety.

### Evaluation Results in Côte d'Ivoire and Zambia

However, there were also differences between the two countries. For example, evaluation results in Côte d'Ivoire show that the power of CmiA's approach is harnessed most effectively when the market environment is relatively good. Thanks to CmiA training, the average farming family in Côte d'Ivoire is now earning nearly 18 percent more from CmiA cotton sales. By contrast, the situation is more complicated in Zambia, where difficult external market conditions have led to lower profitability. CmiA training has, however, managed to stem the decline in cotton farmers' fortunes: Small-scale farmers who completed at least three training units produced yields around 23 percent higher than those of farmers who had not completed any training.

The study also reiterated that climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing small-scale farmers in both countries. Unstable patterns of rainfall, increasing pest infestations, and declining soil fertility due to loss of biodiversity are putting small-scale farmers under pressure. CmiA has therefore set itself the goal of steadily expanding its training programme in order to build up small-scale farmers' resilience to climate change and promote climate-smart agricultural cultivation practices.

## "IT IS ALWAYS NICE TO SEE CLIENTS LIKE CMiA CRITICALLY EXAMINING THEIR OWN WORK AND SETTING IN TRAIN NEW LEARNING PROCESSES"

**Syspons GmbH helps organisations evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their projects. The consulting firm recently conducted an impact study of CmiA for the Aid by Trade Foundation. In this interview with Motje Seidler, a senior consultant at Syspons, we discuss her experiences as an evaluator and the outcomes of the investigation.**



**MOTJE SEIDLER**  
Senior Consultant  
at Syspons

**You often undertake evaluations in the fields of international co-operation and development. What would you say is the most important thing to consider in these sectors?**

For international development projects, it is always important to take into account the major power imbalance or dependency relationship between donors and beneficiaries. This can also influence the responses of some interview partners. As an evaluator from Germany who is both white and a foreigner, I need to frequently remind myself of my own position and its potential impact on others.

**What was the goal of the CmiA impact study commissioned by the Aid by Trade Foundation, and when was it conducted?**

The study's aim was to investigate the impact of the initiative so far and to what extent it aligns with the expectations embedded within CmiA's training. In order to further improve the programme, we also assessed which elements of its implementation work well and which do not. We did this by analysing a large number of recent documents and conducting numerous interviews between October 2019 and September 2021. Furthermore, in two case studies in Zambia and Côte d'Ivoire, we asked 466 cotton farmers about their experiences.

**In common with many international endeavours undertaken over the past two years, the CmiA impact study also faced constraints as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. What challenges did you encounter?**

Due to travel restrictions, we were unable to begin collecting data in Zambia when we had expected to do

so in April 2020, and we had to change our approach at short notice. This caused a delay, but our on-site surveyors ultimately succeeded by working with local experts to collect the data. We discussed every detail of the survey questions and logistics with them, trained local experts via Zoom, and joined them in their work from our desks at home through regular telephone calls.

**How are local experts selected, and how does on-site collaboration actually work?**

We have developed a network of expert evaluators in various countries who can also refer us to other specialists. When selecting experts, we pay special attention to each individual's evaluation experience, expertise in the relevant topic, and independence from conflicting interests. Good personal chemistry is also important to us. In Zambia and Côte d'Ivoire, we were fortunate and quickly found two experts whose work was excellent.

**What lesson have you learnt from the CmiA impact study that has stuck in your mind?**

It became apparent that contextual factors and market structures in partner countries play a central role. CmiA's training efforts can maximise their impact where a country's pricing policies and institutions also provide incentives to small-scale farmers to grow cotton using sustainable methods. These contextual factors also need to be considered during the selection process and when working with partner countries. As was the case with CmiA, it is always nice to see clients following an evaluation with great interest, critically examining their own work, and setting in train new learning processes.





## STUDY INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS ON EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN CULTIVATION REGIONS OF AFRICA

In the first half of 2021, AbTF commissioned a study in Tanzania. It revolved around one question: Do the educational projects implemented through the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme (CCCP) lead to changes in the quality of education and its infrastructure in cotton-growing regions? During the study, more than 450 people from village communities across 15 locations in the district of Bariadi in Tanzania were surveyed. The researchers conducted individual interviews as well as focus group discussions to assess the impact of CmiA-supported educational projects.

The findings show that the projects have a positive impact. The most significant change revealed by the

study is a decrease in school drop-out rates. School attendance rates are also higher in schools with CmiA funding than in the control group, and the overwhelming majority of respondents reported being “very satisfied” (59.53 percent) or “satisfied” (36.12 percent) with CmiA projects. However, despite the best efforts of CmiA and improvements made by local partner organisations, many challenges remain as there continue to be widespread shortages of schools, teachers, and accommodation for teaching staff. Based on these findings, the CmiA initiative is forging ahead with its activities and will continue improving local educational infrastructure through the Community Cooperation Programme.

## UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT OF CMIA COTTON

**The Aid by Trade Foundation had the environmental footprint of CmiA cotton assessed for a second time. The key question was: How big are the environmental footprints being left by CmiA?**

AbTF commissioned a life cycle assessment (LCA) to investigate the impact of CmiA cotton cultivation on its ecological footprint. The study was based on data from Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, and Zambia.

The findings are something to be proud of: A global comparison showed CmiA cotton has an excellent environmental footprint, releasing only 1.24 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents per tonne of harvested CmiA cotton fibres while the global benchmark is significantly higher, at 1.43 tonnes. This is largely because CmiA small-scale farmers use relatively little fertiliser and irrigate their crops exclusively using rainwater. They use no freshwater sources whatsoever for irrigation, which protects surface and groundwater reserves. Whereas the global average for water use is 1,563 litres per kilogram of cotton, CmiA uses only two litres. In addition, rain-fed agriculture saves power since artificial irrigation requires power for water pumps.

A major opportunity for improving the environmental balance of CmiA cotton production lies in the methods used to clear fields. Particularly large volumes of emissions are created by burning the previous season's crop residue before sowing cotton. If these plant residues are composted rather than burnt, they can be reintroduced into the soil as humus, significantly improving the environmental impact and widening CmiA cotton's lead in terms of minimising acidification.

Another approach for further reducing environmental footprints would be to modify tillage. Ploughing results in nutrients like nitrates and phosphorous leaching out of the fertile topsoil at a greater rate, thereby compromising the quality of both the groundwater and the soil as well as ultimately leading to poorer harvests. It is important to re-emphasise both issues during training and to supplement such knowledge with practical tips.





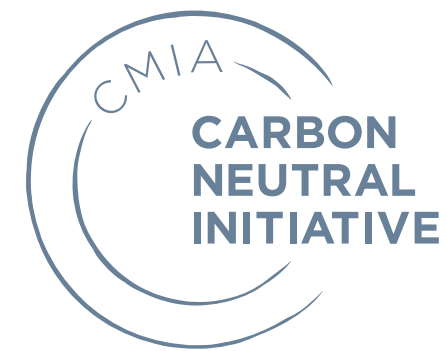
# THERE IS NO PLANET B

Climate change is already making itself felt throughout the world, causing floods, protracted droughts, and unusual heatwaves. To address these issues, we need to limit global warming and develop strategies for adapting to climate changes and their implications. These are difficult but essential tasks for the whole international community, including the cotton and textile industries.

It is estimated that the textile industry is responsible for around six percent of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Cotton production is responsible for between 0.3 and 1.0 percent of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Although this does not sound like much, if one considers the fact that all air traffic in the world put together creates around 1.9 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions, it is still a significant quantity. AbTF therefore wants to help mitigate these emissions through a new initiative.

The good news is that cotton cultivation by CmiA small-scale farmers in Africa already causes up to

13 percent fewer emissions of harmful greenhouse gases<sup>1</sup>. Nonetheless, the Aid by Trade Foundation sees great potential for reducing the footprint of CmiA cotton even further through targeted measures. This is where the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative comes in. It was launched by AbTF in 2021 in order to help decarbonise the textile value chain and enhance the long-term security of cotton farming in Africa by systematically avoiding, reducing, and offsetting emissions from the cultivation, transport, and ginning of cotton.



## THE CMIA CARBON NEUTRAL INITIATIVE

### The First Step Towards a More Climate-Friendly Value Chain

In conjunction with atmosfair, a well-regarded non-profit organisation with many years of experience in climate protection, AbTF is launching the Cotton made in Africa Carbon Neutral Initiative to lay the foundations for a climate-friendlier textile supply chain. Since purchasing decisions are increasingly based on how a product impacts our climate, a supply of CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral cotton offers companies an effective way to pursue their climate goals by using more suitable raw materials.

The CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative takes a multi-pronged approach to emissions, aiming primarily to avoid them, then to reduce them, and finally to compensate for unavoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through suitable carbon offset projects. This comprehensive strategy makes it incumbent on project partners to involve CmiA farmers and their families as well as to ensure each project activity has a positive impact on this target group. This means that the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative is far more than a simple offset-based strategy. It starts by focussing on where the CmiA standard can have a direct impact: greenhouse gas emissions that are directly generated by cotton cultivation and ginning processes. These emissions are mainly related to field clearance, farm work with agricultural machinery, transportation of harvested cotton, management of fertilisers, and energy used in the ginning process.

Several approaches are being taken to reduce these emissions. Energy production for ginneries should generate fewer emissions once renewable energy from solar arrays replaces the conventional power mix and the occasional use of diesel generators. Long-term solutions may arrive in the guise of pyrolysis procedures, creating biochar that binds with carbon in the soil, which



improves the structure of the soil and thereby increases its capacity to hold water.

Measures for reducing field emissions are more limited. One approach is composting instead of burning crop residues, which offers the additional benefit that composted material, humus, can be used to further enrich the soil.

### Compensation of Unavoidable Emissions

Offsetting is planned only to compensate for unavoidable emissions, and such projects must deliver additional benefits to small-scale farmers as well. Eligibility for offset status is restricted to the most effective and credible activities. To ensure the integrity of this programme, compensation measures are registered with UNFCCC's Clean Development Mechanism and the Gold Standard certification system.

Currently, the main form of offsetting involves switching to cooking stoves that are significantly more efficient, thereby lowering greenhouse gas emissions, reducing the number of trees cut down for firewood, and protecting people's health by reducing the release of smoke and noxious gases.

Through the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative, CmiA retail partners have been able to purchase CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral cotton for their value chains since 2021. Using the approach described above, 3,318 tonnes of CmiA-verified cotton has already been rendered CO<sub>2</sub> neutral during the first phase, with certificates to this effect issued by atmosfair.





# THE CMiA CARBON NEUTRAL INITIATIVE BREAKS NEW GROUND IN DECARBONISING COTTON PRODUCTION

With a wide array of projects in many countries in the Global South, atmosfair is one of the world's leading climate protection organisations. It is working with the Aid by Trade Foundation to achieve a transition towards CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral cotton production in CmiA countries as part of the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative. We joined Hansjörg Zeller, the head of atmosfair's New Technologies team, and Nele Erdmann, a senior project developer at atmosfair, to discuss the main challenges they face and the most important steps that need to be taken to address them.

IN THE FIELD

Mr Zeller, the carbon offsetting approach is coming under fire, with many in the media increasingly portraying climate neutrality projects as simply being marketing exercises that provide few benefits for the environment and people in the Global South. For its part, atmosfair makes a point of offering compensation only if emissions are genuinely reduced. What, specifically, do you do differently from other organisations?

We see compensation as only the third-best solution, after the prevention and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. As a result, we require our partners to make a clear commitment to an ambitious decarbonisation plan. In our view, compensation only makes sense for dealing with the remainder of emissions that currently cannot be avoided. In addition, it is important to be transparent about how claims of carbon neutrality are justified.

**Ms Erdmann, what do you consider to be the greatest challenge in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in cotton production, as CmiA has resolved to do through the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative?**

The Aid by Trade Foundation commissioned a study on the environmental footprint of CmiA cotton, known as a life cycle assessment (LCA). The LCA showed that there are many different sources of greenhouse gases in cotton production. Some of these emissions can be reduced through existing, proven technologies, for example by using solar arrays to power ginneries with renewable energy. However, emissions that are not related to power production cannot be solved by simply adopting a new technology. Emissions arising during soil tillage or from the occasional use of chemical fertilisers can only be reduced through long-term measures that would have to be embraced and implemented by small-scale farmers. This is what CmiA is focussed on.

Mr Zeller, cotton production is responsible for between 0.3 and 1.0 percent of the world's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. For every kilogram of CmiA cotton they cultivate, small-scale farmers generate greenhouse gas emissions that are on average already 13 percent lower than those from global conventional cotton cultivation. What steps are you taking to reduce their emissions even further?

We have agreed a transition process with CmiA. This means that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions during the first phase will be compensated for by one of our climate protection projects. In the second phase, we will begin to reduce production emissions by shifting the supply of energy in the production chain to renewable sources, while other emissions will continue to be compensated for. In the third phase, we plan to also reduce emissions from growing and transporting cotton, for example through pyrolysis, which involves using crop residues to create biochar. Instead of burning them in the fields, crop residues can be composted with other organic residues and processed into a highly effective organic fertiliser. This further reduces emissions from farming. Emissions that remain despite these reductions will still be compensated for.

**Ms Erdmann, what specific compensation measures are you implementing, and when do you expect the first reduction measures to take effect?**

In the short term, residual emissions will be compensated for through current atmosfair projects. At the same time, we will develop our own CmiA compensation project to provide efficient cooking stoves for households in regions where CmiA cotton is grown in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Tanzania. The stoves use around 80 percent less firewood than traditional cooking equipment, saving up to three tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year. We expect the first reduction measures to take effect in the second half of 2023.



**Ms Erdmann, are small-scale farmers going to be directly included in the measures so that they, as the ones suffering most from the effects of climate change, can also benefit from these projects?**

Small-scale farmers benefit directly from the compensation project because, by using around 80 percent less firewood than usual, they save money as well as time otherwise spent gathering firewood. This can also make a difference in terms of deforestation. As they are traditionally responsible for preparing meals, women and girls are also exposed to significantly less smoke while cooking, which has been proven to improve the health of their lungs. In addition, small-scale farmers get the efficient cooking stoves at a subsidised price, so they can afford them despite their often precarious financial circumstances.

The entire region also benefits from the project because it creates new jobs, as the example provided by ArewaCotton, our partner for a pilot project in Nigeria, has shown. This local cotton company plans to hire additional personnel to sell efficient cooking stoves.

We also evaluate to what extent crop residues produced by small-scale farmers can be used both for emissions reduction and to provide them with a small side income.

**Mr Zeller, what role does the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative play in shifting the cotton and textile sector as a whole towards CO<sub>2</sub> neutrality?**

Because CmiA has established structures aimed at securing long-term co-operation with partners in

cotton-growing regions, it is possible to test and implement long-term measures, which might ultimately serve as examples for other regions and producers. The CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative can also be used to ensure that additional costs are not borne by local populations but rather by us in the Global North since we are primarily responsible for the emissions to begin with.

**NELE ERDMANN**  
Senior Project  
Manager at atmosfair



**HANSJÖRG ZELLER**  
Team Lead New  
Technologies at  
atmosfair

IN THE FIELD





IN THE FIELD

IN THE FIELD

## THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE CMIA STANDARDS PROCESS



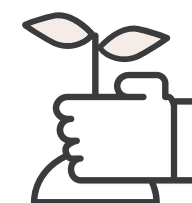
PRINCIPLES, CRITERIA,  
AND INDICATORS



ASSURANCE



MONITORING, EVALUATION,  
AND LEARNING (MEL)



TRAINING



CHAIN OF CUSTODY



CLAIMS FRAMEWORK

**Transparency, credibility, and continuous improvement are central to the standards system of Cotton made in Africa and Cotton made in Africa Organic.**

When the two standards were developed, they aimed to improve the living conditions of African small-scale farmers, achieve better working conditions in ginneries, and make cotton production more environmentally friendly. To accomplish these goals,

the Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) works closely with cotton companies in Sub-Saharan Africa that have one or more ginneries and that procure their cotton directly from small-scale farmers. These cotton companies are issued with CmiA certificates if they are able to prove that they meet the requirements of the CmiA standards through regular field- and ginnery-level inspections.

## COTTON MADE IN AFRICA'S STANDARDS SYSTEM

### Implementation and Verification of Standards' Requirements

In 2021, around one million small-scale farmers, producing some 690,000 tonnes of ginned cotton on 1.7 million hectares of land, were verified under the CmiA and CmiA Organic standards. This means that more than 40 percent of African cotton is already produced sustainably in accordance with Cotton made in Africa's standards system. In 2021, Cotton made in Africa was active in ten countries in Sub-Saharan

Africa, partnering with a total of 22 cotton companies. Field inspection of NSCT, a cotton company in Togo, was also successfully completed in 2021. Auditing of its ginneries is planned for the first quarter of 2022. Once both inspections have been completed, NSCT will be added to the list of verified cotton companies, and Togo will become the eleventh country producing CmiA cotton.

### Clear Principles and Criteria: The Foundations of the CmiA Standards System

A set of principles, criteria, and indicators define the social, environmental, and economic parameters that are considered appropriate in the African context. Combined with management requirements, they represent the four pillars of the CmiA standard: people, planet, prosperity, and management. Whereas core indicators are used to determine whether Managing Entities, as they are known within the CmiA system, can take part in the initiative to begin with, improvement indicators do not need to be met right from the start. However, as time passes, verified partners must continually improve their compliance with the standard's non-core indicators. Specialised training is provided to make this easier to achieve.





### Regular Reviews: Third-Party Monitoring

Verification of whether a standard's requirements are being met consists of several steps. Each year, participating cotton companies must submit information on CmiA-relevant activities as well as complete a self-assessment questionnaire on their compliance with applicable criteria and indicators. These documents provide AbTF with a starting point for external reviews to be undertaken by independent auditors and to calculate outcome indicators derived from the received data. The focus of the audit process switches between cotton fields and ginneries each year. In 2021, 30 inspections were conducted: 17 at the field level and 13 at the ginnery level. To conduct the audits, AbTF once again commissioned two independent verification companies, EcoCert and AfriCert. A total of 21 African auditors undertook CmiA inspections in 2021.

The findings of the audits show stakeholders what has already been properly implemented and what still needs to be improved. The goal is for cotton companies to gradually improve and then maintain their lev-

els of performance in relation to the CmiA standard's criteria and indicators. To ensure continuous improvement, AbTF provides cotton companies with advice and assists them in creating binding plans and in setting tangible goals to be achieved by the next audit.

### Regular Training: Sharing Knowledge at Many Levels

Through training provided by CmiA, small-scale farmers learn how to make their cotton farms more sustainable, boost their farms' profitability, and steadily meet more of the standard's requirements. Agricultural and business management training for participating small-scale farmers is delivered by CmiA-affiliated cotton companies, which in turn receive support in training their own agricultural consultants through the Training of Trainers programme, which is staffed by qualified cotton experts who are authorised and funded by AbTF.



### Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL): No More Excel Spreadsheets

By completing the roll-out of the CmiA Assurance Platform (CAP) to all partners in 2021, AbTF successfully digitalised and optimised another process in the CmiA standards system. CAP holds records of the entire quality assurance process at a single, central location. Cotton companies fill in their own self-assessments directly on the online platform, and auditors submit the results of their on-site assessments of each verified cotton company into the system and upload associated documentation directly to it. By conducting a series of automatic data checks, CAP improves the quality of the information while cutting down on the amount of work it takes to analyse it.

In addition to self-assessments and external audits, the foundation regularly conducts in-depth impact studies. This is to enable AbTF to successfully steer and further develop the standard and its training programme, for example by introducing new training content or by informing the foundation about the kind of impact the initiative's activities are having, the progress that is being made, and where additional support is necessary.

### Chain of Custody and Communications Guidelines

The standards system is completed by the chain of custody guidelines, which define how to integrate verified CmiA and CmiA Organic cotton smoothly into the global supply chain in order to meet the needs of brands and textile companies that have specified interest in sustainable cotton from Africa. In addition, all partners are bound by a single set of communications guidelines, which allow everyone involved to communicate with one another about the standards in a precise and reliable manner.





# BUILDING KNOWLEDGE, STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS, HAVING AN IMPACT

**Partnerships thrive on interaction and innovation, and partnerships between CmiA and verified cotton companies in Africa are no exception.**

However, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, CmiA was barely able to engage in any in-person interactions in 2021, instead shifting largely to virtual communications streamed across thousands of miles. Digital media truly proved their worth, allowing up-to-date expertise to be shared with African partners through webinars that covered a variety of topics, for example explaining how to use the new CAP system, providing a general overview of the standard and its implementation, and detailing new requirements in the latest CmiA criteria catalogue. Two experts from the

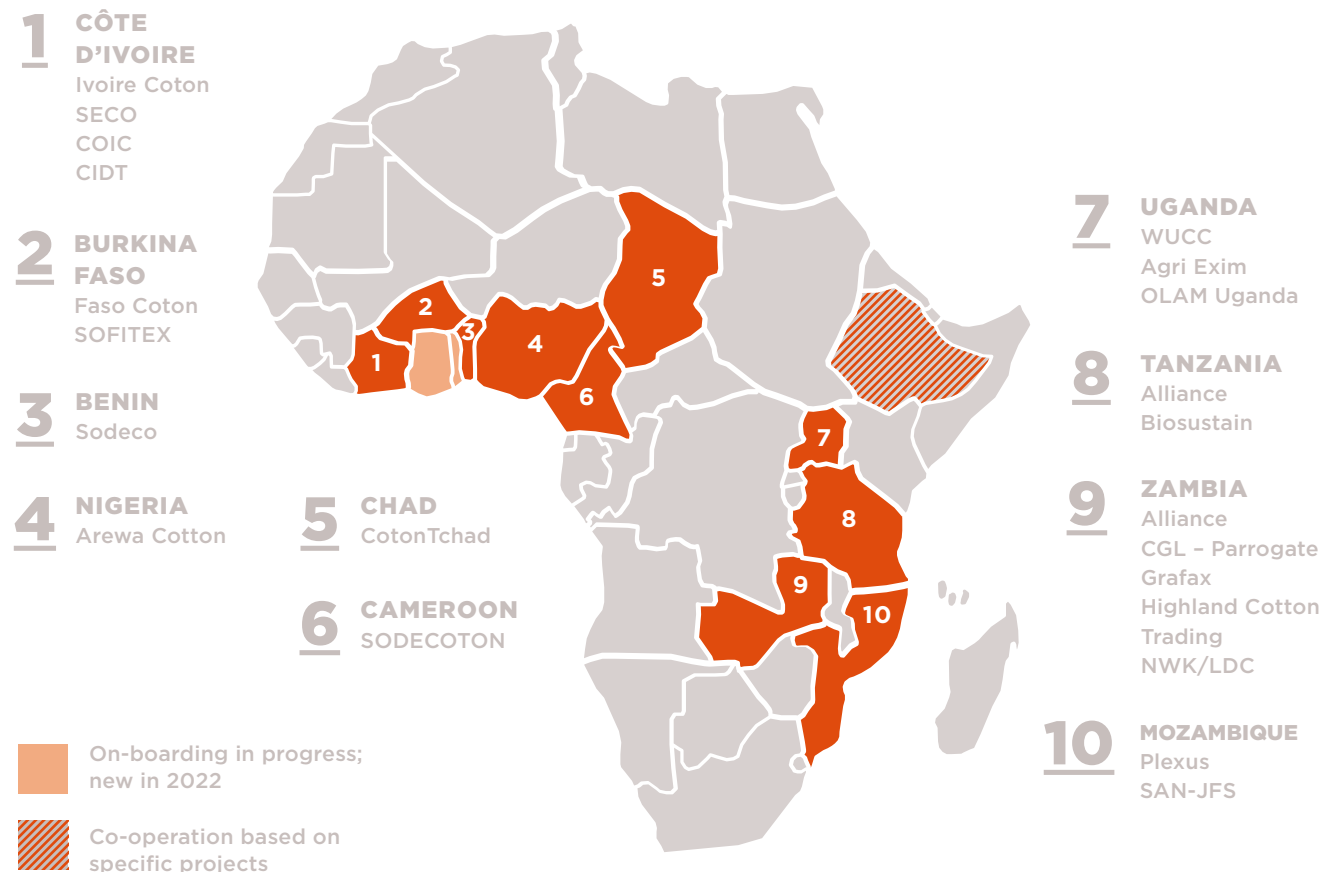
help desk for business and human rights at the Agency for Business & Economic Development also led a webinar on the topic of complaint response mechanisms.

In November 2021, the Aid by Trade Foundation's team was able to resume its on-site activities alongside experts in sustainable cotton cultivation. At the foundation's invitation, representatives of cotton companies from Nigeria, Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, and Uganda came together at a regional workshop organised by CmiA in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. The AbTF team was able to explain the new requirements in the CmiA standard to participants and gather their feedback on newly developed training materials. Such feedback is crucial for CmiA, as it indicates whether training materials are helpful and comprehensible enough to be of real value.



in CmiA's project countries on the African continent. The measures are co-ordinated by the African Cotton Foundation and implemented by the cotton companies. Priority support is given to innovative measures for soil protection or implementing Integrated Farming. All measures ultimately contribute to meeting the criteria of the CmiA standards. By the end of 2021, three projects had been successfully launched under ACF's super-

## THE CMIA PARTNER COMPANIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



## Strong Together

A key partnership for communicating CmiA training content was established in 2021 with GIZ International Services<sup>1</sup>. GIZ International Services primarily provided support with implementing CmiA's Training of Trainers programme in Tanzania and with developing new CmiA training materials that incorporate the latest requirements in the updated CmiA standard. Due to travel restrictions, this joint project focussed on developing digital training tools. At AbTF's behest, for example, GIZ worked with Tanzanian partners to test approaches to virtual training that can be used in other CmiA cultivation countries as well. Additional multi-purpose training videos were also scheduled to be developed by mid-2022.

Since March 2021, AbTF has also been collaborating with the African Cotton Foundation (ACF). Founded in 2018, this non-profit organisation shares many goals with AbTF, including protecting the environment and improving living conditions for African cotton farmers. Most members of ACF are cotton companies that are partnered with AbTF and are verified through CmiA standards. To achieve its objectives, ACF has formed an Africa-wide network of stakeholders in the cotton sector and now provides services and support for small-scale farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This partnership includes support for training and for other operations conducted by cotton companies

vision, with additional projects set to follow in 2022.

The issue of water management is at the core of a water stewardship project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (DEZA), that AbTF has been participating in since 2020. The goal of the project is to minimise water pollution in the textiles and clothing sector by bringing together stakeholder groups from throughout the value chain to responsibly manage water resources. In 2021, AbTF was involved in a baseline study on opportunities and challenges related to water management in the Ethiopian cotton sector. In addition, training materials regarding water management in the context of cotton cultivation were created and presented to various stakeholders in the Ethiopian cotton sector, including representatives of the Ethiopian agricultural ministry, at a workshop in Addis Ababa. Solidaridad, a partner organisation, conducted training sessions for farmers in order to test the materials and gather feedback, which provided the basis for revisions to the materials that are now being finalised.

## AbTF and the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI)

AbTF continued its partnership with BCI to integrate CmiA-verified cotton into the value chains of BCI clients. This resulted in a total of 283,000 tonnes of CmiA cotton being sold through BCI in 2021.

<sup>1</sup> GIZ stands for Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, which is a German development agency





# TACKLING THE PRESSING ISSUES TOGETHER: CLIMATE CHANGE, COTTON SEED QUALITY, AND FARMER TRAINING

IN THE FIELD

The African Cotton Foundation (ACF) is an association of private-sector cotton companies and traders who believe that a combination of pre-competitive co-operation and multi-stakeholder collaboration is the most effective way of addressing the challenges facing the African cotton sector. In this interview, Belinda Edmonds discusses the most pressing challenges and how ACF plans to meet them.



**BELINDA EDMONDS**  
Managing Director  
at African Cotton  
Foundation

## What makes ACF unique compared to other business associations?

ACF is unique because it lets private-sector companies that are normally very competitive share their expertise and also invest in projects they have helped to design. By leveraging the very significant delivery infrastructure of our members' extension services, we are able to ensure that multi-stakeholder resources can be facilitated, co-ordinated, and delivered with maximum impact.

## In which way can a collaboration between ACF and AbTF be of benefit to the African cotton sector?

ACF and AbTF have a shared commitment to and investment in improving the wellbeing of smallholder farming communities and protecting the environment. Our collaboration provides an important producer-to-consumer forum that improves the stakeholders' understanding of expectations and challenges across the value chain. This results in the collaborative development of practical interventions to improve social, economic, and environmental sustainability from farmer to consumer. It also supports our efforts to become a repository of best practices so that the lessons, materials, and achievements of a wide range of development projects can form the foundation for continuous improvement in the deployment, effectiveness, and impact of projects.

## What are the top three pressing issues for the African cotton sector, and how will ACF support its members in tackling these issues?

Our key priorities are understanding the potential impact of climate change and learning how to mitigate and adapt to it. Erratic weather already disrupts the farming calendar in several African countries, and it is expected that the frequency of unusual weather events will increase. As part of a public-private partnership, ACF worked with Wageningen University & Research to map climate risks and opportunities for cotton and other important crops in Africa. This provides us with a framework on which to develop country-specific adaptation and mitigation strategies. We are also focussing on carbon sequestration. We are trying to find practical and cost-effective ways of measuring this and are developing a system of monetising carbon credits to increase and diversify farmers' incomes. The quality and genetic potential of cotton seed are also major concerns. In many African countries, yields remain limited by the use of genetically inferior seeds, and many of them may become even less viable with changing weather conditions. ACF is actively working with technical partners to invigorate African cotton seed research facilities and to encourage the development of high-yield, climate-adapted varieties that produce cotton fibre in qualities that meet market demands. Enhancing and expanding farmer training is an ongoing priority. There is significant urgency to

ensure that farmers' income is not jeopardised by substantially increased and highly volatile input costs, in particular for fertilisers. In conjunction with AbTF, ACF is planning to update our training through technical workshops focussed on the latest successful regional and international practices in soil regeneration and natural pest management. We are also working to en-

sure greater access to and improved financial services for farmers as well as the introduction of environmentally sensitive mechanised solutions that reduce the laboriousness of smallholder cotton production. Both will benefit all African smallholder farmers, especially women and young farmers.



IN THE FIELD





# HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

The CmiA Community Cooperation Programme

To make long-term improvements in the living conditions of small-scale farmers, their families, and their village communities, Cotton made in Africa established the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme (CCCP), which addresses important aspects of their lives beyond sustainable cotton cultivation.

Together with partners from industry and civil society, AbTF supports local cotton associations in regions where CmiA cotton is grown, providing assistance with implementing projects that promote health, education, women's empowerment, and protection of nature and the environment. CmiA's partners work directly with village communities to develop all such projects on the basis of a jointly conducted needs analysis. As in previous years, project participants working in collaboration were able to make a real difference in African cotton-growing regions in 2021.

## IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Education plays a key role in sustainable development and in bringing about improvements in living conditions for cotton farmers, which is why CmiA is working with partners to implement education-focussed projects in Africa. In the most impoverished countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, schools are few and far between, and educational resources, from furniture and exercise books to teachers and textbooks, are also scarce. Through these projects, project partners pro-

vide access to education to both children and adults. This matters because small-scale farmers can only take full advantage of the benefits of agricultural training if they have sufficient skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Thanks to grants provided through the programme, Faso Coton, a cotton company in Burkina Faso, acquired a total of 600 tables and benches for schools in two villages in cotton-growing regions in 2021.

## HELPING WOMEN MAKE STRIDES TOWARDS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

In Sub-Saharan Africa, women generally do most of the work in the fields and all the housework at home while also taking care of their families and their families' nutrition, including by fetching drinking water. Improvements in the living conditions of small-scale farming families are therefore directly connected to the welfare of women. CmiA supports women in their day-to-day lives and advocates for their rights and positions in society. Several projects to support women were implemented in 2021. One example was a project that focussed on food security and was implemented in Nigeria by the Arewa Cotton company. Training in nutrition was provided to 500 women, who also learnt how to establish vegetable gardens to feed their households, making it easier for women to provide for their families. In addition, a women's centre was supplied with dress-making starter kits to enable women to take their first steps towards economic independence.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the focus was also on nutrition, with three women's clubs receiving support to establish vegetable gardens as a means of improving food security for members' families.

For several years, the Ana Kwa Ana Foundation, whose goal is to support women's rights and independence, has provided earmarked donations to fund activities undertaken by Cotton made in Africa in support of women in Zambia. In 2021, the foundation cofinanced posts for gender officers at three CmiA-verified cotton companies. Gender officers support women's rights both within cotton companies and among contracting farmers. Thanks to this funding, the gender officers were able to receive professional training in topics such as monitoring and evaluation in 2021. The officers visited farming communities to deliver training and held discussions with farmers on topics such as the equality of men and women. At ginneries, gender officers worked primarily with employees to raise awareness of issues related to harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

## IN NUMBERS

These figures represent the results of activities conducted by the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme from its start until the end of the calendar year 2021:

### Health:

- 116 wells
- 452 latrines, including
- 384 latrines at schools
- 4 health centers

### Education:

- 110 classrooms
- 67 school canteens
- 54 school gardens
- 8 teachers' houses
- 9 other projects including a girls' dormitory, adult literacy courses, a vocational training centre, and a design studio

### Gender equality:

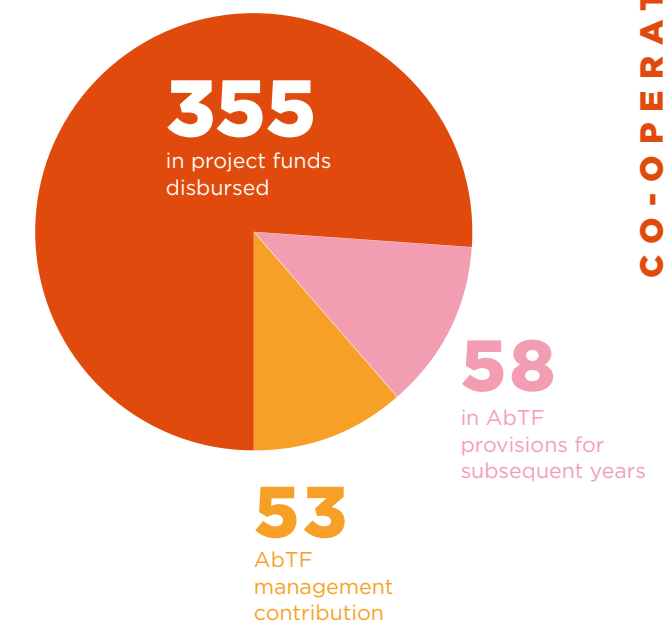
- 82 women's clubs
- 5 other women's projects

### Environment & nature conservation:

- 23 buildings equipped with solar energy
- 3 projects to recycle old pesticide containers

### Co-operation projects

in 2021,  
figures in kEUR







## PROTECTING PEOPLE'S HEALTH IN COTTON-GROWING REGIONS

Water is life, and adequate sanitation facilities are essential for achieving hygienic living conditions. However, according to a UN report published on World Water Day 2022, more than one third of people in Africa do not have secure access to water.<sup>1</sup> They often have to walk for miles to get it. In addition, without safe water and sufficient sanitation, unhygienic living conditions pose a danger to health, especially that of children. As part of the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme, the initiative is therefore supporting WASH projects together with its partners. WASH stands for clean drinking water, sufficient sanitation, and hygiene. One way of ensuring access to clean drinking water is to build wells. This benefits all village residents, not only cotton farmers and their families. In this vein, Faso Coton dug two wells to improve the supply of drinking water in two villages in Burkina Faso. In Côte d'Ivoire, the cotton company COIC also built wells in eight different villages. The improved supply of drinking water benefits more than 5,000 people in these communities. In addition, as part of a project conducted together with the Nigerian cotton company Arewa Cotton, a school was connected to a well in order to ensure a better water supply, benefitting both pupils and the wider village community.

## CONSERVING PRECIOUS NATURAL RESOURCES

Raising awareness of the need for environmental and climate protection is fundamental for the long-term viability of cotton cultivation in Sub-Saharan Africa. CmiA's training therefore shares environmentally friendly cultivation practices with small-scale farmers, who also gain greater awareness of climate and environmental protection through the CCCP.

In 2020, SAN-JFS, a cotton company in Mozambique, launched a pilot project for recycling empty pesticide containers. It allowed small-scale farmers to drop off empty containers at specific collection sites called eco-points. Specially trained women operated these stations and received a sum of money for each container provided by farmers, who in turn were also paid by the container. Pesticide containers were recycled after use and processed into new consumer goods. This had the twin benefits of preventing the containers from damaging the environment and of generating additional income for village communities. In 2021, this initiative was succeeded by a follow-on project, which collected more than 240,000 pesticide containers from some 40,000 small-scale farmers. The project also received EUR 100,000 from the German Postcode Lottery to fund an additional project phase, which is scheduled to end in mid-2022.

## “WORKING WITH CMIA HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO CERTIFY THAT OUR COTTON PRODUCTION MEETS A RECOGNISED SUSTAINABILITY STANDARD”



**VASSIRIKI KONE**  
Head of Studies and  
Projects  
at IVOIRE COTON

IVOIRE COTON is a cotton company that supports the development of small-scale cotton farms in Côte d'Ivoire. The impacts of such assistance can often improve living conditions more widely throughout the region. The head of the company's Studies and Projects Division, Vassiriki Kone, offers an insight into its work with CmiA in the following interview, where he discusses successful projects and what the future may hold.

**You have been partnering with Cotton made in Africa for many years. Why did you choose to join forces with the initiative, and how has the partnership developed over the years?**

Our desire to improve living and working conditions for our staff and producers was the impetus that led us to become the first company in West Africa to join Cotton made in Africa. Working with CmiA has made it possible for us to certify that our cotton production meets a recognised sustainability standard and to undertake a variety of projects, with technical and financial support provided by the Aid by Trade Foundation, among others.

**The results of the CmiA impact study show a rise in average incomes earned from cotton production since 2015. Has this also improved living conditions for the producers themselves?**

We have, in fact, seen that higher incomes have a positive effect on producers' living conditions. Their houses are becoming more and more modern, and they now have alternative means of transport to the ox carts previously provided by IVOIRE COTON. Through crop rotation, farmers have also been able to expand the average acreage of their crops.

**Through the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme, your company is also working on projects that go far beyond sustainable cotton production. Which of these projects are you most proud of?**

We are especially proud of a project for improving access to drinking water. For more than two cotton seasons, we have directly contributed to protecting the health of an entire village community. Digging a well has given everyone access to safe water, whether or not they work in cotton farming.

**Since you started working with CmiA and supporting the CmiA Community Cooperation Programme, what has changed for small-scale farmers and their families?**

Producers dispose of empty pesticide containers more safely and take measures to protect themselves when applying pesticides. By providing hydraulic pumps, we were able to improve access to drinking water in several villages as well.

**What effects of climate change do small-scale farmers in Côte d'Ivoire increasingly have to deal with?**

Changing patterns of rainfall pose a major challenge. The rainy season is supposed to start between May and June, which is when sowing normally takes place. However, rain is now falling far more irregularly, which reduces the density of plants in the fields and therefore decreases farmers' crop yields. In addition, levels of rainfall fluctuate at the end of the season, so quality and yields may suffer if the rains fall for too long or not long enough.

**Cotton cultivation is undergoing a global revolution. What opportunities for sustainable cotton in Africa do you see coming in the future?**

Despite the global changes now underway, cotton production in Sub-Saharan Africa will remain the domain of small, family-run businesses for a long time. This makes it necessary to adapt available means of production to their circumstances. Another key step towards the future is for producers to develop and adopt agroecological practices like zero tillage before sowing or the use of compost-based organic fertilisers. This is the only way to reduce heavy physical labour, increase incomes, and secure the future of cotton production for generations to come.



# CMIA IN THE TEXTILE CHAIN



2021 was a year of growth for Cotton made in Africa. Despite the stream of challenges posed by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, its partners continued to pursue their sustainability goals throughout the global value chain with focus and commitment. Demand for CmiA-verified cotton climbed to record highs, while the initiative actively expanded its digital monitoring scheme in order to further increase the transparency of how CmiA cotton is processed in globally interconnected supply chains. CmiA can now provide the detailed data that companies and end consumers wish for so that the former can advertise how their goods were produced and the latter can make informed purchasing decisions.

## BREAKING RECORDS AND MEETING CHALLENGES THROUGH INNOVATION

Cotton made in Africa was able to maintain its previous year's trajectory of growth, setting a new sales record in 2021. Around 600 million textiles bearing the CmiA label were brought to market in 2021, more than twice the figure for the previous year. In addition to doubling demand, CmiA gained new international partners based in Germany, Poland, South Korea, and the Netherlands. These partners will collectively purchase an additional 110,000 tonnes of CmiA cotton per year. The partner network of retailers and brands that buy CmiA cotton grew by around 30 percent between 2018 and 2021. CmiA has also significantly expanded its textile value chain over the last few years. In 2021, its network of registered partners grew to encompass

240 spinning mills throughout the world, making it larger than ever; most strongly represented are spinning mills serving markets in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India. In addition, increasing numbers of finished-goods manufacturers as well as fabric and yarn traders are joining CmiA's value chain. CmiA-labelled end products were produced in 51 textile markets, primarily for the fashion and home textile sectors.

## Extended Product Portfolio

During 2021, the initiative successfully expanded its product portfolio to include CmiA Inside (products tracked through the Hard Identity Preserved system) and CmiA Supporter (products manufactured according to the Mass Balance system). BESTSELLER is the first retailer to use CmiA Organic and to bring products made from CmiA Organic cotton to market. The demand for CmiA Organic cotton continues to rise as other retailers and brands also express an interest. In addition, Cotton made in Africa collaborated with atmosfair to launch the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative, which offers new and existing clients CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral cotton that meets Cotton made in Africa's standards (for further details, see → pp. 16-19).

All these indicators of growth underline the high level of demand for sustainable cotton. They also bring new challenges, which CmiA worked hard to address in 2021: integrating more stakeholders in value chains, maintaining transparent supply chains, and ensuring sufficient levels of quantity and quality in sustainable cotton. To meet these challenges, CmiA is systematically expanding the digital monitoring systems and services it offers to all its stakeholders.

## IN NUMBERS

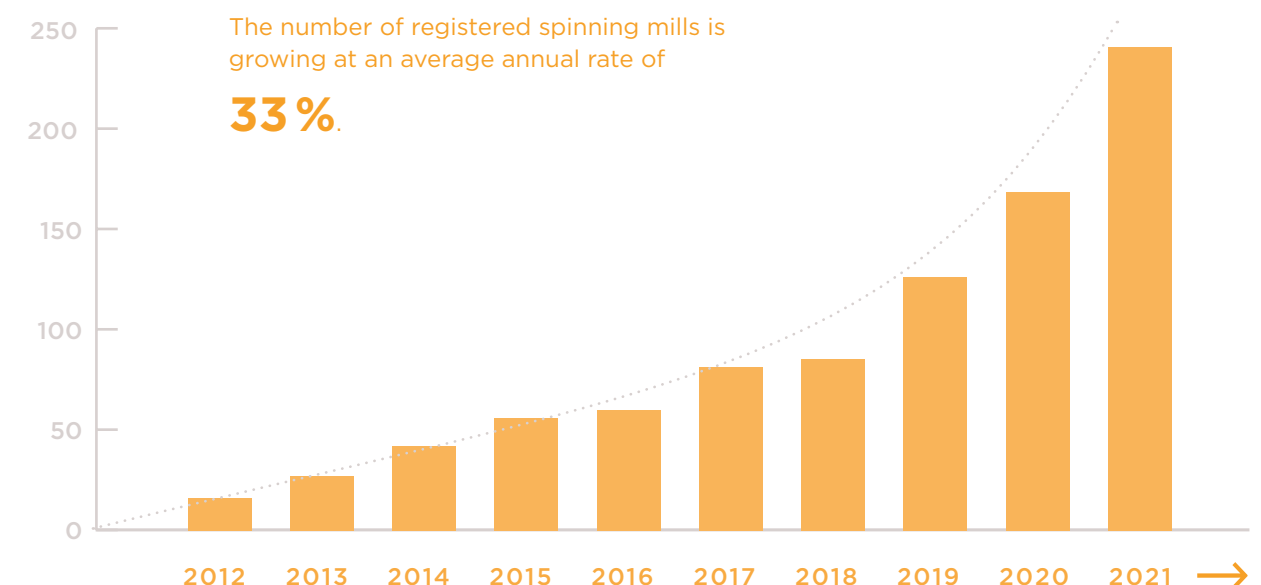
**30 %** more retail partners joined CmiA between 2018 and 2021

**154,000 tonnes** of CmiA cotton have been purchased by CmiA retail partners in 2021 - a plus of 185% in comparison to 2020

**51 countries** throughout the world are now listed as production markets for CmiA textiles

**70,000 orders** were processed through SCOT, the new CmiA online tracking system

**2,000 companies** from the global textile value chain made use of SCOT in the course of one year



## CMIA INVESTS IN DIGITALISATION AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Consumers increasingly want to know where the raw materials for their textiles come from, who processes them, and how large the environmental footprint of an item of clothing is.

Studies show that over 80 percent of consumers value sustainability.<sup>1</sup> This means it is vitally important for brands and retailers to create more transparency in their value chains in order to build trust with consumers and to ensure that their companies enjoy credibility and a reputation for integrity.

To meet these challenges, Cotton made in Africa developed the SCOT tracking system, which came online in 2021. SCOT makes it possible to directly track each order placed by a trading company against the quantity of ginned cotton used. For this to work, all partners in the textile chain have to be integrated within the system. The amount of cotton is recorded at each stage of production, starting with orders from licensing partners, so that the precise quantity of CmiA

cotton can be calculated for each order, from beginning to end.

In 2021, well over 70,000 orders were placed through SCOT, encompassing several million CmiA products and more than 2,000 companies from all parts of the textile chain. This makes SCOT one of the world's leading systems for tracing raw materials using a mass-balancing approach.

CmiA already plans to continue expanding SCOT in 2022 by introducing an automatic registration process for all actors in the supply chain and by integrating fabric traders at an intermediate stage within the system.

In addition to the SCOT tracking system, the initiative regularly offers webinars, in which 1,500 employees of partners from throughout the value chain participated in 2021 alone. Improved documentation and FAQs for SCOT as well as an English-language help desk team provide partners with further support to help them achieve their sustainable procurement goals.

## IN NUMBERS

**1,220**

ready-made garment suppliers in **51** countries

**48**

vertically integrated producers in **11** countries

**560**

fabric producers in **24** countries

**43**

yarn traders in **11** countries

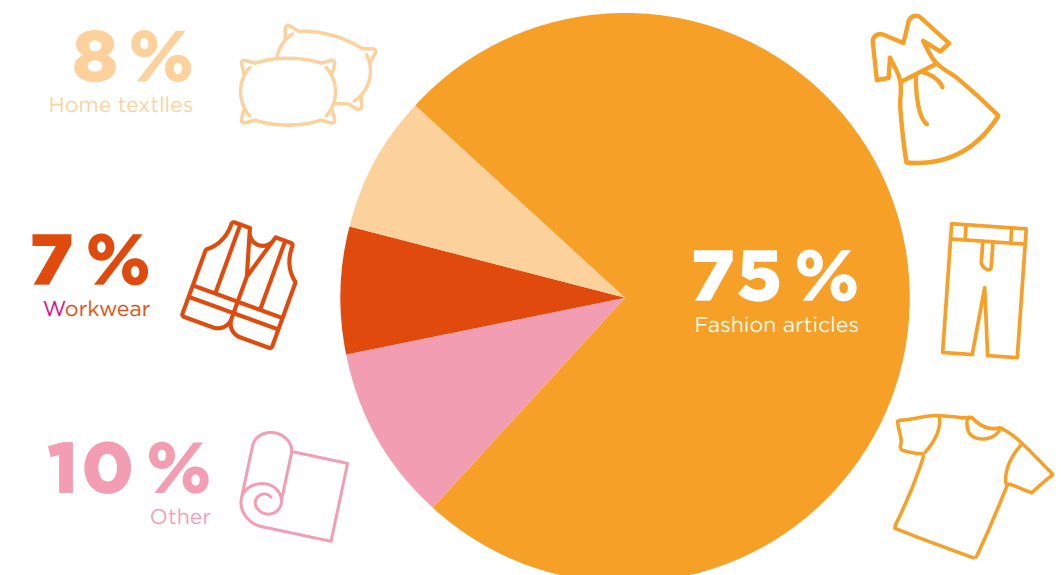
**50**

fabric traders in **7** countries

**27**

cotton traders in **10** countries

About **600** million textiles with the CmiA label were put on the market in 2021.



<sup>1</sup> Source: 2021 Consumer Report by Initiative Digitale Handelskommunikation (IDH), reported in German at: <https://www.horizont.net/marketing/nachrichten/idh-konsumentenreport-81-prozent-der-deutschen-wollen-dass-handel-und-marken-nachhaltiger-werden-195250>





## “TRANSPARENCY IN THE TEXTILE SUPPLY CHAIN IS THE FUTURE”



**SAJID ISRAQ**  
Director at the  
Ahmed Group

A huge exporter that supplies knitted yarn for all the major retail brands around the world, the Ahmed Group is also a longtime partner of CmiA. In an interview, Sajid Israq, one of the directors of the Ahmed Group Textile Division, discusses the demand for transparency in the supply chain, the value of the Sustainable Cotton Tracker (SCOT), and his experiences with upcharges for CmiA-labelled cotton and yarn.

**Mr Israq, as a longtime partner of CmiA, how important is sustainability for your business?**

Sustainability and human capital are inseparable parts of our industry. Following our philosophy, “No quality, no achievement”, we are convinced that it is important to invest in training to build up skills and capacity, thereby ensuring sustainable human capital. We believe that it will never be possible to maintain our business’s profitability without securing the sustainable development of our workforce and environment. Furthermore, we are producing recycled yarn and are an OEKO-Tex-certified company. In addition to the CmiA standard, we also produce organic cotton products according to the GOTS standard.

**The requirements for transparency in textile supply chains are constantly increasing. Despite this, there are some producers and companies for whom transparency in the textile chain still sounds like a major hurdle. What would you say to these people?**

I think transparency in the textile supply chain is the future, and it is implemented through CmiA. We also pay attention to transparency in terms of our business and workplace policies. This gives us better exposure to our customers. People who fear being transparent will be in trouble in the long run. The rise of technology will make the whole textile production process more transparent, and we have to adopt the new technology now to stand out among others and to keep doing so in the coming years.

**With the newly launched Sustainable Cotton Tracker (SCOT), CmiA cotton processed according to the mass balance system can be traced back throughout the textile supply chain. Does the**

**system fulfil the expectations for transparency in the supply chain?**

The newly launched Sustainable Cotton Tracker (SCOT) makes it very simple to maintain the mass balance record for both sellers and customers. In my opinion, it is one of the most transparent transaction systems within the whole textile production supply chain. We are doing business with a large number of customers who are using CmiA yarn. That’s why our company has really benefited from SCOT.

**CmiA cotton is traded at market prices as retailers and brands pay a licensing fee directly to the foundation to use the label. What is your experience with regard to upcharges when buying CmiA cotton and selling CmiA yarns?**

We are one of the biggest manufacturers of CmiA yarn in Bangladesh and are paying a small membership fee directly to the foundation in order to be authorised to sell CmiA-labelled yarns. Neither we nor our suppliers ask for upcharges for CmiA-labelled raw cotton or yarns as it is our duty to give back to society. CmiA is working to improve smallholder farmers’ living and working conditions in Africa and to protect our environment. We are delighted to be a part of this effort, along with many retailers and brands.

**What are the biggest changes textile producers such as your group will have to face in the coming years?**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, textile producers like us need to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances in the textile supply chain system. High shipping costs, rising cotton prices, and the availability of cotton will be among the biggest challenges in the coming years, including for us.

## “CMIA HAS SHOWN ITSELF TO BE HIGHLY RELIABLE AND ACCESSIBLE IN THESE VOLATILE AND CHALLENGING TIMES”



**ANNA RENSING**  
Head of Quality  
Assurance  
at Ernsting’s family  
GmbH & Co. KG

The German retailer Ernsting’s family intends to use exclusively sustainable cotton by 2026. CmiA plays a key role in the company’s plans to reach this goal, as Anna Rensing, the head of its quality development department and the person in charge of product sustainability at Ernsting’s family, explains in this interview.

**What does sustainability mean for Ernsting’s family?**

As an active part of society, it is our responsibility to engage ourselves with the fullest possible commitment as well as with appropriate humility—keeping in mind that we cannot save the world on our own. Together with around 12,000 employees in Germany and Austria as well as our trading partners throughout the world, we are certain that we can make a worthwhile contribution. We see sustainable management as central to the brand, making it both a corporate duty and a matter of concern for every individual in the company, from corporate management to sales staff working at our stores.

**Ernsting’s family has set itself the goal of procuring 100 percent of its cotton from sustainable sources by 2026. What role does your partnership with CmiA play in this?**

Since 2010, CmiA has been at our side as a strong and reliable partner. It will continue to play a key role in reaching our ambitious goal of complete product certification for all our natural-fibre products. Our cotton sourcing reflects this, with CmiA’s share rising by 487 percent between 2020 and 2021.

**What are the benefits you see from procuring cotton through Cotton made in Africa and advertising this on your product labels?**

The distinctive thing with CmiA is that it means we provide help for self-help and contribute to securing the livelihoods of cotton farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa by trading in sustainably cultivated cotton. In addition, the continuous-training approach improves people’s opportunities in the long term, unlike a one-time donation.

**In 2021, you significantly increased the volume of Cotton made in Africa cotton you purchased yet again. What is behind this upwards trend?**

We are determined to transition all of our cotton procurement from conventional to sustainable cotton. We have made great progress towards this over the last year by converting more of our product range. In addition to its status as a long-time partner, we greatly appreciate that CmiA has shown itself to be highly reliable and accessible in these volatile and challenging times.

**What market feedback are you getting on Cotton made in Africa, both from consumers and from within your company?**

We try to make our communication about sustainability as relevant and direct as possible. When talking about CmiA, we briefly introduce individual farmers and point out what a difference it can make in each of their cases. This has proven much easier for people to empathise with than information about quantities or total amounts donated.

**What challenges will textile companies face in making their processes and product ranges more sustainable in the future?**

Raw materials are growing increasingly scarce, contributing to the current shortages in the supply of many types of fibres. I see it as crucial that we deal more responsibly with raw materials, focus on recycling and recovery, and prioritise the search for sustainable options for all natural fibres. In our view, it is essential, both now and in the future, to design products to be durable, save resources, and protect the environment.







# “DEMAND FOR ORGANIC COTTON IS GROWING STEADILY”

Otto Stadtländer is a cotton trading company that sees no contradiction between environmental sustainability and good business practices. The Bremen-based business operates internationally and acts as a strategic partner to Cotton made in Africa. In the following interview, Maximilian Daebel, an authorised signatory for Otto Stadtländer, describes the latest developments in the organic cotton market.

IN THE TEXTILE CHAIN AND ON THE MARKET

**Mr Daebel, you have considerable knowledge of the cotton market. How is demand for organic cotton throughout the world currently shaping up?**

For about the last two years, demand has been outstripping production many times over, and we expect demand to continue growing steadily. However, only one percent of all cotton produced worldwide meets organic cultivation criteria. One likely reason is that certified organic cotton has long been taken for granted, so to speak, and incorporated into supply chains at little markup in comparison with conventional cotton. This meant that there was no incentive for farmers to grow organic cotton. The significant growth in demand over the last four years has driven prices up, thereby increasing incentives for farmers to take the leap into producing certified organic cotton.

**What are the benefits of CmiA Organic cotton, in particular?**

When purchasing a CmiA Organic product, consumers can be certain that they are supporting both environmentally friendly agriculture and social responsibility as outlined in the CmiA standard.

As farmers switching to organic cotton frequently have to adapt to fundamentally new risks and agricultural methods, CmiA works with local partners in cotton-growing regions of Africa to reduce such hazards by offering training to give farmers the knowledge they need and familiarising them with new agricultural methods.

**You trade African cotton throughout the world. In which markets is demand for CmiA Organic cotton the strongest?**

Because European brands have already established textile production chains in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Portugal, these countries now boast extensive expertise in working with organic cotton, and demand is currently strongest there.

**What can be done to increase the supply of organic cotton?**

The supply gap cannot be bridged overnight because the transition from conventional to organic cotton production usually takes two to three years, during which the operation is “in conversion”. In order to compensate for their reduced revenue during this phase, farmers need the textile industry to guarantee purchases over the long term. We are actively working with the industry to develop customised solutions that satisfy all stakeholders.

**To what extent can small-scale farmers benefit from the increased demand for organic cotton?**

Rising demand has led to rising prices, but because cotton is often traded in advance, the higher prices only come into effect at subsequent harvests. For farmers, however, robust demand is just as important as the pricing structure because sustained high levels of demand translate into income security. Such reliability provides confirmation to farmers that they are on the right path and should keep producing organic cotton.

**How do you see the future for CmiA Organic cotton shaping up in terms of both demand and cultivation?**

We would be thrilled to see CmiA Organic production expand to other CmiA countries. Countries in West Africa, in particular, could produce a significant volume of high-quality organic cotton. This could reduce the environmental footprint of cotton as well as addressing the deficit in the supply of certified organic cotton.



**MAXIMILIAN DAEBEL**  
Vice President  
at Otto Stadtländer  
GmbH



IN THE TEXTILE CHAIN AND ON THE MARKET





# CMIA IN THE MEDIA

Cotton made in Africa has built itself a reputation for making a difference and reporting its achievements credibly. In 2021, the initiative succeeded in strengthening target groups' sense of emotional connection to the label and in communicating CmiA's social and environmental benefits.

## CmiA for Readers, Viewers, and Listeners

Cotton made in Africa can report several high points in 2021: Additional international companies joined the partner network, CmiA Organic found a committed bulk buyer in BESTSELLER, and the Carbon Neutral Initiative for CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral cotton was launched. These successes formed the backbone of CmiA's media relations activities.

In total, Cotton made in Africa released 1,100 media reports, making 176 million contacts, which represents an increase in reach of 34 percent over the previous year's figures. Reporting media spanned the spectrum from specialist publications like *Textilwirtschaft*, through daily and weekly newspapers like *Frankfurter Rundschau*, to magazines like *Brigitte* and *Bild der Frau*.

## Behind the Scenes of Cotton Production With CmiA

In order to offer a glimpse into the daily lives of small-scale farmers, Cotton made in Africa's farmer stories centre on the actual faces and personal testimonies of the people who cultivate cotton in accordance with the Cotton made in Africa or Cotton made in Africa Organic standards. The Tanzanian photographer Malicky Boaz was commissioned by CmiA to take portraits of farmers and employees at a local cotton company in 2021. The resulting combinations of words and pictures tell extremely personal stories that give the public a close insight into the lives of small-scale farmers.



## IN NUMBERS

**1,100**  
media reports

**176**  
million readers, viewers,  
and listeners

**34 %**  
greater media reach

## A TV Report on CmiA's Activities and Impact in Africa

CmiA also received television coverage. The ARD-alpha channel's show *Planet Wissen* broadcast another in-depth investigation into cotton farming in Africa and on Cotton made in Africa's work, using Uganda as an example. The programme addressed a variety of questions: How is CmiA-verified cotton cultivated? What do small-scale farmers learn in training? How does this training improve the lives of small-scale farmers? The report made it clear that Cotton made in Africa is a credible and effective standard for ensuring the sustainability of cotton produced in Africa.

## A FRESH LOOK FOR THE BRAND

After scrutinising Cotton made in Africa's brand presence, AbTF ordered an overhaul of its design in 2021 to respond to customer feedback and increasing demands placed on sustainability labels' product communications.

With a revamped logo, a new font, an updated colour scheme, and a selection of high-impact images, Cotton made in Africa's brand presence now reflects what the initiative has been doing for over 15 years: making effective and measurable improvements for people and the environment in Africa.

Redesigned hangtags, with their contemporary look, give CmiA's corporate partners an effective means for communicating the benefits of their sustainable products to their clients. Clearly distinguishable colour combinations and concisely worded logos make it possible to immediately recognise Cotton made in Africa's various products. A distinctive design was also created for Cotton made in Africa's newest product, the CmiA Carbon Neutral Initiative, so that it could be marketed with its own visuals, branding, and labelling. The new branding will be rolled out in 2022.







## “WITH THE CURRENT CHALLENGES AROUND ORGANIC COTTON, IT IS GREAT TO SHARE AN AUTHENTIC AND VERIFIED STORY”

**BESTSELLER is an international, family-owned fashion company with a range of more than 20 individual fashion brands. It is also the first one to use Cotton made in Africa Organic. In the following interview, Danique Lodewijks, a senior project specialist at BESTSELLER, explains how the company is moving away from the traditional, linear way of sourcing and what role CmiA Organic plays in this process.**



**DANIQUE LODEWIJKS**  
Senior Project Specialist  
at Bestseller Group

### Ms Danique Lodewijks, what are the Bestseller Group's main sustainability goals?

At BESTSELLER, we want to accelerate fashion's journey towards a sustainable reality, making sustainability a business mindset for us. Our ultimate ambition is to bring Fashion FWD until we are climate positive, fair for all, and circular by design.

### BESTSELLER is the first retailer to use Cotton made in Africa Organic. What makes the CmiA Organic product line special for you in terms of design and sustainability?

CmiA Organic goes beyond the environmental benefits of organic cotton by also taking social and economic improvements for farmers' livelihoods into account. Furthermore, we can be sure that the cotton from Africa is 100 percent free of genetically modified organisms. The fact that we have full visibility over all supply chain partners also makes CmiA Organic an attractive option for us.

### How do you market your CmiA Organic products to customers and inform them about the impact and work of CmiA, and how have they reacted so far?

All CmiA Organic products carry specially designed hangtags that explain the added value of CmiA Organic cotton. The hangtag further includes a QR code that links to more detailed information on our website. Customer feedback has been very positive. With the current challenges around organic cotton, it is great to be able to share an authentic and verified story.

### BESTSELLER successfully combines quickly changing fashion trends with sustainable sourcing strategies. What are some of the associated opportunities and challenges?

With a broad portfolio of brands, we have the opportunity to react quickly and offer a wide range of products to our customers. To emphasise our focus on a circular future, we recently launched the Circular Design guideline, a tool that enables us to make the right decisions. Furthermore, we invest in the materials of the future through collaborations with organisations like Infinited Fiber. In order to successfully implement sustainable initiatives, we need to make sure that all value chain partners are aligned and moving forward in a collaborative way. Since we are moving away from the traditional, linear way of sourcing, this is a challenge, but we are undertaking the journey step by step.

### Are you planning to expand your CmiA Organic collection to other brands within the Bestseller Group?

Yes, next to NAME IT and SELECTED, both JACK & JONES and VERO MODA will also have CmiA Organic cotton styles in their 2022 collections. We continue to strengthen relationships with our suppliers in order to further increase our uptake next harvest season.



↑  
The products pictured are from  
SELECTED's CmiA Organic collection →



### Working With WWF to Support Sustainable Cotton

“We wear cotton against our skin and close to our hearts. How can we ensure that it is produced in a socially and environmentally sustainable way?” With this opener, WWF, a long-time partner of CmiA, reported extensively on Cotton made in Africa's work and impact on its website and in its newsletter, highlighting the initiative's importance for cotton cultivation and therefore for improving living conditions for small-scale farmers in Africa. The WWF website supplements the report with an extensive catalogue of questions and answers about the CmiA standard and with a description of how WWF supports the initiative.

### HIGH-PROFILE CAMPAIGNS BY BESTSELLER AND HUGO BOSS

BESTSELLER, Denmark's largest fashion company, is the first CmiA partner to process cotton verified under the Cotton made in Africa Organic standard and to label its products as such. To offer consumers both useful information and a more personal connection to this organic cotton, BESTSELLER launched a major campaign that made effective use of CmiA's marketing materials. The drive included numerous social media stories as well as posts, home-made hangtags for product marketing, and a landing page with extensive information about Cotton made in Africa. The landing page focusses on the words and images of cotton farmers themselves, as they explain how growing CmiA Organic cotton benefits them. In BESTSELLER's view, CmiA Organic distinguishes itself by integrating environmental and social aspects into its standard in order to improve the living and working conditions of small-scale farming families and ginnery workers. Overall, the campaign was a success. It highlighted the advantages of CmiA Organic textiles and excited enthusiasm for the sustainable production of raw materials among consumers.

In 2020, the fashion company HUGO BOSS successfully launched a 360° campaign to promote the capsule collection of its brand ambassador Liam Payne. This was extended into early 2021, particularly on social media.







## “DURING THE PHOTO SHOOT, WE WERE ABLE TO CAPTURE THE HARD WORK OF THE SMALL-SCALE FARMERS, THEIR PERSONALITIES, AND PARTS OF THEIR STORIES.”

Malicky Boaz, a young photographer from Tanzania, loves to shoot wildlife, nature, landscapes, and lifestyles. Five years ago, he decided to become a professional photographer to capture an entirely new perspective on everyday life. In an interview, he takes us along on a journey to Tanzania, where he shot a Cotton made in Africa photo campaign about CmiA Organic, and introduces us to the virtual art scene in his East African home country.



**MALICKY BOAZ**  
Photographer & Graphic Designer

**On behalf of CmiA, you have portrayed small-scale farmers, ginnery workers, and employees of Alliance, a CmiA verified cotton company, offering the public a look behind the scenes of Cotton made in Africa and its organic cotton production. How did you get closer to your subjects, who have rarely or never been in front of the camera before?**

I am usually talkative; I joke a little bit and create a friendly atmosphere between my subjects and myself before the shoot. This helps them to feel more comfortable in front of the camera, even if they have never done it before.

**Did any impressions or encounters from the shoots particularly stick in your mind?**

It has been an exciting opportunity to get an insight into the world of cotton farmers. Their unaffected personalities caused them to be reserved at first, but I realised most of them were afraid of being in front of the camera. Some said they are not photogenic and not worth being photographed. By making experiences together and seeing results, we were able to break the ice more and more and capture their hard work, their personalities, and parts of their stories. I was inspired by every step of the shoot.

**All photographers have their own particular visual language. How would you describe yours as it relates to your work for Cotton made in Africa?**

The colours in photographs tell a visual story; especially warm and bold colours can grab attention and make my pictures more interesting and visually stunning. That's why dark and moody colours are an important aspect of the campaign.

**You are part of a very lively art and culture scene in Tanzania. What characterises this scene for you, and how is it currently developing?**

Tanzania is a vibrant and quickly developing country. Throughout the pandemic, I noticed many inspiring and creative movements. The country's young generation is mainly active in music and digital art. However, photography is still in its early stages as an art form, and I see it as my duty and my passion to further develop this form of art. There are several privately organised art initiatives in Dar es Salaam, for example Nafasi Art Space, where like-minded people have a place to learn and create together. These initiatives are worth being seen and supported.



**You have met the people who make the cotton for our clothes and had a closer look at their daily lives. What is your personal message to consumers worldwide who wear cotton clothing every day?**

Clothes are not just something to wear; they all have stories and characteristics that customers can carry with pride. Based on my experiences with the cotton farmers and their lives, I want to congratulate all consumers worldwide on choosing sustainable clothing. You are not just wearing clothes made out of cotton, you are making a big difference in people's lives.







# “CMIA-LABELLED TEXTILES WILL OFFER CONSUMERS VALUES-BASED PURCHASING OPTIONS”

Shinsagae International, a South Korean retail company, and one of its lifestyle brands, JAJU, are the first CmiA partners in Asia. Lee Seock-koo, the co-CEO of Shinsegae International and the head of JAJU, is convinced that this co-operation puts them among the first to respond to the growing trend, especially apparent among the younger generation, of buying clothes with social and ecological value.



**LEE SEOCK-KOO**  
Co-CEO at Shinsegae International

**Mr Seock-koo, in which markets does Shinsegae International operate, and what products does JAJU sell?**

Shinsegae International is an affiliate of the Shinsegae Group, a major distribution company in South Korea. JAJU is a lifestyle brand. Under the slogan of “the best of the things you often use”, it sells primarily clothing, bedding, daily necessities, and kitchenware online and in 260 stores offline. Our aim is to provide products consumers use every day, at the best quality and for a good price.

**As the market leader for fashion and lifestyle in South Korea, you market international fashion brands as well as your own. How important is sustainability for your company?**

The Shinsegae Group prioritises value creation and sustainable development. In keeping with these priorities, our company is actively practising sustainability management by introducing ethical management in Korea for the first time. Sustainability is also an important brand value for JAJU, which strives to produce products in a sustainable way.

**More and more companies are prioritising and publicising sustainable production practices. How prevalent is the issue of sustainability in South Korea, and how important is it for your end consumers?**

In Korea, sustainability has become an important factor in consumption and corporate management. Consumers are increasingly concerned about the impact that the products and services they buy now will have on society and the environment in the future. That’s why we hope the trend to buy sustainably produced products will further increase in the future. In particular, awareness of values-based consumption is becoming more popular in the younger generation, born between 1990 and the early 2000s. They are leading the eco-friendly consumption movement and have even created a new word for it, GREEN + CONSUMER.

**You have been a partner of Cotton made in Africa since 2021. Why did you choose to reach your sustainability targets through CmiA?**

As a lifestyle brand pursuing wellness, JAJU has been strengthening its eco-friendly product lineup since 2020. We paid attention to the value that CmiA places on sustainability, as we do not focus only on the environmental impact but also on the social and economic aspects of our work. By collaborating with CmiA, we would like to inform Korean consumers about products produced in a sustainable way and spread the broader meaning of values-based consumption.

**What opportunities do you see arising for Shinsegae in the South Korean market from the sale of CmiA-labelled textiles?**

JAJU is the first CmiA partner and the first brand to sell products with the CmiA label in Asia. CmiA-labelled textiles will offer consumers values-based purchasing options and differentiate us from other brands. Furthermore, I think it will be a good opportunity to demonstrate how we at JAJU and Shinsegae International put sustainable management into practice.

**How do you advertise and market Cotton made in Africa to your customers?**

To inform the general public about our co-operation with Cotton made in Africa, we are planning to send out a press release about our newest partner and engagement. In addition, we plan to start a full-scale promotion for CmiA products and to advertise CmiA extensively in stores and our own online mall. We also plan to organise a sales campaign in connection with a future community project. By funding this project, we will be able to provide additional support to the farming communities from which we source our CmiA cotton.



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SMALL-SCALE FARMER IN ZAMBIA

The first issue of the sustainability magazine NOW dedicated six full pages to a report on the work of a farmer growing Cotton made in Africa cotton in Zambia. Under the headline “When Africa Blooms”, a journalist told the story of Vainess Chamyolo, known in her village as Wisdom, and of her connection to Cotton made in Africa. Readers accompanied Wisdom through a day in her life as a small-scale farmer, finding out what she learnt through attending CmiA’s training sessions, how she prepared organic pesticides, and how getting verified by CmiA improved things for her. NOW magazine is published by the Otto Group in co-operation with GEO magazine, which is produced by Gruner + Jahr. The first issue had a run of 100,000 copies in German and English. The magazine focusses on reports, features, and interviews about the challenges facing companies that seek to act in a socially and politically responsible manner.



## On Stage With Motsi Mabuse

As an ambassador for Cotton made in Africa, the well-known dancer and TV icon Motsi Mabuse once again stepped forward to make a powerful gesture in June 2021, when she opened the Let’s Dance finale wearing a dress made by Vlisco, one of CmiA’s demand partners. The TV judge also took to social media to parade her fashionable garment and shine a spotlight on Cotton made in Africa.



Credit: Instagram Motsi Mabuse @motsimabuse





# THE GOOD CASHMERE STANDARD® SETS A BENCHMARK FOR SUSTAINABLE CASHMERE PRODUCTION



In 2020, the Aid by Trade Foundation launched The Good Cashmere Standard (GCS) as the world's first independent standard for sustainable cashmere in order to promote the welfare of cashmere goats, to improve the working conditions of farmers, and to protect the environment. From the start, the Aid by Trade Foundation has been working in Inner Mongolia, one of the world's main producers of cashmere, to make measurable improvements in animal welfare and to ensure cashmere goats are treated appropriately. In two short years, the levels of both supply and demand for cashmere produced in line with the standard have grown exponentially. In 2021, nearly twice as much cashmere was certified by The Good Cashmere Standard and processed into textiles as in the previous year. This represents a significant milestone for The Good Cashmere Standard as well as a key step in the right direction for transforming the textile sector.

## 2021 IN FIGURES

**3.3 million**

GOATS



**7,900**

FARMS

**1,300 tonnes**

GCS-CERTIFIED  
CASHMERE



**~127**

SPINNING MILLS  
AND TEXTILE  
PRODUCERS



**6,000,000**

GCS-LABELLED TEXTILES  
ON THE MARKET



**30**

GCS BRAND PARTNERS



**13**

TEXTILE PRODUCTION  
MARKETS WORLDWIDE





## IN NUMBERS

**7,900** farmers  
joined The Good Cashmere  
Standard in 2021

**3.3** million goats fell under the  
purview of The Good Cashmere  
Standard in 2021

**1,300** tonnes of cashmere  
wool were certified by The Good  
Cashmere Standard

**30** international retail partners  
from 7 countries used the certified  
sustainable wool in their products

**6** million products were  
manufactured using cashmere  
wool certified by The Good  
Cashmere Standard

**292** media reports  
discussed The Good  
Cashmere Standard

**378.5** million contacts  
were made by The Good Cashmere  
Standard through the media

### Another Successful Round of Audits

After AbTF laid the foundation for sustainable cashmere production by establishing The Good Cashmere Standard in 2020, the second round of audits began in 2021. By conducting annual checks on farms and on buying and dehairing stations, AbTF ensures their compliance with the standard's animal welfare requirements for goats, good social conditions for people on farms, and measures to protect the environment.

The Good Cashmere Standard has made astounding progress in a very short time, with its certification covering nearly 8,000 farmers, more than three million goats, and 1,300 tonnes of cashmere wool in 2021.

The Aid by Trade Foundation is supported in its activities by local auditors from China, who serve as independent third parties verifying compliance with the standard. They understand local conditions and, partly due to their linguistic and logistical advantages, have easy access to farmers and to buying and dehairing stations.

There are two steps in the auditing process. First, the farmers assigned to each buying or dehairing station complete and submit a self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ), where they report how well they believe they have met the criteria of the standard. Their self-assessments are evaluated by Elevate, an independent audit firm. In the second step, a risk assessment is undertaken to help Elevate select a sample of cashmere farms for in-person spot inspections. These inspections involve local auditors visiting farmers at their farms as well as the buying and dehairing stations that are participating in the GCS programme. AbTF's goal is to audit a random sample of around ten percent of farms every year. Since all of the buying and dehairing stations are audited each year, they are not subject to a random selection process.

### Effectively Improving Implementa- tion of the Standard at Farms

Farmers or buying/dehairing stations wishing to be certified by The Good Cashmere Standard must meet the standard's core, major, and basic criteria. Any confirmed infringements of core criteria result in the offending farms being expelled from The Good Cashmere Standard. Infringements of other types of criteria result in corrective actions, with breaches of major criteria requiring immediate rectification of the problem and breaches of basic criteria requiring the submission of a detailed plan and schedule for rectifying the issue. Only once all the necessary corrective actions have been taken do buying stations and their associated farms receive a one-year certificate under The Good Cashmere Standard.

Corrective actions are crucial tools for ensuring compliance with the standard's requirements and for maintaining both the short- and long-term quality of The Good Cashmere Standard. They also enable farmers to continually improve their cashmere farms and to prove this in subsequent audit rounds.

For a young standard like The Good Cashmere Standard, it is especially important to work with farmers to develop their skills, expertise, and working methods. To achieve long-term changes, AbTF is investing a lot of time and effort into raising awareness and delivering information with the support and advice of experts, especially in the field of animal welfare; it has also made it a priority in 2021 to review corrective actions. Working together with the Aid by Trade Foundation, a local specialist in animal welfare employed by the auditing firm Elevate ensures that corrective action plans are managed with the highest levels of expertise and professionalism.



## High Demand for Certified Sustainable Animal Fibres

As the first standard for sustainable cashmere wool, The Good Cashmere Standard is witnessing an explosion in demand.

Well-known retailers and fashion brands from Europe, Australia, and North America are already purchasing GCS-verified cashmere. Now in its second year of operation, The Good Cashmere Standard can proudly report having more than 30 international licensing partners that hail from seven countries and have brought around six million GCS-labelled products to market.

Demand for cashmere has grown significantly in recent years. However, the origins of this fine material and the conditions under which it has been produced have largely remained a mystery. This means that demand for a certified sustainable alternative to conventional cashmere is enormous, not least due to changes in consumer behaviour and concerns raised by animal rights organisations. People now place greater value on animal-friendly clothing production, as evidenced in a recent study by Four Paws, an animal welfare organisation. This study reported that just under one third of respondents consciously look for clothing that takes animal welfare standards into account.

## Systematic Tracing Provides Unprecedented Transparency in the Processing of Cashmere Wool Through the Supply Chain

The Aid by Trade Foundation developed the Cashmere Tracking System (CATS) as a digital tracking system that covers all certified cashmere wool and all orders for products bearing the label of The Good Cashmere Standard.

In 2021 alone, nearly 200 partners throughout the textile value chain—from producers to spinning mills to retailers—were registered in the system, and about six million products could be traced back through the system by trading partners. This makes the online portal of The Good Cashmere Standard the only one currently in the market to ensure this level of transparency and traceability in the cashmere industry. CATS was updated in 2021, and the system's performance will continue to be reviewed and improved upon on an ongoing basis.

People now place greater value on animal-friendly clothing production, as evidenced in a recent study by FOUR PAWS, an animal welfare organisation.

## Growing Public Awareness of The Good Cashmere Standard

Both Cotton made in Africa and The Good Cashmere Standard got a new look in 2021. The sharp, modern logo, representing warmth and approachability, is suitable for display on the web, in articles, or on product tags. The contemporary design offers trading partners excellent opportunities to attractively present the advantages of sustainable cashmere wool on the product, at the point of sale, or even online.

The timing is perfect, with corporate partners increasingly focussing on the marketing potential offered by The Good Cashmere Standard, whether they are engaged in product promotions or corporate communications. H&M, Peek & Cloppenburg (P&C), and the UK lifestyle brand Boden, for example, all heavily promoted sustainable cashmere under the GCS label in 2021. P&C set up in-store displays and posters to promote the standard. Boden, whose clothing can be ordered by catalogue or online, gave The Good Cashmere Standard a prominent position in its online shop.



2022

## Training in Animal Welfare

AbTF is determined to ensure that farmers receive training and additional awareness-raising in animal welfare as a high priority in 2022. To this end, we worked with animal welfare experts and animal rights organisations to develop training methods and other measures in 2021. Cashmere farmers will be offered both virtual and in-person training in topics that address their specific needs, such as animal health when shearing or combing cashmere goats.



The Good Cashmere Standard also attracted media attention. The sustainability label was the subject of 292 media reports in 2021, with a total reach of 378.5 million viewers or listeners; this is over 147 percent higher than in the previous year. Specialist publications like *Textilwirtschaft* or *Forbes*, daily newspapers like the German *Handelsblatt*, and magazines like *Bunte* or *Elle* all reported on The Good Cashmere Standard.

The Good Cashmere Standard also garnered two mentions on television. The popular show *Galileo*, shown on the channel ProSieben, broadcast a feature on Haelixa's marking system, using products following The Good Cashmere Standard as examples; the second report by WISO, shown on ZDF, discussed fraud in the cashmere industry. Top marks went to a pullover by H&M, one of the first partners of The Good Cashmere Standard.





“USING A HIGHER-QUALITY CERTIFICATION SUCH AS THE GOOD CASHMERE STANDARD IS A GOOD WAY TO START!”

Only a small percentage of animal-derived fibres used in the textile industry are currently certified according to animal welfare standards. We spoke with Dr Marlene Kirchner, a veterinarian and the lead expert on farm animals and nutrition at FOUR PAWS, and Jessica Medcalf, the organisation’s global corporate engagement manager, about the sensitive topic of animal welfare in fashion.



**DR MARLENE KIRCHNER**  
Lead Expert Farm Animals and Nutrition at FOUR PAWS



**JESSICA MEDCALF**  
Global Corporate Engagement Manager Textiles at FOUR PAWS

**FOUR PAWS is passionate about animal welfare in the textile industry and making consumers aware of animal-friendly fashion. What exactly do you want to achieve?**

Our vision at FOUR PAWS is a world where animal-friendly fashion is the only kind of fashion, and we do this by focussing on encouraging brands to be transparent and accountable. We know this will lead to a positive change. We are “at the table”, provide value and support, and are a critical friend to the fashion industry. We believe that highlighting good and bad practices, encouraging the development of robust certification initiatives, and mobilising consumers are all important components of achieving change.

**Does animal cruelty occur in all animal-based fibre industries?**

Cruelty can be found in all animal-fibre industries, but only a tiny proportion of industry members currently provide any level of transparency about their animal welfare standards. This is what we are trying to change so that poor standards of animal welfare are no longer hidden. Also, legislation can help to set frameworks and improve animal welfare. However, companies should not wait to change aversive farming practices and minimum requirements that do not prevent animal cruelty.

**Which problems of animal welfare are inherent to cashmere production?**

Many of the goats’ basic needs might be neglected, including access to adequate food, pasturing, and exploring; unlimited access to water and veterinary care; and the chance to express natural and social behaviours and to experience positive mental states. Goats are also often subject to cruel practices, for example painful mutilations that are carried out without appropriate anaesthesia and pain relief. Goats can be transported long distances in inhumane conditions, and they are commonly slaughtered without prior stunning. Throughout their lives, they repeatedly suffer a painful and stressful hair removal process that involves the goat’s legs being tied together. Shearing and combing can cause injuries to the goat’s skin, causing pain and infection. Being forcefully held or tied in a recumbent position for the duration of hair removal is incredibly stressful for the animals, particularly for pregnant goats, and can cause physical harm to both the nanny and the unborn kid. If the goats are shorn during cold weather, some may die due to the sudden exposure caused by removing their undercoat as they are lacking evenly distributed body fat.

**In 2020, the Aid by Trade Foundation introduced The Good Cashmere Standard as the world’s first standard for sustainably produced cashmere from Inner Mongolia. What are the most important aspects of animal welfare when it comes to textile standards?**

FOUR PAWS encourages standards owners to follow the Five Domains model of animal welfare, which considers how the environment, nutrition, health, and behavioural interactions, including those with humans, impact the animals’ mental state. The ultimate goal is to ensure an animal has a good mental state, and a holistic approach must be undertaken to achieve this. Correspondingly, the standards should ensure that the basic needs of animals are met, species-specific resources are provided, and cruel farming practices that cause pain, suffering, and distress are abandoned.

**What can retailers and brands do to improve animal welfare during the production of animal-derived fibres?**

Unfortunately, brands and retailers do not have animal welfare scientists within their teams, and while some do try to connect directly with the suppliers in their value chain, most brands rely on certifications.

Using a higher-quality certification such as The Good Cashmere Standard is a wonderful way to start! Most of the other certifications available today for the various animal-based fibres really are not ensuring an adequate level of animal welfare. So, we want to see brands not only utilising the certifications available but also working with and supporting standards owners to raise the bar.

**Which actions is FOUR PAWS adopting to improve animal welfare in the fashion industry, especially in terms of helping consumers to make informed choices?**

“Wear it Kind” is our umbrella fashion programme, an initiative designed to support and catalyse more compassion in fashion. It works to ensure that an excellent level of animal welfare is provided to the animals used within all major fibre supply chains. Through this programme, we primarily engage and educate brands, retailers, and consumers. However, we also participate in standards development processes and engage at all levels within the industry. FOUR PAWS is also consulting for groups like the OECD and the Dutch government’s IMVO textile partnership.







# A DIGITAL FINGERPRINT ENSURES THE TRACEABILITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF CASHMERE WOOL



As a technology partner, Tailorlux develops and implements optical fingerprinting technology for a variety of materials and products in order to provide transparency and to enable the sources of materials to be authenticated. The company has been working together with The Good Cashmere Standard by AbTF since 2021. In this interview, Tobias Herzog, the managing director of Tailorlux, discusses the opportunities this collaboration has created for the textile chain.

**The Good Cashmere Standard by AbTF uses Tailorlux's IntegriTEX system to provide transparency and traceability in the textile value chain. How does the system actually work?**

The technology is based on light-emitting materials called luminescent pigments. These inorganic pigments, also referred to as markers, are custom produced. They are significantly smaller than the fibres that they are designed to mark and bear a unique fingerprint. Cashmere wool is marked by enriching the raw material with pigments, which then become an integral part of the fibres so that the wool can be physically traced.

**How can the markers be detected?**

The markers can be quickly and simply scanned and read with a handheld sensor while an algorithm checks whether the spectrum of light it detects matches the spectral fingerprint provided by a reference sample.

**Why is it so important to ensure transparency when working with cashmere wool?**

As a high-value raw material, cashmere fibres enjoy a significant profit margin and are therefore a prime target for counterfeiting. Proof of authenticity for cashmere wool offers retailers and brands certainty that cashmere wool was in fact used in the product. In addition, increasing numbers of consumers are demanding demonstrably sustainable products. Animal welfare plays a key role in many people's purchasing decisions as well. Combined with the documentation provided by The Good Cashmere Standard by AbTF, our product authentication provides consumers with the information they need to make an informed decision.

**This is a relatively involved process. Can it really be practical to roll it out more widely in the textile industry, especially when it comes to servicing the mass market?**

Our experience shows that only those marking processes that have no impact on production processes

gain acceptance. Prior to spinning, every natural fibre is mixed with others of the same type, whether that be cotton or cashmere; by incorporating the markers at this stage in the process, while the fibres are still homogenous, we enable producers to continue production at their normal speeds.

**In the textile sector, marking is a new and niche approach. What opportunities does it offer to retailers?**

We make fibres machine-readable during the processes of spinning, knitting, or weaving. This offers the whole textile sector a chance to gain reliable production data about its sources of supply for the first time. By making use of our physical authentication services, The Good Cashmere Standard is blazing a pioneering new trail.

**What is your vision for the future of the textile sector when it comes to transparency in the textile value chain?**

Digitalisation could make the textile value chain easier to track. In 2021, we already showed how it is possible to monitor the blending of entire batches of cotton using only one sensor per carding line. Using live production data, this kind of tracking can also be implemented per linear metre of a given textile product. The content claim on the label of the end product would thereby be supported with real data, and all prior transactions subjected to the materials authentication process would be digitally accessible.



**TOBIAS HERZOG**  
Managing Director  
at Tailorlux

# THE GOOD CASHMERE STANDARD FILLS AN IMPORTANT GAP FOR ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE TEXTILE CHAIN



Madelene Ericsson Ryman is part of the Resource Use & Circular Impact Team at the Global Sustainability Department of the H&M Group. She also represents the company on the advisory board of The Good Cashmere Standard. In the following interview, she explains why she sees the key for long-term animal welfare in engaging with the people who work with cashmere goats every day. She also discusses which efforts the H&M Group is undertaking to become more sustainable.

**H&M stands for fast fashion. Can fast fashion ever become sustainable?**

We see ourselves as a company that helps people all over the world to express themselves through fashion and design, in an affordable way. That shouldn't be seen as something bad. The actual problem is the system behind it, which needs to be changed. Our company wants to be part of this process and development. Therefore, we would like to continue what we are doing right now while also making us more independent from resource use. That's why we are putting a lot of effort into becoming circular in both the way we work and the way we source our materials.

**As one of the largest retailers in the world, H&M Group wants to produce its textiles in a more sustainable way, with people, animals, and nature being treated respectfully. How important is animal welfare in this context for your customers?**

Animal welfare is a topic that lies very close to the hearts of our colleagues and customers. We have had an animal welfare policy in place since 2014, but our work to ban materials that do not align with our values started back in the early 2000s. We aim for 100 percent of our materials to be either recycled or sourced in a more sustainable way by 2030. Our goals also include 30 percent of our materials being recycled by



**MADELENE ERICSSON  
RYMAN**  
Environmental  
Sustainability Business  
Expert at H&M Group

2025 and all animal fibres being sourced from farms certified according to credible animal welfare standards by the end of 2025.

**Which steps have you already undertaken to respond to consumers' growing desire to buy sustainably produced textiles that do not harm the wellbeing of animals?**

To have believable animal welfare standards we can depend on is very important for us as a brand. That is why we have been engaging with animal welfare organisations as well as other brands and players in our supply chain to find solutions that work for the entire industry. However, we cannot only focus on animal welfare requirements but must also include the environment and the people working at the farms. It is important to reward the farmers who go the extra mile to make improvements for the animals and to make it clear that investing in the animals can help to make the farms more resilient in the long term. So, the key for long-term animal welfare lies in engaging with the people who work with the animals every day. That is what we think AbTF is so good at: keeping the farmers' perspectives in mind as well.

**H&M is a partner of The Good Cashmere Standard and uses certified cashmere in its products. When did you join and why?**

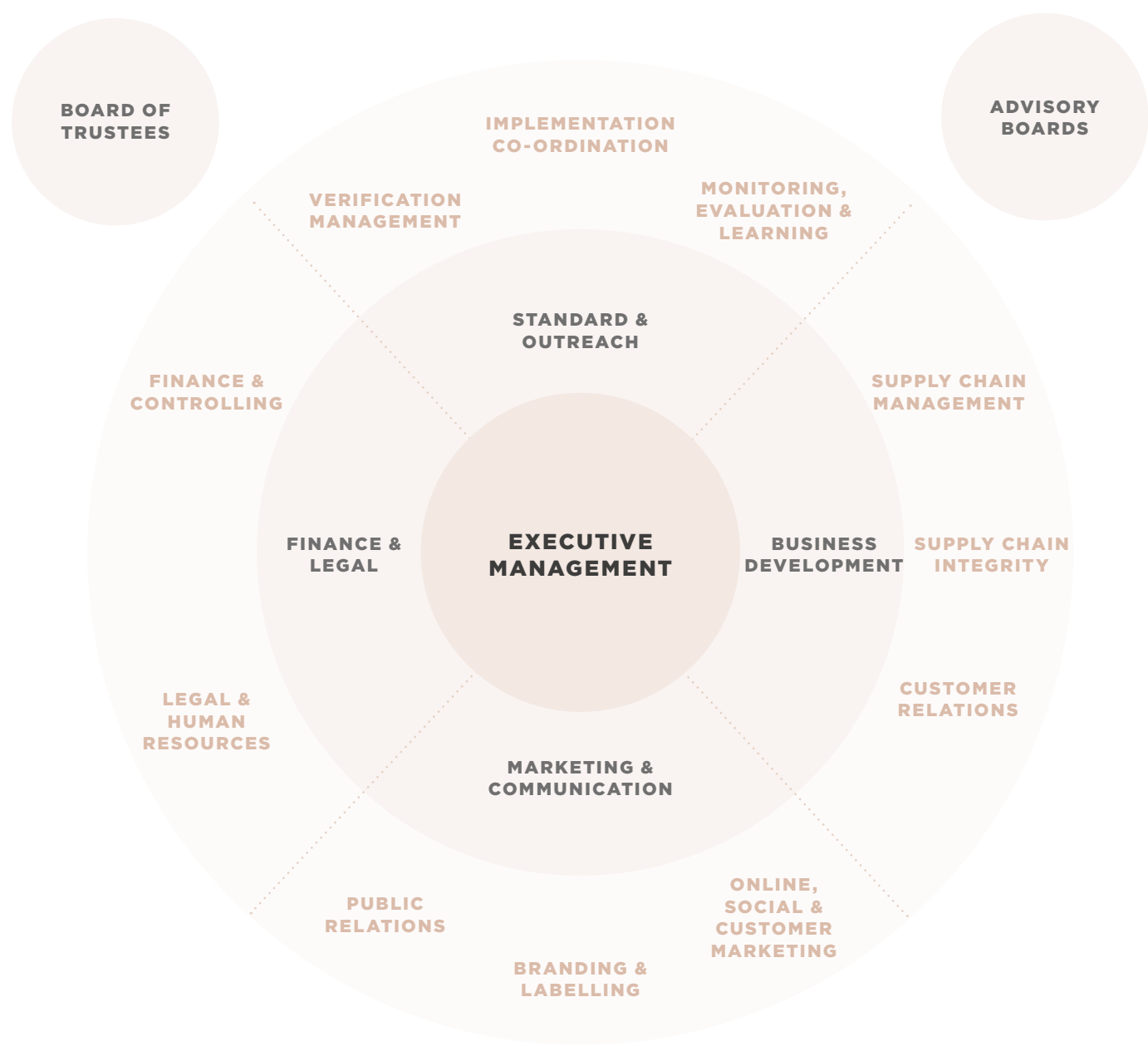
There were no good cashmere standards addressing animal welfare, the environment, and social issues, so we felt that The Good Cashmere Standard filled an important gap. We joined the standard at its inception and started to source certified fibres as soon as they became available. For us as a brand, this long-term commitment made by The Good Cashmere Standard is also important because it lets farmers rely on there being a long-term market once additional improvements have been made under the standard.















THE AID BY TRADE FOUNDATION TEAM

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



THE ABTF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees of the Aid by Trade Foundation is staffed with internationally leading personalities from NGOs, the public sector, and trade. With a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve members, its purpose is to ensure that the foundation's main objectives are implemented. As of 31 December 2021, the Board of Trustees included the following people:

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
|    | <b>PROF. DR MICHAEL OTTO</b><br>Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees / Chairman of Supervisory Board Otto Group |    | <b>DR WOLFGANG JAMANN</b><br>Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees / Executive Director International Civil Society Centre |
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ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE





THE CMIA ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board of Cotton made in Africa is staffed with internationally renowned representatives of various interest groups that bring different perspectives and experiences to the table. Their different areas of expertise make the advisory board a key discussion partner and advisor to the management. As of 31 December 2021, the CmiA advisory board included the following people:



**MARCO BÄNNIGER**  
Head Trader Hand Picked Cotton  
Paul Reinhart AG



**DR ALEXANDER DAVID**  
Director Purchasing International /  
CSR  
Lidl Stiftung & Co. KG



**FRITZ GROBIEN**  
Managing Partner Albrecht  
Müller-Pearse & Co and  
Vice-President Bremen Cotton  
Exchange



**DR FLORIAN REIL**  
Team Leader Project Development  
& Support, Initiative for Sustainable  
Agricultural Supply Chains (INA),  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
(GIZ) GmbH



**MAJA-CATRIN RIECHER**  
Project Manager Sustainable  
Agricultural Commodities  
WWF Germany



**DR RAFAEL SCHNEIDER**  
Deputy Director Policy and External  
Relations, Coordination Food  
Security Standard (FSS)  
Welthungerhilfe



**FABIAN SCHOLZ**  
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Miles GmbH



**TORSTEN STAU**  
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REWE Group Buying GmbH  
Chairman of the Board &  
Non-Executive Director  
REWE Far East Limited



**JOHANNA VON STECHOW**  
Johanna von Stechow  
Head of Environmental Protection  
Tchibo GmbH



**OLAF TSCHIMPKE**  
CEO International  
Foundation for Nature  
NABU Naturschutzbund  
Deutschland e.V.



**JÖRN OTTO**  
Vice President  
Sourcing and Supply Chain  
bonprix Handelsgesellschaft mbH

THE GCS ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board of The Good Cashmere Standard is staffed with internationally renowned representatives of various interest groups that offer different perspectives and experiences. Their different areas of expertise make the advisory board a key discussion partner and advisor to the management. As of 31 December 2021, the GCS advisory board included the following people:



**ALVA CHEUNG**  
General Manager Marketing  
Erdos Sheng Lin Ltd



**MADELENE RYMAN ERICSSON**  
Environmental Sustainability  
Business Expert at H&M Group



**ANNA HEATON**  
Fiber and Materials Strategy Lead  
Animal Materials  
Textile Exchange



**HEIKE HILLEBRECHT**  
Head of Buying  
Peter Hahn GmbH



**KATJA KAUPISCH**  
Officer for International Wildlife  
Conservation Eurasia  
NABU Naturschutzbund  
Deutschland e.V.



**DR MARLENE K. KIRCHNER**  
Lead Expert  
Farm Animals & Nutrition  
FOUR PAWS International



**SOPHIE PRATER**  
Scientific Officer Ruminants  
Royal Society for the Prevention of  
Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)



**BRIAN YU**  
General Manager  
Artwell Holdings Limited





A SELECTION OF CMIA CORPORATE PARTNERS IN 2021



















A SELECTION OF GCS CORPORATE PARTNERS IN 2021









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Note on trademarks: For reasons of better readability, the labelling of Cotton made in Africa and The Good Cashmere Standard as officially registered trademarks with the ® notation in the continuous text is omitted.

Note on key figures: Some of the figures in this report have been rounded to simplify presentation.

This report is also available in German and can be downloaded at [https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CmiA\\_Jahresbericht\\_2021.pdf](https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CmiA_Jahresbericht_2021.pdf)





## AID BY TRADE FOUNDATION

The Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) was founded in 2005 by Prof. Dr Michael Otto, an entrepreneur from Hamburg, Germany. The aim of the foundation, which operates independently of the Otto Group, is to help people to help themselves through trade, thereby preserving vital natural resources and securing the livelihoods of future generations.

Cotton made in Africa® is an internationally recognised standard for sustainably produced cotton from Africa, connecting African small-scale farmers with trading companies and fashion brands throughout the global textile value chain. The initiative's objective is to employ trade rather than donations to offer help for self-help in order to improve the living conditions of around one million cotton farmers and their families in Sub-Saharan Africa while protecting the environment. The small-scale farmers benefit from training and better working conditions, and additional social projects enable their children to attend school. Female small-scale farmers are supported in pursuing professional and social independence.

The Good Cashmere Standard® by AbTF is an independent standard for sustainably produced cashmere wool. Developed in 2019 in close collaboration with animal-welfare specialists and independent cashmere-production experts, its goal is to improve the wellbeing of the cashmere goats and the working conditions of the farmers as well as the environment in which they live. The standard will begin by focussing on the framework conditions for cashmere production in Inner Mongolia.

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### Aid by Trade Foundation

Gurlittstraße 14 · 20099 Hamburg

Telephone: +49 40 25 76 75 50

Email: [info@abt-foundation.org](mailto:info@abt-foundation.org)

[www.cottonmadeinafrica.org](http://www.cottonmadeinafrica.org)

[www.thegoodcashmerestandard.org](http://www.thegoodcashmerestandard.org)