



**COTTON
MADE IN
AFRICA**



PRESS INFORMATION

22 March Is World Water Day: Cotton made in Africa Supports Human Right to Water Through Wells, Training, and Water Filters

Hamburg, 2024-03-19 In many regions of the world, water is becoming a luxury. Demand for water is growing along with the global population. The supply of water, however, is coming under threat by climate change, especially in structurally disadvantaged regions such as ones in Africa South of the Sahara, where weather extremes like droughts and torrential rainfall are having a devastating effect. Through its Cotton made in Africa (CmiA) standard, the Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) is working to ensure more equitable access to safe drinking water and better protection for this valuable resource.

“Water scarcity represents an existential threat to people in cotton growing areas,” says Tina Stridde, the managing director of the Aid by Trade Foundation, continuing, “With drinking water reserves and agriculture at risk due to climate change, it is becoming increasingly important to offer small-scale farmers training in sustainable water management so that they can allocate this valuable resource effectively.”

Training in Water Management for Agriculture and the Household

Rain is no longer falling in the usual amounts or at the usual times of year. Groundwater is being depleted, and harvests are at risk. Sharing knowledge and practical measures for improving water management in cotton



cultivation and in daily life is therefore a core component of the training Cotton made in Africa offers small-scale farmers. This training is complemented by an illustrated book on water management, which the Aid by Trade Foundation developed together with its partners. “The training material on water management is incredibly useful for the farmers and for us as trainers because it presents the most important information in a well-organised way, thereby making it easier to discuss the topic with the farmers,” as Nilzo Lazaro, trainer for SAN-JFS, a CmiA-verified cotton company from Mozambique, concluded at a recent training event with small-scale cotton farmers in the district of Cuamba.

142 Wells and 478 Latrines Built as of 2023

To improve access to safe water in cotton growing regions, AbTF supports projects for the construction of water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities. Through these projects, 142 wells and 478 latrines had been built by the end of 2023 in conjunction with partnering companies.

Biosand Filters for Clean Drinking Water in Uganda

In Uganda, AbTF is taking an innovative approach to making water safe for drinking. Together with the GoodTextiles Foundation and the cotton company MMP Agro, biosand filters are being built as a simple and cost-effective way to purify water from existing sources. Potentially contaminated water is poured in and filtered as it slowly drips through while dangerous bacteria are rendered harmless. Around 1,000 CmiA farmers, including women, and another ten thousand village residents are benefiting from the 1,000 biosand filters. Manufactured from locally sourced materials, the biosand filters are expected to last at least 15 years and therefore represent a long-term solution for these households.

The Extraction of Groundwater or Surface Water for Irrigation Remains Excluded with CmiA

To conserve groundwater resources, the use of groundwater or surface water will continue to be prohibited in the cultivation of CmiA-verified cotton. Since the global average of water used to produce one kilogram of cotton is around 2,100 litres, a simple calculation demonstrates that each t-shirt made of CmiA cotton represents an average saving of over 500 litres of water. This goes to show that the CmiA seal stands for effective environmental protection and for the greatest possible conservation of the life-giving resource of water in cotton cultivation.

About the Aid by Trade Foundation

Founded in 2005 by the entrepreneur Prof. Dr Michael Otto, the Hamburg-based Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) has developed into an internationally operating and respected non-profit organisation with a focus on sustainable resources. Through its standards—Cotton made in Africa (CmiA), Cotton made in Africa Organic (CmiA Organic), Regenerative Cotton Standard (RCS), and The Good Cashmere Standard (GCS)—AbTF plays a decisive and measurable role in improving the living conditions of people and animals and in protecting the environment. In exchange for the right to purchase the certified raw materials and to use the corresponding labels, members of a global alliance of textile companies and brands pay a licensing fee to AbTF’s marketing company, ATAKORA Fördergesellschaft GmbH. With small-scale farming families and textile companies facing increasing challenges, the standards play a fundamental role in ensuring their resilience and future effectiveness. AbTF works closely with industry experts and specialists in animal welfare and environmental protection.

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