

Regional Coordinator — Africa

Job Description – Better Cotton Initiative www.bettercotton.org



Background

BCI & The future of cotton

Cotton, in one form or another, is used by nearly every person on the planet. It is a \$12 billion industry that employs around 300 million people in the production stages alone. Cotton can be a water-intensive and pest-sensitive crop, and is often grown in semi-arid and water scarce areas. Its cultivation represents over 2.4% of global arable land, involving about 30 million farmers. Cotton is produced in more than 65 countries worldwide, a majority of which are classified as developing countries. The economies of some developing countries and the livelihoods of millions of farmers and their families are dependent on cotton production. Approximately 80% of people involved in cotton production are on small farms. In this respect cotton is different from other value chains, where a greater proportion of people working in the sector are involved in large scale production. The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) aims to make global cotton production better for the people who produce it, better for the environment it grows in and better for the sector's future.

For the last two years, the BCI has been working with organisations from across the cotton supply chain and beyond to facilitate a solution. Based on existing research and best practice, 'Better Cotton' complements, not competes with, existing initiatives such as Fairtrade and organic cotton, providing a wider solution for the mainstream cotton industry.

Retailers and brands currently supporting the BCI, such as adidas, Gap, H&M, Levi and IKEA, use more than 1 million metric tonnes of cotton lint per year. By working with these companies, along with other cotton actors around the world the BCI will increase demand for the production of more sustainably grown cotton. Growing 'Better Cotton' will also contribute significantly to the Millennium Development Goals on poverty, education, the environment and gender equality.

BCI's long term objectives are:

1. To demonstrate the inherent benefits of better cotton production, particularly the financial profitability
2. To reduce the impact of water and pesticide use on human and environmental health
3. To improve soil health and biodiversity
4. To promote Decent Work for farming communities and cotton farm workers
5. To facilitate global knowledge exchange on more sustainable cotton production

How will it work?

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) seeks to address the global significant environmental, social and economic impacts of cotton production, by meeting its long term objectives through three key strategic approaches:

- **Going mainstream:** growing 'Better Cotton' on a global scale, building on existing good work; focusing on globally significant impacts; involving stakeholders from across the supply chain and beyond.
- **Enabling farmers:** building the capacity of farmers and cotton farm workers; increasing profitability, productivity, and quality without a fixed premium; facilitating a link to the market.
- **Demonstrating real change:** measuring the positive impact of growing 'Better Cotton' on people and the environment; encouraging progress to grow cotton better and better; not another certification or labelling scheme.

BCI is currently governed by a Steering Committee of global organizations including, producer organizations, trade & industry organizations, civil society, and international institutions. Current members of the Steering Committee are adidas, Gap Inc., H&M, ICCO, IFAP, IFC, IKEA, Organic Exchange, Oxfam, Pesticide Action Network UK, and WWF. The Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Regional Working Groups, Support Team members and other experts have been working towards developing a workable 'Better Cotton' System.

The 'Better Cotton' System

The 'Better Cotton' System will include global **Production Principles** with minimum requirements and further progress requirements; globally and locally promoted **Enabling Mechanisms** (see table 1); a Swiss **membership association** with rules of participation (fees, rights, and obligations); a **global fund** for smallholder farm support with eligibility criteria; a **link to the market** in the form of an identifiable 100% 'Better Cotton' bale; an **information management system** with multiple user interfaces; **assessment** mechanisms that exclude the use of accredited auditing and have a strong focus on encouraging progress and measuring impact; tools and rules for messaging and communication about results and impact at farm level, smallholder farm support, and traceability.

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Table 1: BCI Production Principles and Enabling Mechanisms – Version 1.0

Production Principles	Better Cotton is produced by farmers who minimize the harmful impact of crop protection practices Better Cotton is produced by farmers who use water efficiently and care for the availability of water Better Cotton is produced by farmers who care for the health of the soil Better Cotton is produced by farmers who conserve natural habitats Better Cotton is produced by farmers who care for and preserve the quality of the fibre BCI promotes Decent Work
Enabling Mechanisms	BCI enables knowledge sharing and skills development BCI enables effective producer organisation BCI enables equitable access to responsible financial services

Terms of Reference

Responsibilities

BCI will be employing three Regional Coordinators in 2009 to cover the regions of Latin America, Africa and South Asia. The role and responsibilities outlined here define the areas of work for the first year of implementation of the 'Better Cotton' System in West and Central Africa (Burkina Faso, Mali, Benin, Cameroon, Senegal and Togo). The scope of work will be subject to review and refinement as expansion takes place.

The Africa Regional Coordinator (AFRC) is responsible for:

Regional Communication and stakeholder engagement:

1. Supporting BCI's stakeholder engagement with cotton producers, cotton farm workers, civil society, trade & industry (especially gins, cotton companies, traders), government and other organizations, in West and Central Africa (WCA).
2. Maintaining regular and accurate communication with BCI members and implementation partners in WCA to ensure that the BCI and the Better Cotton System is well understood.
3. Identifying potential expansion possibilities for the BCI in Africa.

Implementation of the 'Better Cotton' System

4. Supporting the development of, and managing the implementation of the whole 'Better Cotton' System in Africa; from initial implementation programmes to expansion. The main components include:
 - a) **BCI Production Principles and Criteria:** Support needs assessments and gap analyses in implementation areas and look to identify national long term needs to meet all Production Principles in each country. Support may include the management of consultant contracts, sharing of best practice and existing knowledge, and carrying out the gap analyses.
 - b) **BCI Enabling Mechanisms:** Support the implementation of the BCI enabling mechanisms to address the priority needs identified. Support may include the management of consultants, coordination of meetings and facilitation of relationships.
 - c) **BCI Farm Assessment Programme:** Provide support to farms/ BCI members / implementation partners in the exchange of information between BCI and cotton producers with respect to baseline data on farming practices and data on minimum and progress requirements. Support may include identification of the need for producer association, information collection, and reporting.
 - d) **BCI Impact Assessment Programme:**
 - i. Assist in the national definition of impact indicators in relation to the global impact indicator areas, and manage the gathering of impact information and data
 - e) **BCI Supply Chain:**
 - i. Support the implementation of the 'Better Cotton' Supply Chain System through being present at the point of weighing and collection of seed cotton from producers, delivery at the gin, and weighing and identification of the cotton lint bales.

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- f) **National Guidance & Information Sharing:** facilitate the development of appropriate regional information on specific ways available to farmers to address the BCI Principles and Criteria: (i) identify material that already exists on best practices used in the region; (ii) identify gaps that need to be filled; (iii) work with implementing partners to ensure that each criteria has sufficient and appropriate information available; (iv) share the information developed or obtained by the project with BCI.

Regional management

5. Contribute to the formulation of project proposals for implementation of the 'Better Cotton' System in WCA
6. Managing discrete budgets in relation to BCI's engagement within the region.
7. Providing regular reporting within a set framework to the manager.
8. Keeping up-to-date with complementary activities / projects implemented in the region.

General

9. Maintaining strong and effective communication lines with the BCI Team, and co-programmers.
10. Attending internal meetings to report on activities and to facilitate the exchange of information between regions.
11. To keep up to date with, and report on, significant issues arising that are relevant to the cotton sector, and the Better Cotton System, within the region.

Working arrangements

The AFRC reports to the BCI Social and Labour Coordinator for her/his work programme, activities and outputs. The position is planned to be a full-time position. The location will be in WCA, with the exact location dependent on the location of a suitable office, and accessibility to the project area(s).

BCI Principles of Operation

1. All parties are characterised by efficient use of resources, the promotion of good administrative practices and transparency in the management of funds, good governance, and the hindrance of corruption
2. All parties ensure non-discrimination in their activities, particularly with regard to gender equality
3. All parties value the importance of continuous improvement and learning from doing
4. All parties are attentive to reducing emissions that contribute to global warming

Duration

It is envisaged that the AFRC will receive a fixed-term contract initially for a 1 year period, with extension depending on a) satisfactory performance and b) continued funding. There will be a 6 month probationary period.

Profile of the Regional Coordinator

To be successful, the Regional Coordinator will have the following attributes:

Required:
1. Knowledge and experience of the cotton sector in West and Central Africa in particular regarding farm production practices and the cotton supply chain
2. Experience, knowledge or a proven keen interest in the issues of sustainability, preferably in agriculture or development
3. University degree, or equivalent higher education qualification
4. Fluent in French <u>and</u> English.
5. Strong communication (both written & spoken) and attentive listening abilities
6. Experienced facilitator of professional relationships and/or groups
7. Experience working with smallholder organizations at the grassroots level
8. Experience working with global / international organizations

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9. Ability to work independently, to take initiative, and engage others
10. Willingness and ability to travel frequently within the region and internationally
11. Enjoy taking on a challenge and be open to new ideas.
12. Ability to work in a multicultural environment with respect for diversity and gender balance
Preferred:
13. Experience of project management, monitoring and evaluation
14. Experience of budget management and reporting
15. Experience of conducting needs/impact assessment
16. Experience, knowledge or a proven keen interest in the issue of labour standards in agriculture
17. National of West and Central Africa Region

Applications

Interested applicants with the required attributes are asked to send a detailed CV and a brief covering letter (two pages maximum) to Ellie La Trobe Bateman at BCI (ellie@bettercotton.org) who will receive these on behalf of the BCI Steering Committee. We thank all applicants for their interest but only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Application deadline: Monday 6 April, 17.00 GMT

First round phone interviews: Week of 14 April

Second round interviews: early May

Commencement Date: June 2009