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Training of WWF Pakistan by Allan Williams, April 2010

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Job opportunities

The BCI is recruiting the following positions based in Geneva, Switzerland:

Supply Chain Manager
(application deadline 20 May).

Membership Coordinator
(application deadline 4 June).

Please refer to the full job descriptions on the http://www.bettercotton.org/index/28/jobs_with_bci.html

Training for BCI Implementing Partners

In March 2010, the BCI held its first global Implementing Partners training workshop in Brussels with 14 participants from 6 organisations working in 5 countries.

The training revolved around the BCI Step-by-Step Guide to Implementation, with exercises focused on how to carry out participatory group self-assessment and collecting data about change.

The workshop provided a good opportunity to share different experiences and strategies for the implementation of the Better Cotton System in the four BCI focus regions.

Further training for Implementing Partners have been held locally, in particular, in India with local partners and in Pakistan with WWF Pakistan.

BCI Implementing Partners are currently ABRAPA, CottonConnect, Solidaridad, WWF India and WWF Pakistan.

Snapshot: BCI project in Mali

In the forthcoming growing season the Better Cotton System will be implemented in the four BCI focus regions: Brazil, India, Pakistan and West and Central Africa. The first project in West and Central Africa will be in Mali, in the area of Koutiala. The Implementing Partner is Solidaridad.

Building on existing structures and skills, Solidaridad will work closely with the following local partners: CMDT (Malian cotton company), AProCA (African cotton farmers association), the UNSCPC and the URSCPC (National and Regional Union of Cooperatives of Cotton Producers), the Integrated Pest Management Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO/GIPD), OXFAM, and the Institute of Regional Economy.

The project intends to directly benefit 80,000 cotton producers over the next 3 years. Project activities will start at the beginning of June.





Farmer in a cotton field, Warangal

© BCI / Ellie La Trobe Bateman

Now available

Le Dossier d'Information sur le Système Better Cotton est maintenant disponible en Français : <http://bettercotton.org/index/179/fra/n%C3%A7ais.html>

O Pacote Informativo sobre o Sistema Better Cotton está disponível em Português no <http://bettercotton.org/index/178/portugu%C3%A7as.html>



Cotton bale coming out of the bale press

© BCI / Isabelle Roger

New Members

Members that have joined the BCI since January 2010 are:

- *Producers:* AProCA (African Cotton Producers)
- *Suppliers and manufacturers:* Sadaqat (Textile Mill in Pakistan)
- *Associate Members:* CottonConnect

The BCI welcomes membership of any organisation with an interest in the cotton supply chain that supports the BCI mission and wishes to participate in the realisation of the BCI's long-term objectives.

The next opportunity to become a member is 1 July 2010. For this, applications must be submitted to membership@bettercotton.org by **31 May 2010**. Please refer to the information on http://www.bettercotton.org/index/160/applying_for_membership.html.

Better Cotton Fast Track Program

During the course of 2009, a group of private and public players have developed a strategy to speed up the implementation of the Better Cotton System, with the objective to reach a production of 1 million metric tons of Better Cotton lint by 2015. It is a demand driven strategy based upon the commitment of frontrunner brands and retailers to invest both in farmer support programmes and in the procurement of Better Cotton into their supply chains. This group consists of Ikea, Levi Strauss & Co, H&M, Marks and Spencer, Ecom, WWF International, ICCO, Rabobank Foundation, IDH and Solidaridad. To support this strategy the Better Cotton Fast Track Program (BCFTP) and its related fund have been established.

The Program consists of a Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) and a Fund. The SAC has a strategic advisory role on the direction and objectives of the BCFTP. The SAC consists of the founding participants of the program and is open to other front running BCI members that support the objectives of the BCFTP. The Executive Board of the Fund is formed by ICCO, IDH, Rabobank Foundation, two cotton experts and a representative of BCI and is open to other funders.

Interested organisations can submit a project to the Fund. Retailers' involvement is a requirement. The interested organisation needs to become a BCI Implementing Partner before funds are transferred.

Engaging with retailers and traders

The BCI successfully held two workshops with retailers and traders in March in the United States and in April in Europe. The objective of the workshops was to present and further explain the Better Cotton System and the BCI plan for 2010-12. These meetings were also able to demonstrate how engaging with the BCI can help retailers shape their cotton sustainability strategy.