COTTON
MADE IN
AFRICA

Cotton made in Africa Membership Guidelines

Version 3.0, October 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 GENERAL INFORMATION 3

2 CMIA CHAIN OF CUSTODY MODELS 3

2.1 CmiA Traceable: Segregation 3

2.2 CmiA Mass Balance (MB) 4

3 BECOME A CMIA MEMBER 4

3.1 Annual Membership Fees 5

3.2 How to Register 6

3.3 Cotton Purchase Requirement for Spinning Mills 6

3.4 Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) for CmiA Traceable 7

3.5 Audit Requirement for Spinning Mills (CmiA Traceable) 7

3.6 Upgrade from CmiA Mass Balance to CmiA Traceable 7

3.7 Updating Company Information 8

4 RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP 8

5 SANCTIONS 8

6 CONTACT AND DOCUMENTS 9

1 General information

The Membership Guidelines, provided by Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF)/ATAKORA Fördergesellschaft, are the framework document for supply chain organisations which want to implement cotton verified under Cotton made in Africa® (CmiA) or Cotton made in Africa® Organic (CmiA Organic) into their production lines.

- All organisations producing, treating, trading, or sourcing CmiA cotton or CmiA-claimed products (e.g. comber noils, yarns, fabrics, or garments) are required to maintain a membership with CmiA, as applicable.
- **Organisations with multiple processing or production levels** (e.g. yarn production and fabric production) **shall define which supply chain units and processes are included in the scope of their CmiA registration**. Each unit and process included in the registration scope must meet the applicable CmiA implementation and registration requirements. Processes and products that are not included in the registration scope shall not be associated with CmiA claims.
- **Independent legal entities within the same corporate group shall be registered separately with CmiA.** Each entity is responsible for defining and maintaining its own applicable registration scope and for meeting the requirements applicable to the processes and products included in that scope. Retailers or brands that manage their own manufacturing activities might also need to register in accordance with the applicable registration requirements.

To ensure that purchases of CmiA-claimed products and materials are made under a verified claim, it is always the duty and responsibility of the purchasing entity to check whether the selling entity is registered with CmiA, as applicable.

The Aid by Trade Foundation and ATAKORA reserve the right to protect and safeguard themselves against risks to their integrity and credibility. CmiA registrations can therefore be denied, suspended or terminated if a company poses a significant compliance, integrity, reputational, or business risk to the Aid by Trade Foundation or ATAKORA or the respective standard system through past or present actions. Such risks may include, but are not limited to child labour, severe health and safety violations, fraud, corruption, serious breaches of applicable laws or internationally recognised business conduct standards, failure to fulfil contractual or arbitration obligations, or being listed on recognised industry risk and default lists, including the International Cotton Association's List of Unfulfilled Awards Part 1 or Part 2.

2 CmiA Chain of Custody Models

CmiA cotton can be implemented under either of two Chain of Custody (CoC) systems.

2.1 CmiA Traceable: Segregation[1]

CmiA yarn produced under this model may consist of:

[1] The term *segregation* replaces the previous term *HIP (Hard Identity Preserved)* in order to align terminology with internationally recognised ISO 22095 chain-of-custody models and the terminology used in ISEAL-oriented sustainability

- CmiA-verified cotton only; or
- a mixture of CmiA-verified cotton and recycled cotton under the Recycled Claim Standard (RCS) or Global Recycled Standard (GRS).[2]
- Mixing with fibres other than cotton is also permitted.

The materials and products produced under this implementation model (yarns, fabrics, and textiles) must always be stored and processed separately, and remain traceable to their origin through appropriate documentation, ensuring full traceability from the retail order back to the CmiA cotton producer. Assurance is provided under the Aid by Trade Foundation Transparency Standard.

2.2 CmiA Mass Balance (MB)

The Mass Balance system is not a content claim, but about increasing the demand for CmiA cotton.

CmiA yarn produced under this model is not required to physically consist of CmiA cotton. Instead, CmiA cotton
- may be mixed or substituted with other cotton
- may be mixed with fibres other than cotton.

As a result, the level of supply chain transparency provided by this implementation model is limited.

CmiA verifies the mass balance through its Tracking System to ensure that the spinning mill is not selling more CmiA MB-claimed yarns than it has purchased CmiA cotton. This method does not guarantee that CmiA cotton is physically in the product – it is designed to increase the demand for CmiA cotton and to ensure accurate volume reconciliation within the supply chain.

Overall,
- CmiA-verified cotton can be implemented under either system.
- CmiA Organic cotton can **only** be implemented under CoC model 'Segregation'
- All CmiA-verified materials and retailer purchase orders (POs) must be tracked in the applicable Tracking System.
- Supply Chain organisations can apply for either one or both CoC models.

Full operational rules for both systems - segregation, blending, documentation, order flow, - are set out in the **CmiA Implementation Guidelines**[3].

3 Become a CmiA Member

All organisations producing, treating, trading, or sourcing CmiA cotton or CmiA-claimed products (e.g. comber noils, yarns, fabrics, or garments) are required to maintain a partnership with CmiA. This applies regardless of which Chain of Custody model — Mass Balance (MB), Segregation (CmiA Traceable), or both — the organisation intends to operate under.

systems. The amendment's sole intention is to harmonise terminology; the underlying traceability and materials-separation requirements remain unchanged.

2 This also includes their successor standards within the framework of the Textile Exchange Materials Matter Standards.

3 https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/api/media/file/CmiA_Traceable_Implementation.pdf
https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CmiA_MassBalance_Implementation.pdf

For **renewal** of your company's CmiA membership, do NOT register your company again. Please refer to Chapter 4 and reach out to the **CmiA helpdesk**.

Important:

- Independent companies within the same group must register individually with CmiA.
- Companies operating multiple sites must register **each site separately**. A single site may perform multiple activities. For example, an organisation operating both a spinning mill and a fabric manufacturing facility at the same location may register this as one site; however, if these activities are carried out at separate locations, or if the organisation operates multiple spinning mill sites, each site must be registered individually.
- Organisations should also specify their group company affiliation at registration, to ensure eligibility for **applicable discounts** and clear visibility of company relationships.
- Once registration is complete, the organisation is **granted access to the applicable Tracking System and listed on the official CmiA supplier list**.

3.1 Annual Membership Fees

The annual membership fee depends on the supply chain level(s) and the applying CoC model.

	CmiA Mass Balance only	**CmiA Traceable only** *or* **CmiA Traceable & CmiA MB**
Spinning Mills (buying cotton, producing yarns)	2,000 EUR	3,500 EUR (2,000 EUR in the year following an audit, when no audit is required.)
Yarn Trader or Yarn Dye House (buying yarns, selling yarns)	1,000 EUR	1,000 EUR
Fabric Producer (buying yarns, producing fabrics)	1,000 EUR	1,000 EUR
Fabric Trader or Fabric Dye House (buying fabrics, selling fabrics)	500 EUR	500 EUR
Garment Producer (buying yarns or fabrics, producing garments)	0 EUR	1,000 EUR
Garment Trader (buying garments, selling garments)	0 EUR	0 EUR
Comber Producer/Comber Trader	1,000 EUR	1,000 EUR

Companies that cover several production steps (e.g. yarn and fabric production) under one entity **only need to complete one online registration** (provided they have same Chain of Custody), via the CmiA registration portal and their fees will be calculated accordingly.

3.2 How to Register

Following steps are required for a CmiA registration (not renewal!):

1. **Register your supply chain organisation online** via the CmiA registration portal: https://registration.aidbytrade.org/registration?standard=CmiA

   NOTE: Spinning mills must have already purchased CmiA cotton before registering online, see Section 3.3 for further detail.

2. **For CmiA Traceable registration only:** Complete the Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) via the link provided in the registration submission email, see Section 3.4 for further detail.
3. Once the registration is approved, the organisation will receive the **membership invoice**. The payment can be made via bank transfer or credit card (Stripe).
4. **For CmiA Traceable registration of spinning mills only**: After payment an additional **audit** is required, see Section 3.5 for further detail**.**
5. Once payment is received (and for spinning mills under CmiA Traceable the audit has been successfully passed), the organisation will receive a **membership confirmation**, valid for one year.

3.3 Cotton Purchase Requirement for Spinning Mills

Spinning mills must purchase CmiA cotton from a CmiA-nominated cotton trader before registering online via CmiA registration portal and upload respective documents during the online registration.

- Ask explicitly for CmiA cotton — not all African cotton is CmiA cotton.
- State clearly to the cotton trader that the cotton is bought as "CmiA" cotton, to be used for CmiA production and to receive a volume update in the Tracking System; the contract should be dated not older than one year.

During the online registration, the following documents need to be uploaded for approval by AbTF.

CoC model	Documents required	Specification
CmiA Traceable	1. CmiA cotton purchase contract	Both sides signed contract and invoice (pro-forma invoice is not enough!); clearly mentions "CmiA cotton" (incl. expected shipment date)
	2. Cotton shipment document/confirmation of receipt	Document confirming cotton receipt at the spinning mill's warehouse
	3. Photo documentation	Photo proof that CmiA cotton is clearly marked and stored separated from any other cotton

CmiA Mass Balance	1. CmiA cotton purchase contract	Both sides signed contract or invoice (pro-forma invoice is not enough!); clearly mentions "CmiA cotton"

3.4 Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) for CmiA Traceable

The SAQ is a formal declaration that an organisation has established the necessary systems, procedures, and controls to comply with the segregation, traceability, transparency, and documentation requirements under the AbTF Transparency Standard.

The SAQ is required from **every organisation operating under CmiA Traceable**.

The SAQ link is shared in the registration confirmation email, which is sent after the registration is filled via the registration portal. The SAQ should be completed before the invoice is issued. Incomplete or inconsistent information may delay the registration process or require corrective action.

3.5 Audit Requirement for Spinning Mills (CmiA Traceable)

For spinning mills registering for CmiA Traceable, after the payment of the membership fee is received, a mandatory audit is conducted to verify the spinning mill's compliance with the AbTF Transparency Standard.

- The company must demonstrate compliance with segregation requirements, a transparent and reliable traceability system, and comprehensive documentation supporting segregation and transparency.
- For the purpose of the audit, the company must have CmiA cotton physically available on site to verify stock and traceability procedures.
- If any non-conformities are identified, the company must address this through corrective actions before the membership application can be approved.
- Including preparation time, the audit process, and report verification, the registration process might take 21–28 days.
- The audit must be re-conducted **every two years**.
- For your more guidance, please refer to the following documents:
  - https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/Onboarding-Audit-for-HIP-Spinning-Mills.pdf
  - https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/HIP-Onboarding-Audit_Checklist.pdf

3.6 Upgrade from CmiA Mass Balance to CmiA Traceable

An organisation already registered for CmiA Mass Balance that intends to switch to, or add, production under CmiA Traceable can apply by following the process as below:

- **Contact the CmiA helpdesk directly**, indicating the intention to upgrade to CmiA Traceable and the CmiA retail partner for which CmiA Traceable productions are planned.
- All organisations applying for CmiA Traceable are required to complete the SAQs. For further information, please refer to Section 3.4.

- **Only Spinning mills must undergo the mandatory additional requirements** described in section 3.5, verifying compliance with segregation and transparency requirements; other supply chain levels upgrading to CmiA Traceable are not subject to the audit.
- **The AbTF issues an invoice** for the balance amount payable reflecting the difference between the Mass Balance fee already paid and the applicable CmiA Traceable fee.
- **After payment, the organisation receives a new Membership Confirmation Document (MCD)** confirming its registration under CmiA Traceable.

3.7 Updating Company Information

If a registered organisation's information changes (for example: company name, address, contact details, ownership, or business scope), it must inform CmiA promptly to keep its registration accurate.

- **Contact the CmiA helpdesk directly**, providing the updated company information.
- **The AbTF updates the organisation's details** in the membership records accordingly (and sends out new MCD, if needed).

4 Renewal of Membership

The CmiA membership expires annually. Thirty (30) days prior to expiry, the organisation receives a notification email from the AbTF CmiA registration portal containing a link to the online renewal process. This link opens a pre-filled form with the organisation's current registration data, which the organisation reviews and updates as needed before submitting. Once submitted, the renewal follows the same process as the initial onboarding.

The renewal process must be completed before the membership expires. The following prerequisites must be fulfilled:

- CmiA transactions are updated regularly, correctly, and verified in the applicable Tracking System.
- For spinning mills: the CmiA cotton balance is positive.

Please do NOT register your company again, but reach out to the **CmiA helpdesk**.

5 Sanctions

The Aid by Trade Foundation / ATAKORA will be able to terminate a valid CmiA membership in case of:

- A company is being listed on recognised industry risk and default lists, including the International Cotton Association's List of Unfulfilled Awards Part 1 or Part 2.
- Transactions in the Tracking System are not conducted on a regular and valid basis
- The cotton balance is not positive, and the spinning mill does not purchase CmiA cotton in due time

If an organisation:

- Cannot prove the source of traded, treated, or processed materials and products under a CmiA claim

- Fails to demonstrate that claimed materials were processed correctly and in accordance with the implementation requirements
- Provides fraudulent information or data;

then the Aid by Trade Foundation/ATAKORA reserve the right to take corrective actions. These actions may include:

- Commissioning audits
- Cancelling account volumes
- Suspending the organisation
- Terminating the membership entirely

Without a valid CmiA membership, an organisation is no longer allowed to produce or sell any CmiA- claimed materials or products.

6 Contact and Documents

If you have any questions regarding CmiA or the Tracking System, please check: https://scot.cottonmadeinafrica.org/faqs/view

or contact the **CmiA Helpdesk:** mail@scotsupport-dss.atlassian.net

(**Available Monday – Friday, 09:00 am – 17:00pm Indian time)**

Helpful Documents:

- CmiA Traceable Implementation Guidelines https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/api/media/file/CmiA_Traceable_Implementation.pdf
- CmiA Mass Balance Implementation Guidelines https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CmiA_MassBalance_Implementation.pdf
- CmiA Verified Cotton Companies https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CmiA-Cotton-Companies.pdf
- CmiA Cotton Trader https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/Cotton-Trader-CmiA.pdf
- Cotton Made in Africa Standard https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CMIA_Standard_ENG.pdf
- Cotton Made in Africa Organic Standard https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/CmiA-Organic_Compl-Requirements-CmiA-Vol4_V1_EN.pdf
- Aid by Trade Foundation Transparency Standard https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/AbTF_TransparencyStandard_Version1_6.2025.pdf
- Assurance Manual AbTF Transparency Standard https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/Assurance-Manual_AbTF-Transparency-Standard_Version1_6.2025.pdf
- Audit Guidelines for Spinning Mills under CmiA Traceable https://cottonmadeinafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/Onboarding-Audit-for-HIP-Spinning-Mills.pdf