



COTTON
MADE IN
AFRICA

Aggregated Verification & Implementation Report 2023

Cotton made in Africa
Standard by Aid by Trade
Foundation



Executive Summary



This executive summary gives an overview of the key findings of CmiA verification activities in 2023



- In 2023, CmiA worked with 20 partnering cotton companies in 11 African countries south of the Sahara



- 900,000 smallholder families producing about 508,000 tonnes of lint cotton on an area of about 1.7 million hectares were verified under the CmiA and CmiA Organic standards



- 23 verification missions were conducted, 13 missions on field level and ten on ginnery level of which five for CmiA candidates



- CmiA verified cotton companies conducted farm level trainings for farmers on various topics with a total participation of 9% female and 91% male smallholder farmers, which is in line with the gender shares of CmiA contracted farmers in 2023

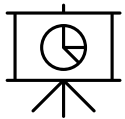


- Aggregated verification results from 2023 show that the CmiA verified partners achieve good to very good ratings for the four sustainability pillars: the Prosperity Pillar performs best, followed by People, Management and Planet

Executive Summary



- Compared to the verification results from 2022, partners improved their scores in all pillars except in the Planet Pillar, where there was a slight deterioration



- At principle level, verification results show that partners achieve very good results on Principle 10 'High quality inputs & pre-financing' and Principle 11 'Productivity & fibre quality' whereas there is room for improvement regarding Principle 12 'Improvement of farmer's resilience' and Principle 7 'Land use, biodiversity and climate' which score the lowest



- Several events for knowledge transfer and exchange such as Regional Workshops, the Innovations Club and a Community Engagement Training were organised to support CmiA partners in implementing the standard requirements



- The AbTF also (co-)financed several projects for training and other implementation measures



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INTRODUCTION

About



Cotton made in Africa (CmiA) is a well-recognised standard that follows a **continuous improvement approach** for a sustainable development of the cotton sector in African countries south of the Sahara.

Compliance with the standard requirements is regularly monitored by **third-party verifiers** to give independent feedback to cotton companies on their performance and to ensure CmiA remains a **credible standard** that brands and retailers, and ultimately consumers can have confidence in. The verification process is a tool which at the same time checks if the cotton companies comply with the **standard minimum requirements**, and independently assesses the success in continuously improving the sustainability performance, thus motivating each company to further advance.

By comparing verification results across the certified cotton companies, the Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) can analyse remaining challenges and jointly act with all relevant stakeholders to overcome those hurdles.

Independent and qualified third-party verifiers regularly check the performance of cotton companies (“Managing Entity”) participating in CmiA, on farm level – i.e. related to the contracted small-holder farmers – and at the ginnery level – i.e. in one or more ginning factories – against the requirements of the Cotton made in Africa standards (CmiA and CmiA Organic).

The **annually published Aggregated Verification & Implementation Report** provides information on the **results of last years’ verification missions**, serves as a reference to monitor future verifications, and helps to continuously revise and improve the work on farm and ginnery levels in line with the CmiA standards.

The following chapters comprise an **overview of the 2023 performance results** of verified cotton companies, the **verification management activities** conducted by the AbTF as well as the **implementation support offered**.

The CmiA Standard covers the most significant aspects of cotton cultivation and ginning



MANAGEMENT

The Management Pillar

sets out the requirements related to responsible business conduct, the verification process, and commitment to CmiA values.



PEOPLE

The People Pillar

contains requirements intended to define CmiA's understanding of small-scale farmers and to ensure decent working conditions on ginning mill level, it specifically focuses on the empowerment and development of women and children.



PLANET

The Planet Pillar

aims to cover the most pressing environmental issues and to define how cotton can be cultivated in a way that mitigates negative impacts for nature while increasing the resilience of the agro-ecosystem and the environment of communities farming cotton in rural areas across Africa south of the Sahara.



PROSPERITY

The Prosperity Pillar

consists of requirements that enable cotton farmers to acquire fundamental business skills and to sustainably increase productivity and quality. On a broader scale, these requirements make it possible for communities to improve their livelihoods and resilience.

The four
Pillars of
CmiA

Principles of the CmiA Standard

The **principles represent the aspirational goals and expectations** that the AbTF has with regard to the CmiA Managing Entities and farmers.

Each principle contains several criteria (in total 58). The criteria are **requirements that need to be met in order to fulfil a principle**. In addition to the principles and criteria, there are also **indicators**, which are **measurable aspects that enable verifiers to assess whether or not the corresponding criterion has been met**. At the indicator level, the CmiA standard volume 4 distinguishes between **core and improvement indicators**. Core indicators must be fulfilled for a verified Managing Entity to obtain or maintain a CmiA certificate. A **systemic non-compliance with a core indicator will lead to the denial or withdrawal of the Managing Entity's CmiA certificate**. Non-compliance with improvement indicators does not, in itself, prevent a Managing Entity from obtaining a CmiA certificate. The responsibility for ensuring compliance with the CmiA principles, criteria, and indicators lies with the Managing Entity.

The 12 Principles of CmiA



each principle contains several Criteria (total 58)



VERIFIED COTTON COMPANIES IN 2023 AND COTTON PRODUCTION IN THE 2022-23 SEASON



In 2023, CmiA worked with 20 partnering cotton companies in 11 African countries south of the Sahara

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 CÔTE D'IVOIRE
CIDT
COIC
Ivoire Coton
SECO | 4 BENIN
OBEPAB
SODECO | 8 UGANDA
MMP Agro |
| 2 BURKINA FASO
Faso Coton
SOFITEX | 5 NIGERIA
ArewaCotton | 9 TANZANIA
Alliance Gineries
Biosustain |
| 3 TOGO
NSCT | 6 CHAD
Cotontchad | 10 ZAMBIA
Alliance Gineries
CGL (Parrogate)
HCT (Parrogate)
LDC Zambia |
| | 7 CAMEROON
SODECOTON | 11 MOZAMBIQUE
SAN JFS |



After successfully passing the first verification cycle, a **company from Uganda became a new CmiA Organic partner** in 2023, bringing the number of cotton companies verified according to CmiA and CmiA Organic to 20. At the same time, however, the **partnership with a cotton company from Nigeria expired** at the end of December 2023. In **Benin, Tanzania and Zambia, several cotton companies are in the on-boarding process** in 2023, and some have already undergone the first verification at field level or at the level of the ginning factories.

CmiA Cotton Production Overview 2023

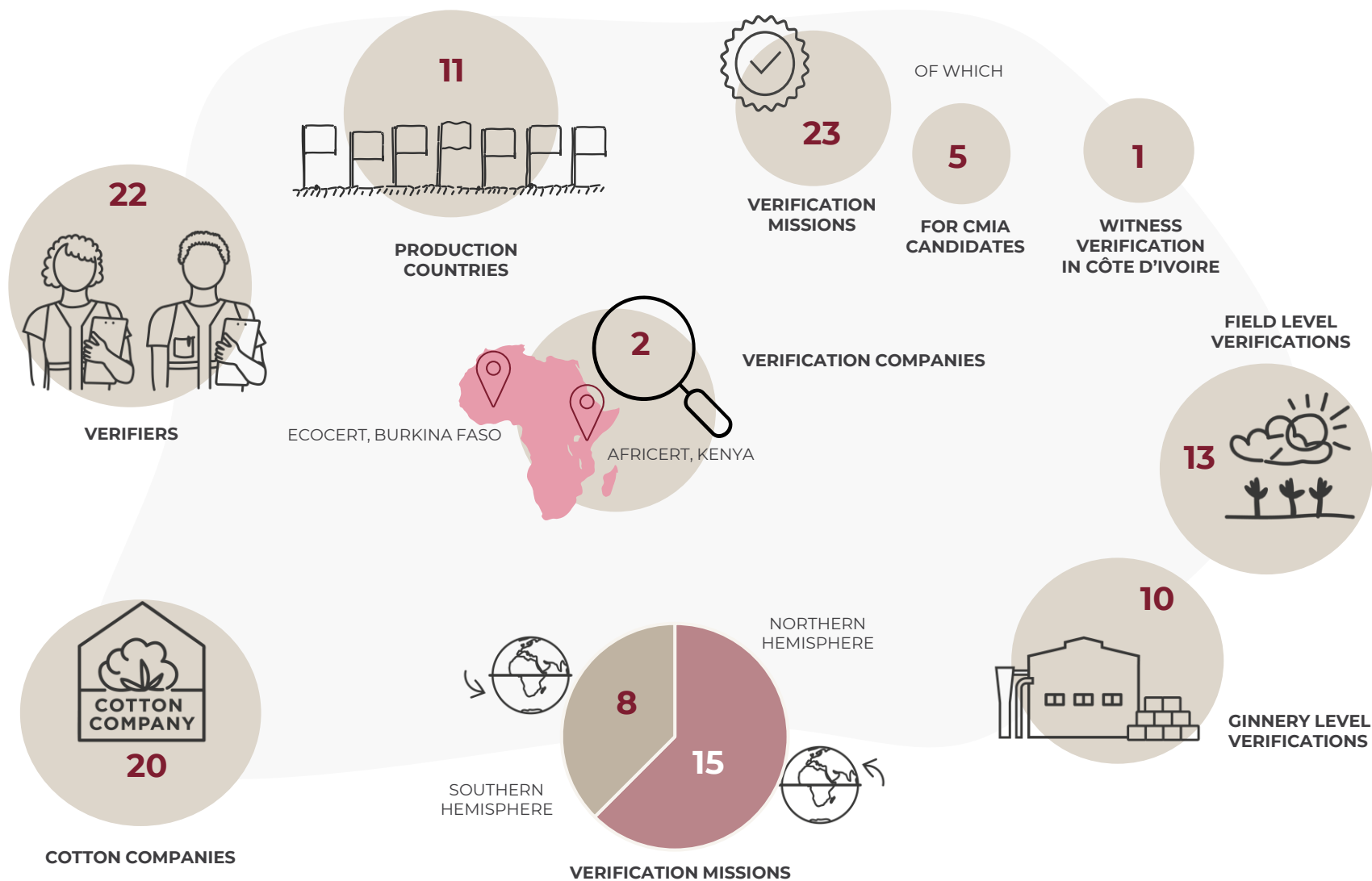
		2023 Harvest 2022/23
	Verified cotton companies (as of 12/2023)	20
	Farmers	896,139
	thereof Organic farmers	29,235
	Area (ha)	1,736,339
	Seed cotton (mt)	1,214,225
	Lint cotton (mt)	508,145
	thereof Organic lint cotton	8,221

In 2023, about **900,000 smallholder families** producing about **508,000 tonnes of lint cotton** on an area of about **1.7 million hectares** were verified under the CmiA and CmiA Organic standards.



OVERVIEW OF VERIFICATION MISSIONS IN 2023

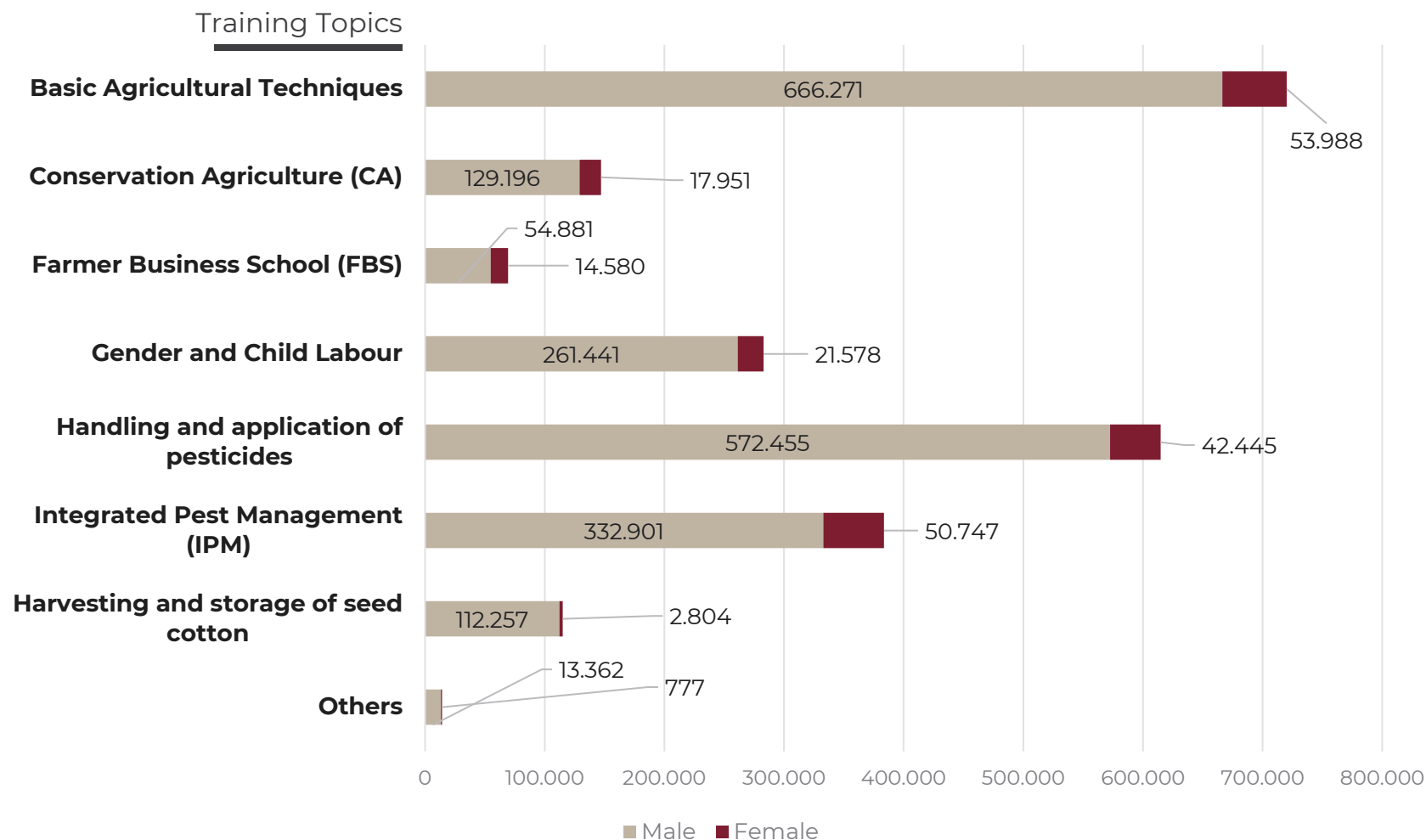
Verification Activities Overview 2023





FARMER TRAININGS PROVIDED BY CMIA MANAGING ENTITIES

Attendees of Farm Level Trainings by Gender

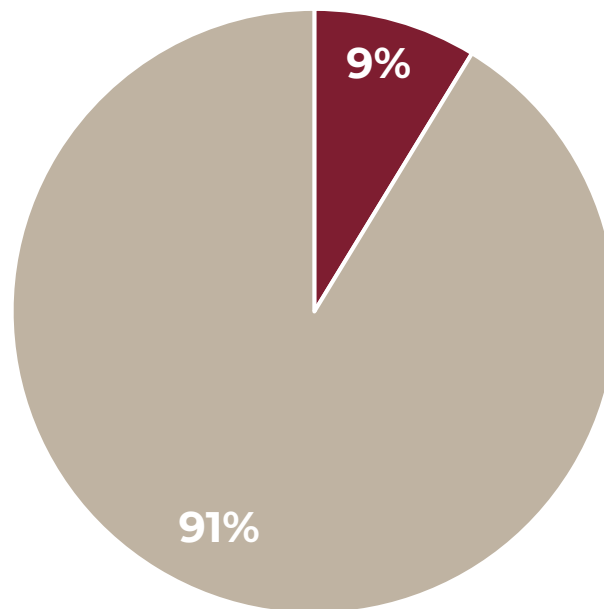


Training Attendance by Gender

In 2023¹, CmiA verified cotton companies conducted farm level trainings on various topics with a total participation of **9% female** and **91% male** smallholder farmers.

This also corresponds to the share of female and male CmiA-contracted farmers in 2023¹.

¹ Data referring to 2022-23 agricultural season



Farm level training attendance by gender 2023



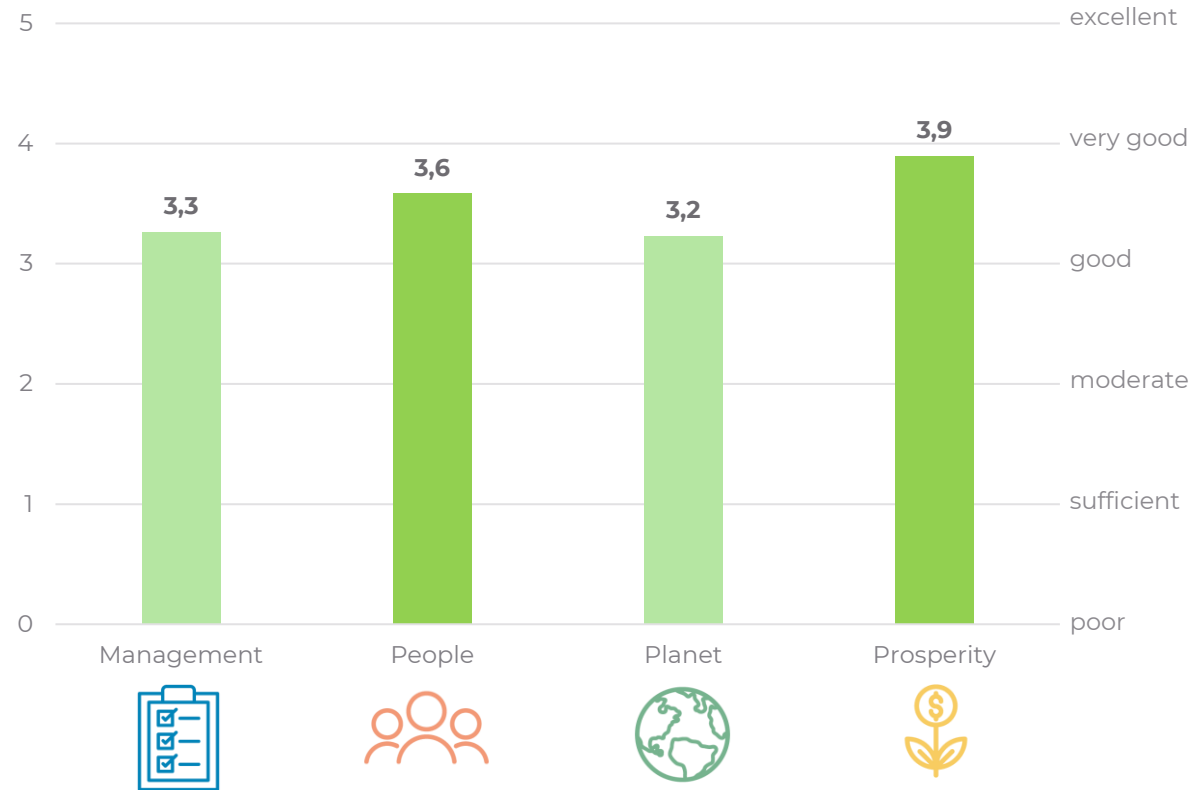
VERIFICATION PERFORMANCE RESULTS 2023



Average Verification Results per Pillar

The verification results from 2023 show that, aggregated, the CmiA verified partners achieve good to very good ratings².

The Prosperity Pillar performs best, followed by People, Management and Planet.



² Scores include core and improvement indicators



Average Verification Results per Pillar compared to 2022

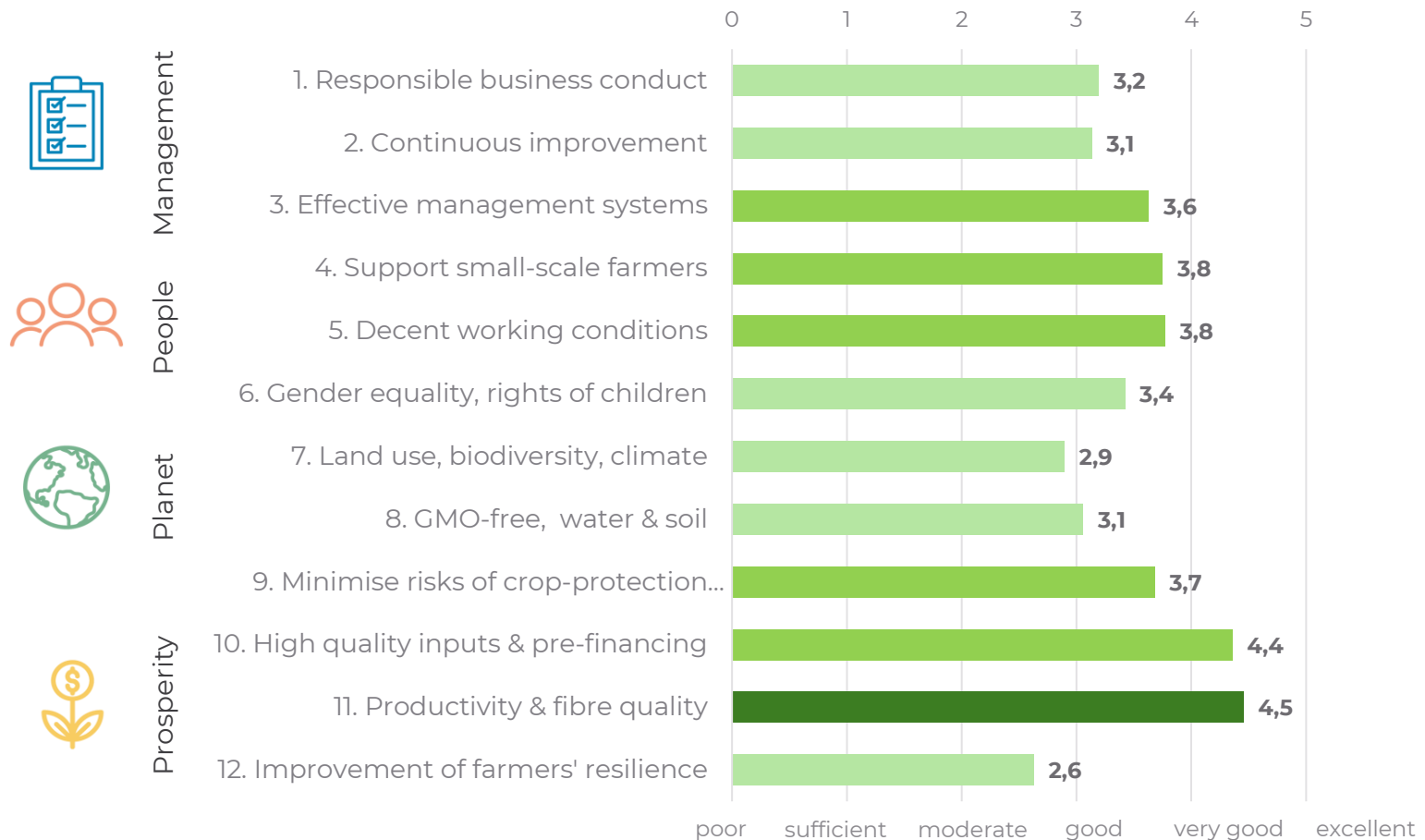
Compared to the aggregated verification results from 2022, an improvement can be observed in all pillars except in the Planet Pillar, where there was a slight deterioration of 0.1 score points.

It should be noted that the results are only comparable to a limited extent, as the verification cycle is alternating (ginnyery and field level verification on an annual rotation).



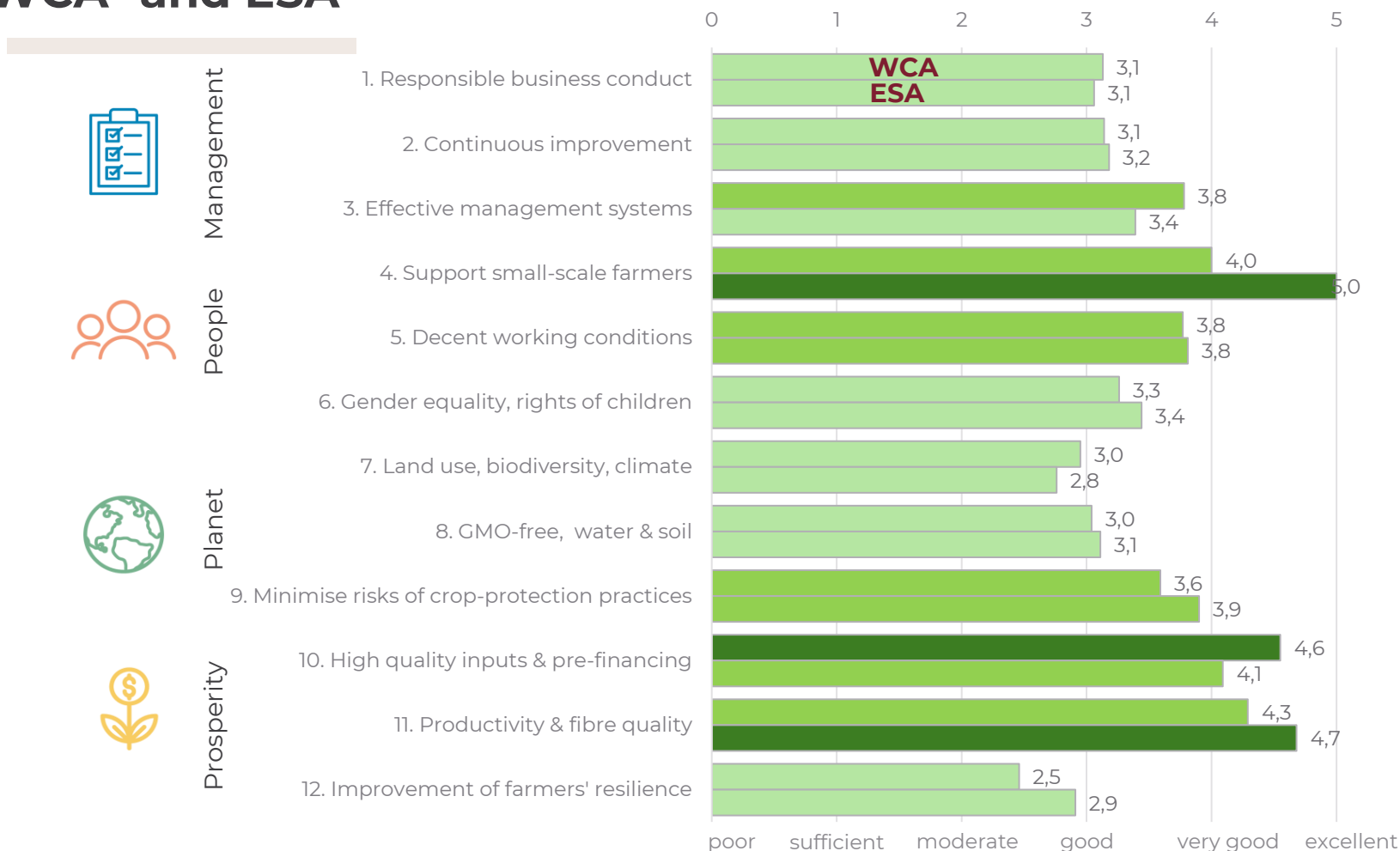


Average Verification Results per Principle



This graph shows a more detailed picture of the overall performance results of the 12 principles. The CmiA verified partners score excellent in Principle 11, five principles are rated very good, and six principles are good.

Average Verification Results per Principle – Comparison WCA³ and ESA⁴



This graph shows that the CmiA verified partners in West and Central Africa and in East and Southern Africa achieve very similar verification results at Principle level.

³ West and Central Africa

⁴ East and Southern Africa



IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT FOR MANAGING ENTITIES

Events for knowledge transfer and exchange



- ✓ Regional Workshop for WCA Partners in Togo
- ✓ Innovations Club with African Cotton Foundation in Côte d'Ivoire
- ✓ Community Engagement Exposure and Learning with African People and Wildlife in Tanzania
- ✓ CmiA Workshop with Association Interprofessionnelle de Coton in Benin
- ✓ Regional Workshop for ESA Partners in Uganda

Project funding for training and other implementation measures



- ✓ Growing Benin's Organic Cotton Sector Project
- ✓ CAR-iSMa Project
- ✓ Cooperation between ACF and AbTF with seven grants for projects



REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR WCA IN LOME, TOGO

- AbTF invited two representatives of each certified cotton company from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo as well as of the Ivorian association APROCOT-CI and the Beninese association AIC
- The three-day regional workshop included updates on standard requirements, an exchange between cotton companies and a representative of the verification company Ecocert Burkina Faso, the presentation of specific agricultural topics by individual partners and newly developed training materials by AbTF etc.
- The group visited two project sites of the NGO Eau Propre d'Afrique to find out about solar-powered water treatment and innovative drinking water distribution points



Workshop attendees during classroom session



Visit at a water collection point at Lomé beach



INNOVATIONS CLUB IN ABIDJAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE

- In May, the AbTF once again organised a three-day specialist event (for the first time under the title 'Innovations Club') in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, together with the African Cotton Foundation (ACF)
- Various presentations highlighted different approaches to improving the monitoring of soil health and reported on agricultural engineering measures for integrated cultivation and the involvement of the cotton growing communities
- The 41 participants included representatives of the cotton companies as well as representatives of the AbTF, the ACF and external speakers



INNOVATIONS CLUB
by CmiA & ACF



Participants of the Innovations Club 2023 in Abidjan



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP WITH APW IN TANZANIA

- AbTF organized a pilot training course in Tanzania to learn about the ACTIVE™ programme of the NGO African People and Wildlife (APW)
- In September, a group of ten people from Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda and Germany learnt the theory and practice of the approach developed by APW for successfully involving local communities in conservation measures and managing wildlife-human conflicts
- The well thought-out and technically advanced approach to monitoring and evaluation and the combination of traditional knowledge, science and cloud-based IT solutions, as well as the close links between NGO staff, local authorities and various local community committees particularly impressed and inspired the participants



Training participants group photo



**African People
& Wildlife**



AIC WORKSHOP IN PARAKOU, BENIN

- Also in September, two representatives of CmiA conducted a workshop organised by the AIC (Association Interprofessionnelle du Coton) and AbTF in Parakou, Benin
- The aim of the workshop was to improve cooperation between CmiA and the various players in the Beninese cotton sector and to create important synergies for more efficient cooperation
- The event was aimed at agricultural advisors and all AIC member groups, such as representatives of cotton farmers and cotton companies
- The two-day workshop provided the 60 participants with detailed input on the CmiA standards system, CmiA standard requirements, the verification process, among other topics



Workshop attendees during classroom session



REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR ESA IN LIRA, UGANDA

- In November, the Regional Workshop for the certified cotton companies from Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique and Uganda took place in Lira, Uganda
- The three-day workshop included classroom sessions on standard-related topics and reports on the project activities of various partners, but also a visit to the ginning factory of the Ugandan partner MMP Agro and a day trip to their organic cotton farmers
- There were also practical exercises on evaluating the field regarding the implementation of 'good agricultural practices' and assessing soil quality using easy-to-measure parameters
- A visit was made to the NGO JEEP in Kampala, which showed the participants various approaches to conserving natural resources, e.g. by using efficient cooking stoves, and protecting biodiversity



Workshop participants during demonstration of soil quality testing



GROWING BENIN'S ORGANIC COTTON SECTOR

- A project coordinated by PAN UK and implemented by the non-governmental organization OBEPAB
- The goals of the project are that at the end of the three-year term (2021-2023), a total of 9,000 farmers will be CmiA Organic certified, their living conditions will be improved and long-term investments in the organic cotton sector in Benin will be ensured through expanded market access via CmiA
- The AbTF supports the project financially
- In January 2023, two representatives of CmiA together with PAN UK and GIZ visited OBEPAB cotton farmers around Abomey, Benin

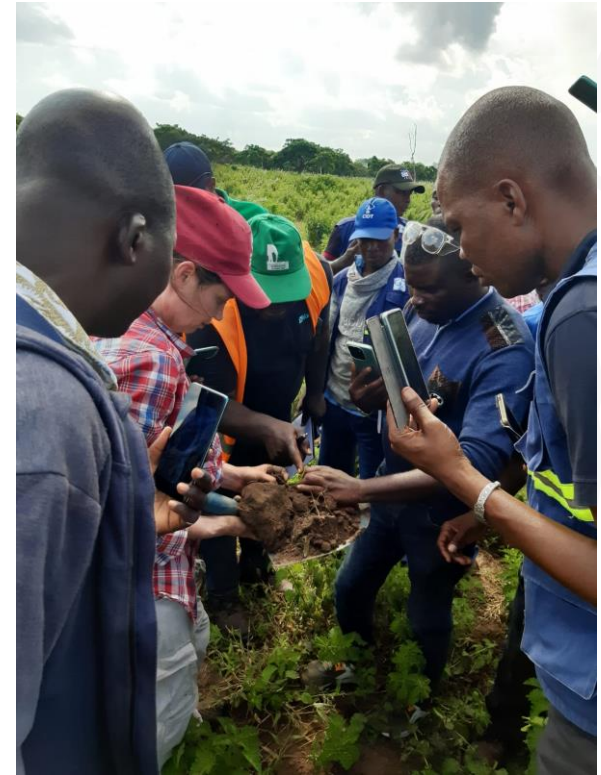


Coordinator and founder of OBEPAB and the gender officer



CAR-ISMA PROJECT

- In February and March, the AbTF carried out visits to the project partners in Zambia and Mozambique together with consultants from sustainable AG (formerly Soil&More Impacts) in order to evaluate and adapt the practices that have been started with the objective to improve soil health
- While the rolling out of compost was successfully implemented in Zambia, various plants were tested as ground cover in Mozambique
- As part of the CAR-iSMa project, an exchange visit to the project partner in Côte d'Ivoire, also took place in July, which was attended by representatives of the project partner from Mozambique well as a representative of GIZ



Participants of the exchange visit in Côte d'Ivoire assessing soil

The project is supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with funding from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



COOPERATION BETWEEN ACF AND ABTF

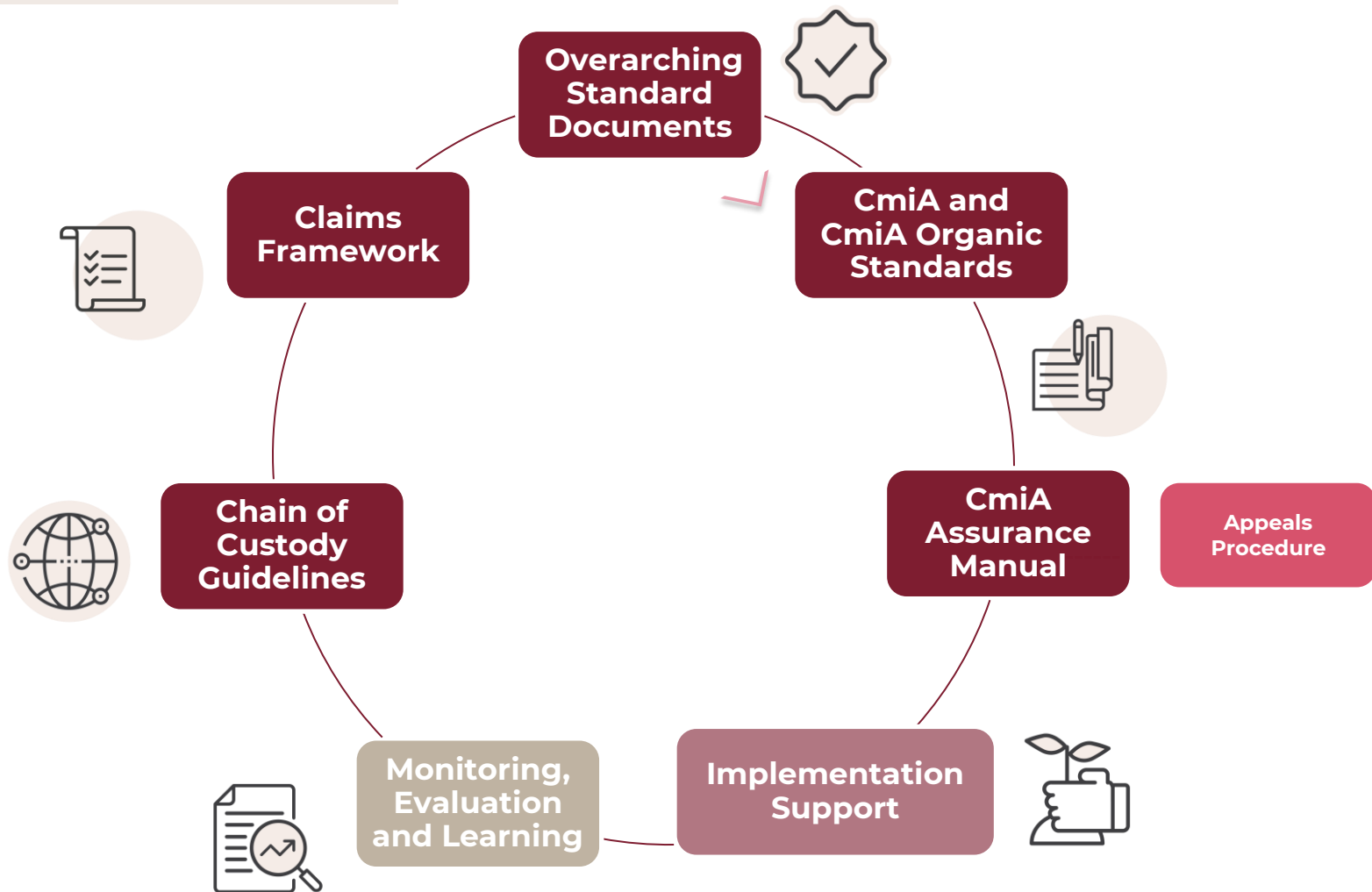
- The cooperation between AbTF and ACF continued in 2023
- Building on the four successfully implemented projects from the first financing round (2021-2022), project proposals were again collected from the cotton companies at the beginning of 2023, this time with a term of up to three years
- By the end of 2023, a total of seven new projects had been launched under ACF coordination, three of which build on the previous projects
- In addition to project funding, the cooperation agreement also includes the organisation of the Innovations Club (see page 26)





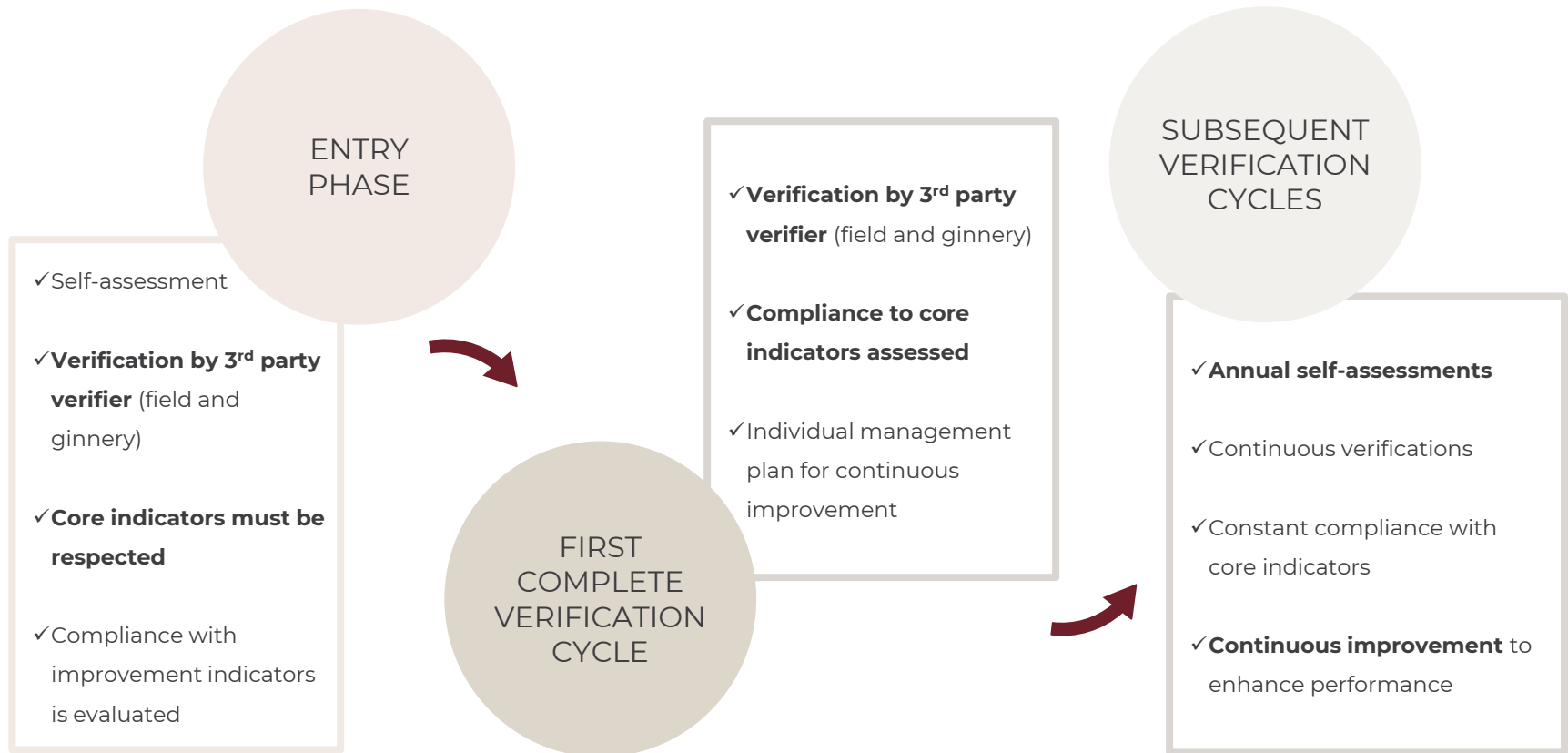
ANNEXE: THE CMIA STANDARDS SYSTEM

Overview of the CmiA Standards System





The Cotton made in Africa Standards System works for continuous improvement, credibility and transparency and follows a defined procedure





AID BY TRADE FOUNDATION

The Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) was founded in 2005 and is now an internationally renowned and active nonprofit organization for sustainable raw materials. Through its work, it makes a decisive and measurable contribution to improving the living conditions of people and animals and to protecting the environment. With its certified raw materials Cotton made in Africa (CmiA), Cotton made in Africa Organic (CmiA Organic), Regenerative Cotton Standard (RCS) and The Good Cashmere Standard (GCS), the foundation puts its goals into practice.

A globally active alliance of textile companies and brands requests the certified raw materials and pays a license fee to the foundation's marketing company, ATAKORA Fördergesellschaft GmbH. This entitles the partners to market their goods with the labels of the standards. In view of the increasing challenges small-scale farmers and textile companies are facing, the standards are of fundamental importance for their resilience and future viability. The AbTF works in close cooperation with industry experts, animal welfare and nature conservation specialists.

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