

Programme Officer – Assurance (India)

Starting Date: As soon as possible

Contract type: Permanent

Location: New Delhi, India

Salary: Competitive salary commensurate with experience

Application closing date: Midnight 09 April 2023

Background

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. In challenging times, we are meeting the challenge head on. Through our network of field-level partners we have trained over 2.5 million farmers - from the smallest to the largest - in 23 countries in more sustainable farming practices. A quarter of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard. We have united the industry's stakeholders behind our efforts, from ginneries and spinners to brand owners, civil society organisations and governments. Everyone who cares about cotton and its sustainable future can now be part of something better.

About this role

Better Cotton is now seeking a qualified individual to serve as Programme Officer to contribute to two critical components within the Better Cotton Standards System that support continuous improvement of more sustainable practices at the farm level. Under the line management of the Senior Coordinator Assurance and the matrix management of the Standards & Assurance team, the Programme Officer – Assurance will support the successful, rapidly expanding implementation of the Better Cotton programme in India.

Assurance covers the auditing and monitoring systems to ensure farmers participating in the Better Cotton programme meet essential requirements. S/he will support in ensuring that assurance activities are carried out in a consistent and credible way at country level, in line with global processes.

The Programme Officer - Assurance will monitor the activities of programme partners (PPs), feed into PP evaluations and funding mechanisms. Programme Partners are organisations with local expertise who oversee the setup and management of farming groups (Producer Units) under the assurance model. S/he will ensure the credibility of the information collected from the field and contribute to the understanding of the Impacts of Better Cotton in India. Frequent travel to cotton-growing states and regions will be required. Some international travel may be required.

The New Delhi office supports & coordinates the work in India and works closely with the Geneva/London offices, which represent Better Cotton globally.

This challenging role offers excellent opportunities for personal and professional development, together with a competitive benefits package.

Responsibilities

Assurance

Conduct verification visits on farmers to assess whether they comply with the Better Cotton (BC) Standard around sustainable cotton production.

- » Develop clear, detailed, and timely reports after verification visits, including identification of nonconformities and supporting evidence.
- » Through field visits, identify areas for improvement and specific capacity needs of farmers participating in the BC programme.
- » Carry out frequent travel to project locations during the growing and harvest season to conduct partner support visits and verification activities.
- » Review Corrective Action Plans and conduct visits for verification of their compliance.
- » Review readiness check reports prepared by PUs and provided feedback to partner and ensure to develop their understanding as per Assurance requirement.
- » Review PU support visit reports and provide feedback to partner and ensure their understanding of requirement as per Assurance manual.

Information, Results and Data management

- » Support the analysis of agronomic, economic, and social indicator data, to ensure accurate referencing to regional contexts.
- » Support in collection of data from project and control farmers by Producer Units to ensure BCI requirements and deadlines are met. Conduct online trainings/webinar, if required.
- » Effectively contribute to field level data quality management especially the quality management of farmers lists that includes desk review, finding error, communication potential error for physical verification.
- » Update Sales Force and Project Database on need basis.
- » Review Corrective Action Plans and their implementation by Producer Units.

Capacity building and support to Implementing Partners and Producer Units' staff

- » Helping India Assurance team to execute trainings, i.e., 3PV, Readiness Check, PU Support Visit, etc.
- » Support the Coordinators to develop training content and deliver training and capacity building activities around PP staff capacity building training on standard, sustainable farming practices, and participate in PP trainings where needed.
- » Manage the Relationship between Better Cotton and Programme Partners, and conduct support visits to Projects to identify their needs so as to facilitate Continuous Improvement in their performance.

Knowledge management

- » Collect project information on farmers and Producer Units structure and update Better Cotton project database with accurate information.
- » Collect, review and organise National Guidance Materials developed by Better Cotton and its Implementing Partners.
- » Contribute to the creation of communications material – case studies, stories from the field etc. – to be made available to members and partners, strengthening the story of Better Cotton.

Beyond these specific responsibilities, the Programme Officer is expected to collaborate on activities agreed with Coordinators and India Country Director.

Profile

The selected candidate will have the following skills, knowledge, and experience:

Experience
<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 4 years' work experience, with at least 1 in a relevant field Experience working as part of a team Experience working with projects in rural settings
<i>Desirable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in monitoring and evaluation, certification and auditing Experience in collecting, cleaning and verifying data and information Experience in Capacity Building of institutions and farmers Experience in Agriculture, Water Management, Conservation of Biodiversity and Decent Work
Skills and Knowledge
<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's degree, or equivalent higher education qualification, in a relevant field Demonstrated interest in sustainability and international development Superior skills and aptitude to appraise arguments critically and logically, organise ideas in a clear and concise manner, and draw conclusions and formulate arguments in a way that is effective, concise, and precise Excellent interpersonal skills, along with the ability to work independently and with initiative, and in a collaborative manner with a team. Excellent written and communication skills with the ability to communicate clearly and concisely, and to assimilate and process information for wide-ranging audiences Fluency in English and Hindi (spoken and written) High proficiency in MS Office, particularly Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Outlook Willingness to frequently travel domestically, and occasionally overseas Good aptitude for statistics and data analysis
<i>Desirable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective and meticulous professional with the ability to multi-task Academic background in rural/agricultural development and sustainability Understanding of Decent Work principles in the context of India Knowledge of cotton production Knowledge of Telugu / Kannada

Working arrangements

The position is full-time (40 hours per week) and will be based in the Better Cotton India office in New Delhi (Saket). Better Cotton offers flexible working, with core hours being 10am – 4pm and the option to work from home one day per week. Flexible working arrangement can be provided as per policy.

Frequent travel to cotton-growing states and regions will be required. Some international travel may be required.

The successful candidate will receive an open-ended employment contract, with a 3-month initial trial period.

Applications

Send us by or before midnight, 09 April 2023 a detailed CV in English and a brief cover letter (2 pages maximum) incorporating earliest availability for joining, last drawn and expected salary via [this link](#). In your cover letter, please include an explanation of why your experience is specifically relevant to this role at Better Cotton.

Application deadline: 09 April 2023

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only candidates short-listed for a telephone interview will be contacted. Better Cotton is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human, and financial resources.

Better Cotton has a zero-tolerance approach to any attitudes or behaviours that put children or adults at risk of harm. Safeguarding incidents are acts of serious misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal and referral to relevant authorities for criminal prosecution.