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COVER STORY

European Union (EU) delegation for Pakistan Visits WWF-Pakistan SPRING project Bahawalpur

A two member delegate comprising Ms. Roshan Ara and Mr. Ricardo Rossi from EU delegation for Pakistan visited SWITCH-Asia SPRING project in Bahawalpur during first week of March 2014.



WHAT'S INSIDE

Decent Work Awareness Street Theater



Eu Delegation visits WWF-Pakistan stall at SA Labour Conference



Leaders of Change



South Asia Labour Conference 2014



NSC Meeting 2014



National Stakeholders Meeting 2014





A two member delegate comprising Ms. Roshan Ara and Mr. Ricardo Rossi from EU delegation for Pakistan visited SWITCH-Asia SPRING project in Bahawalpur during first week of March 2014. The objectives of the visit were to gauge the pace of work under the EU funded SWITCH Asia SPRING project and to have face to face interaction with the project staff, ginners and relevant stakeholders.

The visit started with a briefing at SAP Management office, Bahawalpur where Asad Imran Sr. Manager SAP shared the up-to-date progress of the project with the distinguished guests.

After the briefing, the guests were taken to the exploratory visit to a ginning factory; Mekotex (Pvt) Ltd. situated in Lodhran, about 30 km towards north of Bahawalpur. Ch Abdul Ghaffar the owner of the facility briefed the delegation about the work being carried out in his factory to enhance ginning efficiency as recommended by WWF-Pakistan team under SWITCH-Asia SPRING project. He also shared the monetary benefits he harvested in cost saving and efficiency improvement through implementation of different Better Ginning Practices (BGPs). Moreover, he categorically pointed out that besides improving productivity & energy efficiency, he has been successful in preserving the natural quality of cotton by adopting BGPs in whole ginning process.

EU delegation was also given a tour of WWF-Pakistan Better Cotton project area where they met a group of cotton picker women. The picker women demonstrated Better picking practices, importance of health and hygiene in the form of a role play. The delegate also visited demonstration site of mushroom cultivation where cotton gin waste was used as a growing medium. The EU delegation also participated in a Learning Group meeting of Better Cotton farmers where issues related to cotton production were discussed in detail. The farmers explained how Better Cotton system is helping

them to improving productivity & input resource efficiency besides building their capacities for taking care of their health and environment.

Later in the evening the delegation went to Lodhran to watch a street theatre performance presented by renowned drama group Dosst-Natak depicting decent work and environmental issues at farm and gin level. During the second day of their visit, the delegation visited a ginning factory; Mian Cotton ginning pressing & oil mills. The owner Mian Abdul Waheed explained about the structural changes they made for providing a better environment for workers. Besides other modifications, he specifically mentioned about shifting the main beater outside the ginning hall on the recommendation of SPRING team resulting in significant dust reduction as well as reduction in noise level.

Following the visit to Mian Cotton factory, a meeting with prominent ginners from all three regions (Sukkur, Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur) was arranged. During the meeting the ginners explained their journey with the project. The participants shared their personal experiences with reference to the knowledge gaps they had prior to project intervention. They also specifically mentioned individual experiences regarding the practices & technical modifications they adopted in consultation with & on recommendations of the SPRING team. This overview presented a clear picture of the economic & environmental benefits the fibre ginners community is having as a result of their participation in the project. In the debriefing at the end of the visit, both Mr. Ricardo Rossi and Ms. Roshan Ara appreciated the efforts and work of SPRING Team in project implementation in its true letter & spirit and expressed that the visit has provided them an opportunity to have a clearer understanding of the activities being carried out & to witness the benefits the target sectors is having as a result of the action.





National Better Cotton Stakeholder's Council Meeting

Meeting of The National Better Cotton Stakeholders Council of WWF-Pakistan's "Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs" SWITCH-Asia SPRING Project

National Better Cotton Stakeholder's Council meeting was held in Lahore on 12th June, 2014 at Sunfort Hotel. Stakeholders from Ministry of Textile Industry (MinTex), All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), National Textile University (NTU), University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), Karachi Cotton Association (KCA), Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute (PCSI), Centre for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (CIWCE), spinner and ginners participated.

The objective of the meeting was to share the progress of the project to date as well as to share the results of the Better Ginning Practices (BGPs) collated & pilot tested in ginning SMEs and formation of technical committee to review Better Ginning Practices Guidelines. SWITCH-Asia SPRING project activities being implemented in the field so far were shared with the stakeholders by Asad Imran Senior Manager SAP.

Dr. Shafiq Ahmed, Country Manager BCI presented an overview on the importance of cotton in Pakistan. He also appraised the efforts of WWF-Pakistan SWITCH-Asia SPRING team for successful implementation of project activities and efforts for mainstreaming Better Cotton in the supply chain.

Mr. Anis- UI-Haq Secretary APTMA and Dr. Khalid Abdullah Cotton Commissioner MinTex appreciated WWF-Pakistan and its partners for their efforts in improving cotton standards. Dr. Khalid Abdullah promised to support WWF-



Pakistan SWITCH-Asia SPRING project at policy level in the endorsement of Better Ginning Practices (BGPs).

Arif Hamid Makhdom Director SAP facilitated to constitute a Committee to review the BGPs guidelines so as for its endorsement and further dissemination to the ginning industry. Moreover, it was agreed to hold a meeting of Better Cotton Sustainability committee (established earlier this year with Mr. Mukhtar Chairman PCGA, Mr. Asim Saeed, Vice Chair PCGA, Mr. Hamesh Kumar & Dr. Shafiq, country Manager BCI Pakistan) in September 2014 with an agenda comprising of suggestions & plans for sustainability of Better Cotton System in Pakistan.

At the end Dr. Ghulam Akbar, Senior Director Programmes, WWF-Pakistan thanked the stakeholders. He said that WWF-Pakistan's work is related to a project whose impacts on industry and environment will be long term. In order to evaluate these impacts in future Government Institutions have to play their role actively so that industry gets maximum benefits.





SPRING Team attends South Asia LABOUR CONFERENCE in Lahore



An international level South Asia Labour Conference was organized at Pearl Continental Hotel Lahore from 24th to 26th April 2014. This conference was organized in collaboration with Labour Department Government of Punjab Pakistan, International labour Organization, European Union and other development partners. The basic objective of the conference was to develop a strong connection among South Asian countries for joint initiatives to improve Labour Market Management and labour market policies. Labour Ministers from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Maldives and high-level delegations from India, Nepal and Bhutan attended the conference.

The conference was coupled with an exhibition where different institutes, organization and government departments engaged in development of different aspects of labour & working conditions, established their stalls to highlight their efforts.



WWF-Pakistan SPRING team, besides participating in thematic sessions of the conference set up a stall at the South Asia international exhibition at Expo centre Lahore in order to highlight the work done under SPRING project for the improvement of Working Conditions & Environment for workers in ginning industry of Pakistan. Publications, manuals, brochures and equipment were displayed. EU delegation along with delegate from other countries as well as general public visited their stall. SPRING team displayed their publications, posters and manuals on decent work at their stall and explained to the visitors regarding the work done to increase labour productivity, promotion of decent work in line with international labour standards, better working conditions through improved occupational safety and health measures, creating better work opportunities. The team also explained to them about the project, its importance and social, economic and environmental impacts on cotton ginning industry of Pakistan. South Asian delegation commended the efforts of EU funded SWITCH-Asia SPRING project.





Sustainable Cotton Supply Chain Development

Success Stories



Muhammad Mustafa, Cotton Farmer

Producing Better Cotton has improved our environment, our health and our income.

Manzoora Khatoon, Female Cotton Picker

WWF-Pakistan is helping us to take care of our health and that of our families.



Arif Hamid Makhdam, WWF-Pakistan

Through SWITCH-Asia SPRING Project, WWF-Pakistan has extended its efforts further up to ginning industry; ensuring to develop a Sustainable Cotton supply chain from farm to final product.

Ch. Abdul Ghaffar, Gin Factory Owner

We've achieved savings in energy, improvement in quality, and our productivity has increased with the technical support of SWITCH-Asia SPRING Project



Muhamamd Saleem, Gin Worker

Now we know a lot about our rights at work. Whether we work here or in any other factory. We are safer and healthier now.

Omar Ahmed, Spinner & Supplier

We feel good that buying Better Cotton is helping our people and shedding positive light on our country.



Pramod Singh, Material Specialist, IKEA

Our expectation and our hope is that more and more farmers will join the Better Cotton movement. We can make Better Cotton a mainstream cotton. That's what our efforts with WWF are aiming to achieve.



Ginners Orientation Meetings Step-2 SPRING Project

SWITCH-Asia SPRING project in its 3rd year is going to expand its scope to 200 ginners by involving new ginners from all three regions. In order to introduce the project objectives, the progress made & the importance of BGPs adoption to improve ginning processes, 9 Ginners orientation Workshops were arranged by SWITCH-Asia Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs (SPRING) in Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan and Sukkur. The main objective of the meeting was the selection of Step-2 ginning SMEs of SPRING project with brief Introduction of WWF-Pakistan and its mission along with "SWITCH-Asia" project introduction, objectives, outcomes and core areas of action i.e. Better Cotton Sourcing and Tracking, Ginning Efficiency and Decent Work and the sharing of Ginning Waste Management.

During technical presentations, Project Coordinators shared the list of common issues of ginning factories along with their solutions. The meeting comprised interactive activities and discussion sessions. Majority of the ginners showed great interest and asked different questions relevant to process and energy efficiency.

Efforts made by WWF-Pakistan SWITCH-Asia SPRING project were appreciated by participating ginners, moreover they were interested in adopting Better Ginning Practices and asked the team to visit their factories for onsite technical support, this showed a positive change in the ginning industry and that the ginners are willing to switch to a whole new level to improvise.

Project Coordinators, SWITCH-Asia SPRING project thanked the ginners for showing keen interest and active participation in the workshop and were looking forward that they will participate in upcoming technical trainings of SPRING project with the same interest.

SUSTAINABLE COTTON PRODUCTION in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs (SPRING)

SWITCH-Asia, Better Cotton Initiative (BCI)

GINNERS MEETING 2014



The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) and Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs (SPRING) Project jointly organized ginners meeting in Hyderabad and Bahawalpur Pakistan on 16th and 18 June 2014 respectively. Stakeholders, ginners, implementing partners WWF-Pakistan and Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), participated in the meeting. The main objective of the meeting was to add more ginners as members to the current list of Better Cotton producing ginners.

Giving an overview of Better Cotton, in a presentation M. Shuaib Supply Chain Coordinator from BCI described in detail about Better Cotton (BC), its importance in the light of demand for Better Cotton by the world's top rated retailers. He explained about Better Cotton's environmental value, its supply chain requirements & conditions for the ginners to work along with BCI.

Implementing Partner WWF-Pakistan's introduction was given by Arif Hamid Makhdam, Director SAP WWF-Pakistan, briefing the progress and expansion of Better Cotton in core areas. He gave statistics on how converting to Better Cotton, the farmers have been able

to reduce the use of fertilizer, water and pesticides leading to reduced environmental footprint of cotton production.

The other presentation was by the SPRING team in which they explained the process through which the project has been working to solve the issues prevalent in the ginning industry of Pakistan. They presented the results of technical surveys, audits, research studies & pilot testing at the ginning SMEs that lead to concrete recommendations in the form of Better Ginning Practices (BGPs) guidelines. They also shared that implementation of these BGPs at STEP-I ginning SMEs have led to significant improvements in energy conservation, process efficiency & productivity besides bringing about positive change in the working conditions and environment.

Followed by formal registration of new ginners, Mr. Shuaib thanked the ginners for their interest in Better Cotton Initiative & hoped that ginners will avail new business opportunities in the coming days. He also appreciated EU funded SWITCH- Asia SPRING project for their efforts in bringing a positive change in terms of efficiency in ginning sector of Pakistan.





Leaders of Change

Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs (SPRING) is working towards bringing a positive change in the cotton ginning industry of Pakistan. So far 45 ginning SMEs have adopted BGPs (Better Ginning Practices) suiting to their relevant needs & resources. The overall response of these 45 ginners has been over whelming in terms of bringing about technological, physical and structural modifications at their facilities with the support of project team.

Besides adopting recommendations for improving resource efficiency & productivity, many of these businesses also made significant efforts for improving working conditions and environment to make their factories a healthy and safe place for workers. Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs (SPRING) team WWF-Pakistan, decided to appreciate these leaders of change to create a sense of ownership of the project they are part of & to set a motivational examples for others to follow. The event was held at Rahim Yar Khan on 22 May 2014 with ginners coming from Bahawalpur, Sukkur and Rahim Yar Khan regions. The data gathered as a result of post implementation survey of participating SMEs helped the project team to rank the ginning SMEs with higher levels of adoption, level of interest, volume of investment and level of environmental & economic benefits derived out of BGPs implementation were among some of the indicators considered for selecting the recipients of the award. These leaders of change are expected to act as a catalyst to pace up the process of BGPs adoption among other SMEs of the sector through demonstration, experience sharing & motivation of fellow ginners.

Beginning with the recitation from The Holy Quran, the event started with a participatory discussion led by Masood Akhtar Khan and Toheed from WWF- Pakistan SWITCH ASIA project, highlighting the benefits of adopting various Better Ginning Practices (BGPs). Participating ginners shared their personal experiences regarding being part of the project & the process of change that was not only technical but also rational. The major gains explained by ginners were related to energy conservation, improved productivity & quality, input costs as well as lower repair & maintenance costs.

Bale tracking system is one of web based systems used by BCI that allows member ginners to log on for offering their stocks of Better Cotton. This system links the supplies of Better Cotton to the demand by the potential buyers. This facilitates the global knowledge exchange on more sustainable cotton production in various countries & increases traceability along the supply chain. As all 45 STEP-1 ginners are also registered with BCI for trading Better Cotton both at national & international level, the project team deemed it appropriate to encourage these leaders of change by providing laptop systems with installed Better Cotton Bale tracking system. These ginners & their staff are also being trained to use the system for digital record keeping and offer the stocks over web for swift sale responses.

Concluding remarks were given by Arif Hamid Makhdom Director SAP WWF-Pakistan, who appreciated the efforts of ginners by being innovators in bringing about changes in their factories which will lead to a sustainable future for the industry.

BCI General Assembly 2014

BCI held its General Assembly on 23-25 June 2014 in Amsterdam. Arif Makhdom Director & Asad Imran, Sr. Manager WWF-Pakistan's Sustainable Agriculture Programme attended the event. The General Assembly presented an unparalleled opportunity for all members – nearly 400 leading actors from all over the world – to come together in a networking hot spot of activity: build new business relationships, connect to the farm-level where impressive results are being achieved and collaboratively move towards transforming the cotton sector. This year's theme was 'Learn, Lead, Drive the change' and focused on engaging members so that we together work towards our 2015 and 2020 strategic aims.

Better cotton family is growing with 400 members from 27 countries while almost 900,000 farmers from 17 countries participated in capacity building programmes in 2014. In the event, the details regarding signing off on a number of strategic partnerships were shared (for Turkey, Mozambique, Brazil and Australia) under which the supply of Better Cotton looks set to continue growing. Moreover, new members were introduced to the various tools and support available to them and had learning sessions on the BCI Supply Chain, BCI Claims Framework and available communications tools.

This year, a new Council was voted in, with representatives from India, Pakistan, China, USA, Australia, Turkey, Sweden, Switzerland and Singapore. Hammad Naqi Khan, Director General WWF-Pakistan was re-elected as council member to represent civil society organizations.



Hammad Naqi Khan
Director General, WWF-Pakistan



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Technical & Decent Work Trainings for STEP-2 ginnners
- 3rd NSC Meeting
- Ginnners Exposure Visit to Various Research Institutes and Textile Industry Turkey
- Ginning Machinery Manufactures Survey
- Linkage Development Meeting between Step-1 ginnners and Karachi Cotton Association
- BCI licensing for Better Cotton Farmers for 2014



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