

## Cotton Fact Sheet

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- 100 million rural households around the world are involved in cotton production
- The share of cotton in total fibre consumption has more than halved since 1940, dropping from 88% to around 40%
- Cotton prices have been in long term decline, falling to \$0.92/kg in season 2001/02, the lowest level in 30 years
- US producers currently receive about \$4.2bn in subsidies, equivalent to the total value of the crop
- In crop year 2002/03, almost 60% of US cotton was dumped on the global market, rising to 76% the following year
- Global cotton prices would be an estimated 15% higher if all subsidies were eliminated
- Cotton exports generate between 4% and 7% of GDP in Benin, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso and Togo
- In 2004 West African cotton farmers achieved around 30% of the world price compared with US producers who were paid 70% above the world price
- There are 50 Fairtrade certified cotton producer groups in India, Mali, Senegal and Cameroon (as of November 2005)
- The successful launch of Fairtrade cotton in other European certified cotton for the 2005/06 season

Facts and photos from: "Redressing a Global Imbalance: The Case for Fairtrade Certified Cotton" Fairtrade Foundation Briefing Paper, November 2005

One conventional cotton T-shirt uses 1.5 liters of toxic chemicals.

We need to shift.

# A plant that was instrumental in the industrial revolution, the American Civil War and the Cold War;

# A plant whose growing uses 25% of the world's chemicals and caused one of the world's worst ecological disasters;

# A plant for which American farmers receive 170% of the world price in the form of subsidies... Africans 30%;

# A plant on which 2 million farmers depend in Burkina Faso;

# The most influential plant in the world.

# And the plant for which real fair trade is needed.

125 million people who depend directly on cotton for their survival.