

Our path to sustainability



“We like to ‘say what we do and do what we say’ as we believe that sustainability is, first and foremost, a question of commitment and transparency.”

Jean Chabert,
Founder & CEO Stanley/Stella

“Stanley/Stella is an innovative Belgian apparel company producing premium clothing for printing and decorating. Since our origins in 2012, we have worked hard to bring our vision for a more respectful, more equitable, and more sustainable textile industry to life.


This report outlines our commitments and the steps we’re taking to improve our value chain for a healthier planet and happier people. We provide insights into the complex challenges associated with the textile industry, how we tackle those challenges, and what our future aspirations are.

In 2023, we took great strides in our supply chain approach to ensure good working conditions, lower our environmental footprint and guarantee the integrity of our raw materials. We also finalised our decarbonisation strategy, with an ambitious 2030 objective, and continued to make a tangible difference in the lives of communities close to the cotton fields, to our partner factories in Bangladesh, and to our Brussels headquarters.

2024 will be a year of even stronger collaboration across our ecosystem to reduce emissions, support the economic prosperity and well-being of factory workers and cotton farmers, and continue to source the best materials for our collections.

With every step we take, we aim to continue leading the textile industry towards a better future for our planet and its people. Thank you for following our journey.”

Jean Chabert,
Founder and CEO Stanley/Stella



Jean Chabert

Highlights of 2023



← **Remei Tanzania, our first 'direct-to-farm' project**
 Our new collaboration with Remei brings us even closer to the source of our organic cotton. Remei Tanzania works with around 2,000 smallholder farms in the Simiyu region, providing farmers with secure and fair payment for their organic cotton, as well as ongoing education and support in organic farming practices. See page 32 for more information.

↓ **Strengthening sustainability actions with field visits**
 In 2023, we visited key actors in our supply chain. In Turkey, India and Tanzania, we deepened our understanding of organic cotton sourcing and inspected ginning facilities we work with. In Bangladesh and China, we visited fabric and garment factories to review climate-related topics, including verifying carbon data, learning about the machines used, and discussing energy efficiency and carbon emission targets with management.



← **New tools to further improve factory working conditions**
 2023 saw us reinforce our supply chain monitoring and management tools. Through revised audit documents, enhanced processes, and strengthened Corrective Action Plans (CAPs), we aim to accelerate action and continue improving working conditions in our partner factories. See page 52 for more information.



← **Carbon Footprint Strategy**
 After two years of intensive work to measure and understand our carbon footprint across our supply chain, we proudly unveiled our decarbonisation strategy in April 2024. This huge project unites the entire Stanley/Stella ecosystem around a common goal: to reduce our relative carbon emissions by 30% by 2030. See page 46 for more information.



← **Mobile healthcare for villagers in Bangladesh**
 To support the communities where workers from our partner factories live, in 2023 we began financing a mobile hospital project that, as of March 2024, gave over 40,000 people from 35 villages access to free medical consultations and medication, prenatal care, basic screening tests and minor surgery. See page 66 for more information.



← **Enhancing recycled polyester traceability in China**
 To deepen our understanding of our recycled polyester supply chain and confirm the traceability of the raw materials, we travelled to China in 2023 to meet with actors at different levels of our supply chain, including visits to collection points for post-consumer plastic bottles. This was of course done together with our Beijing-based team. See page 38 for more information.



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Standing by our commitments

Sustainability has been one of our core values since day one, and it is firmly embedded in every aspect of our business culture.

It is reflected in how we choose our raw materials, design our products and develop our collections. It shapes decisions about our workplace environment and policies, and it influences how we recruit and empower our employees. It informs our long-term business strategies, our operational planning and our day-to-day activities. And it guides how we choose our partner factories and how we grow our network of decorators and resellers.

We are committed to using our business as a force for good, and the Stanley/Stella Charter, launched in 2022, serves as our guiding framework. With goals and engagements on critical environmental, social, and governance issues, our Charter outlines the core principles that guide our behaviour and inspire the entire Stanley/Stella ecosystem to keep raising the bar.

“To achieve our social and environmental objectives, we need to go, see and understand our impacts in the supply chain and translate our commitments into concrete actions.”



Michel Hublet,
Head of Sustainability

The Stanley/Stella Charter

Together with our employees, suppliers, and Official Dealers, we aspire to form a community of like-minded individuals, driven by the common desire to positively impact both the Stanley/Stella ecosystem and our industry.

The Stanley/Stella Charter, launched in 2022, is our guiding framework which represents what we stand for as a company in the garment industry. It articulates our commitment to addressing critical environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues in our area of influence, and outlines the ten core principles that guide our behaviour and inspire the entire Stanley/Stella community to care about our planet and its people.

Read the full Stanley/Stella Charter here.



Nature protection

Preserve soil, water, air and biodiversity through responsible material sourcing, manufacturing, distribution and decoration.



Carbon footprint

Contribute to global carbon neutrality by leading CO₂ reduction activities across our value chain and engaging in compensation initiatives.



Circularity

Minimise product and packaging waste at production and consumption levels, taking steps towards circular business models.



Working conditions and well-being

Respect human rights by providing and advocating for safe and good working conditions.



Diversity, inclusion and equity

Promote diversity in recruitment and business practices, an inclusive professional environment, and equal opportunities for all.



Community engagement and impact

Contribute to the economic and social development of communities through fair remuneration, education, and our ecosystem engagement.



Accountability and traceability

Take accountability for our actions across our supply chain through full traceability, and human rights and environmental due diligence.



Collaboration

Stimulate open-minded dialogue and collaborate with our communities and stakeholders within and outside the industry for a bigger and better impact.



Innovation and empowerment

Reinforce business sustainability through digitalisation and innovative thinking and actions.



Transparency and authentic communication

Openly and accurately communicate with our communities and stakeholders about our social and environmental challenges, the actions we are taking, and where our limits lie.

Our workplace

Across our entire organisation, we seek to create working environments that are positive and empowering, and where consideration for people, the planet, and society is integrated in every decision and action.

Our employees

Our people are the beating heart of Stanley/Stella, driven by our core values of Innovation, Excellence, People and Sustainability at every step: seeking game-changing solutions that address real problems, giving the best of themselves in every task, actively working to understand people's needs, and considering the sustainability-related aspects of every decision.

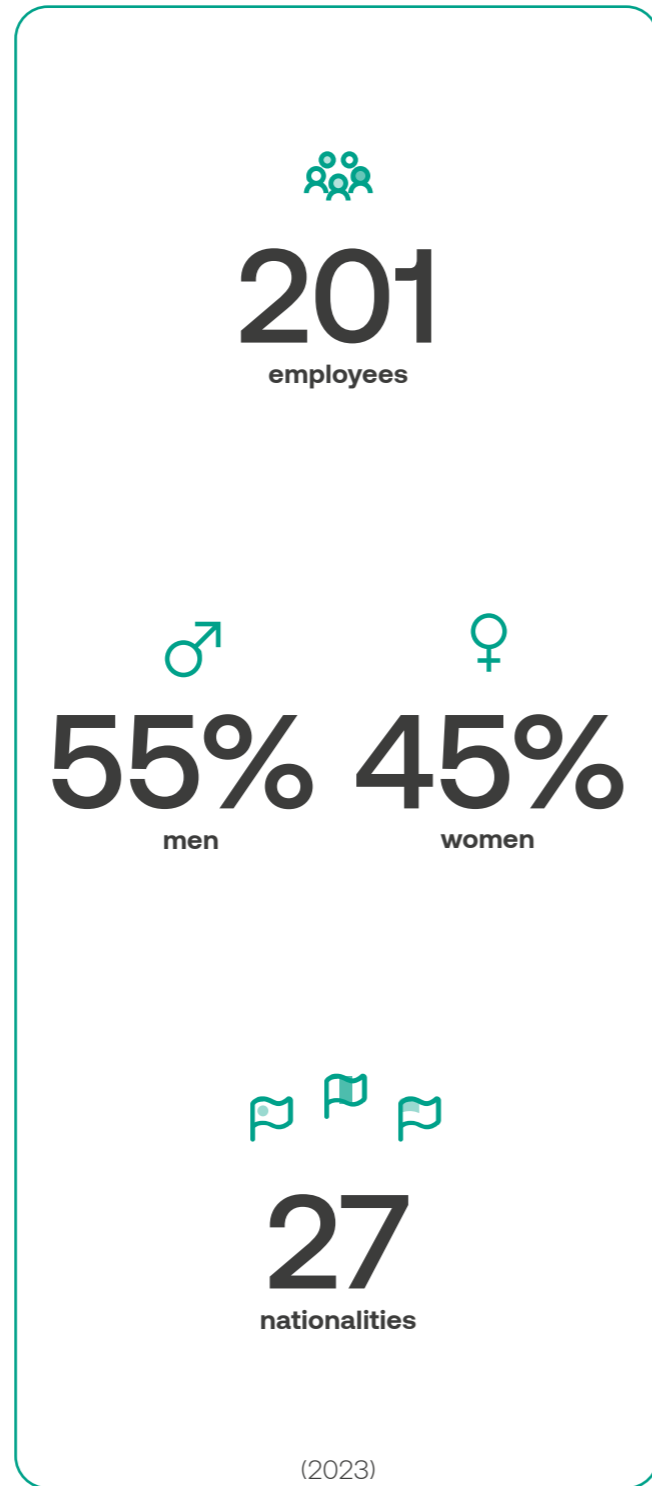
Our people supporting sustainability

As well as integrating sustainability across all our departments – from design and sales to logistics and customer support – we also have a strong team of 11 who work at the core of our sustainability efforts across locations.

In our Brussels headquarters, we have a team of six people working on our long-term sustainability strategy and short-term actions. This core team ensures that sustainability is embedded across functions, and at every level of the company.

In Dhaka, we have a team of five people closely monitoring and liaising with our partner factories on a daily basis.

We also have colleagues in China, India and Turkey who are closely involved in sustainability initiatives, and who bring invaluable local insights that support our efforts.



“Sustainability is our shared responsibility. By incorporating it into our workplace environment, we strive for a true culture of sustainability.”



Raphaël Torfs,
Head of HR

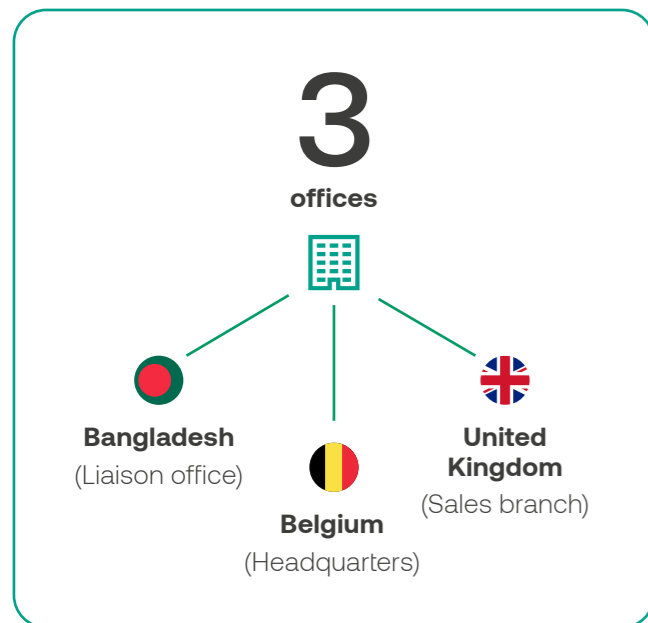
Our offices

In 2021, we moved into our current headquarters in Brussels, which gave us the opportunity to further align our working environment with our commitment to sustainability. As well as prioritising eco-friendly materials, we supplement our purchased green electricity with energy from roof-top solar panels, we reduce our water consumption by using rainwater for toilet flushing, and we optimise our waste management by separating four types of waste for recycling.

In Dhaka, our Bangladesh Liaison Office reflects the same sustainability, innovation and excellence principles as our Brussels headquarters. Sustainable raw materials have been chosen where possible and the walls have been decorated with hand-stitched 'nakshikatha', a traditional local craft. We also used recycled materials for sofa covers and repurposed stitched cloth for seating tool covers.

Our workplace policies

Our aim is to foster a supportive, transparent, and sustainable workplace, and various policies contribute to that goal. Our remote work policy at our Brussels headquarters aims to balance work-life harmony with our fast-paced growth and business needs.



We also developed salary policies in 2022 and 2023 with an external provider to establish a more structured salary scale and lay the groundwork for compliance with the EU Pay Transparency Directive. Additionally, to further enhance and promote transparency, we implemented a whistleblowing policy and tools in line with EU directives.

To reduce the environmental impact of our operations in Brussels and give our employees more choice, we introduced some transport-related policies. Starting in 2024, only 100% Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) or Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) are allowed under our sustainable car policy. We also offer an additional bonus, on top of the legal requirement, to employees that join a bike leasing programme.

Education and awareness raising

From the moment new employees join Stanley/Stella, we continually invest in their growth, offering comprehensive induction training and ongoing development in both technical and soft skills. To deepen their understanding of our ecosystem, we organise a Bangladesh Discovery Trip several times a year. This immersive experience lets employees connect with local colleagues, understand the culture, and explore our partner factories and initiatives.

Our regular Connect events are another way we reinforce in-person connections and provide opportunities for knowledge sharing. This event, which brings our international team together several times a year, also offers the chance to strengthen everyone's involvement in our ongoing sustainability projects.

Outside of organised events or trainings, the Sustainability Corner in our Brussels headquarters aims to promote awareness about environmental and social issues among colleagues. This cosy library features a wide range of resources on various sustainability topics, from food and travel to fashion and the climate crisis.



Our products

We aim to create best-in-class products that meet the diverse needs of the imprint industry, while always upholding the highest environmental and social standards. Across our ranges – which feature mainly knitted items like t-shirts, sweatshirts, polos, and jogging pants, as well as some woven pieces like jackets and accessories – we use exclusively organic and recycled materials.

Responsible product development

As we serve a B2B audience, our main collection is relatively stable, with timeless products and colours that often remain available for several years. To keep our offering fresh, we release a spring/summer and an autumn/winter collection each year.

These collections, featuring new or updated styles and introducing a palette of trend-inspired colours, are developed around 1.5 to 2 years in advance and produced in full alignment with our suppliers. This long-term planning ensures realistic deadlines and maintains our focus on quality and sustainability.

Sustainable design practices

Our dedication to innovation drives us to continually seek ways to reduce the environmental impact of our products, including working towards a more circular mindset. In 2021, we launched our RE-Range, made using recycled cutting waste from our own production. While in 2024, we transitioned 14 of our sweatshirt styles (representing 50% of our sales) from an 85% organic cotton/15% recycled polyester blend to a new 100% organic cotton fabric, meaning they can be more easily recycled at end-of-life.

We also continue to explore alternative fabrics, fibres and dyeing methods that meet both our customers' needs and our environmental and social standards.

Optimised decoration results

We leave no stone unturned when it comes to providing the best possible fabric surface for decoration. Our in-house decoration team of five people test every fabric and colour combination, and support our customers in achieving outstanding and long-lasting decoration results. We also impose decoration standards on our network of dealers and actively support them in achieving GOTS certification by transitioning to sustainable inks and processes.



Our certifications

Our supply chain is certified by various independent bodies according to the most stringent standards, demonstrating our commitment to more environmentally friendly practices. But our dedication doesn't end there. Together with our partners, we continue to go beyond certifications to increase our understanding and drive positive action for our planet and its people.

GOTS



The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is the leading worldwide standard for organic cotton. Based on both environmental and social criteria, it guarantees that cotton is organically grown without the use of genetically modified seeds or hazardous chemicals. It also ensures traceability from post-harvesting of the raw material to the final customer, including transaction certificates at every stage of production. We offer GOTS-certified products, each labelled individually. See page 29 for more information.

GRS



The Global Recycled Standard (GRS) is the world's leading standard for recycled textiles. The standard applies to the full supply chain and addresses traceability, environmental principles, social requirements, chemical content, and labelling. All the recycled cotton, recycled polyester, and recycled nylon we use is GRS certified. See page 35 for more information.

OEKO-TEX®



Standard 100 by OEKO-TEX® is one of the world's best-known standards for assessing harmful substances in fabrics. Our certification confirms that Stanley/Stella products contain no chemical substances that are harmful to human health and the environment, and guarantees that they comply with the EU REACH regulation. Standard 100 also prohibits certain potentially harmful substances even where these are not yet legally banned. See page 40 for more information.

PETA



Stanley/Stella is 'PETA-Approved', which means that we do not conduct or commission any animal tests on ingredients, formulations, or finished products and pledge never to do so. Our products are made from 100% vegan materials with no ingredients of animal origin, ensuring that no harm is caused to animals.

Our memberships & collaborations

Overcoming the environmental and social challenges our industry faces requires a constructive and collaborative approach. We are proud to work with leading membership organisations and partners to amplify our efforts in improving working conditions, sourcing sustainable materials responsibly, and supporting the communities where we operate. These collaborations connect us with a wider network and inspire us to keep raising our ambitions.

Our memberships

Fair Wear Foundation



Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) is an independent organisation that works with apparel brands, garment workers and textile industry stakeholders to improve labour conditions in garment factories. As a FWF member, Stanley/Stella ask FWF to organise third-party audits to assess human rights risks and monitor remediation progress in factories. Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) are reviewed and remediated in collaboration with factory management until they can be closed. Stanley/Stella has been a member of FWF since 2012. See page 56 for more information.

Textile Exchange



Textile Exchange is a global non-profit organisation that works closely with its members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibres, integrity and standards, and responsible supply networks. As a member since 2012, Stanley/Stella participates in various Textile Exchange initiatives, including the annual Material Change Index survey and the Sustainable Cotton and Polyester Challenges, which are part of the Materials Benchmark survey. These tools map progress towards more sustainable sourcing at the raw material level. See page 28 for more information.

Our collaborations

Remei



Founded in 1983, Swiss-based Remei Group works directly with smallholder farmers in India and Tanzania to offer traceable organic cotton as the first step of a sustainable textile value chain from fibre to ready-made textiles. Their mission is to create value for all those along the value chain, while taking maximum care of people and the environment. Through Remei's local subsidiaries, organic cotton farmers receive a purchase guarantee for their raw materials, are paid an additional premium above the local market price, and benefit from ongoing support and comprehensive extension services on organic cultivation. In 2023, we started sourcing some of our organic cotton from Remei. See page 32 for more information.

Drip by Drip



Drip by Drip is a non-profit organisation founded in January 2018 that focuses on addressing water issues caused by the fashion and textile industry. In Bangladesh, Drip by Drip partners with Agroho, a local organisation that identifies needs, and suggests, implements, and monitors projects on the ground. In 2023, we started a collaboration with Drip by Drip to provide free medical consultations in the villages where workers from our partner factories live. These communities would otherwise have limited access to healthcare facilities. See page 66 for more information.

Removall



Removall is a project developer specialised in designing and operating certified carbon offset projects. In 2024, we started collaborating with Removall as a trusted partner for carbon offset initiatives. We chose Removall due to the nature of its projects, their proximity to areas where our suppliers operate, as well as the integrity of the projects. For example, carbon credits are certified by independent third parties, and are 'ex-post', meaning that the credits we purchase represent carbon savings that have already been realised, rather than promised or expected. See page 64 for more information.

Our responsible value chain

Our supply chain

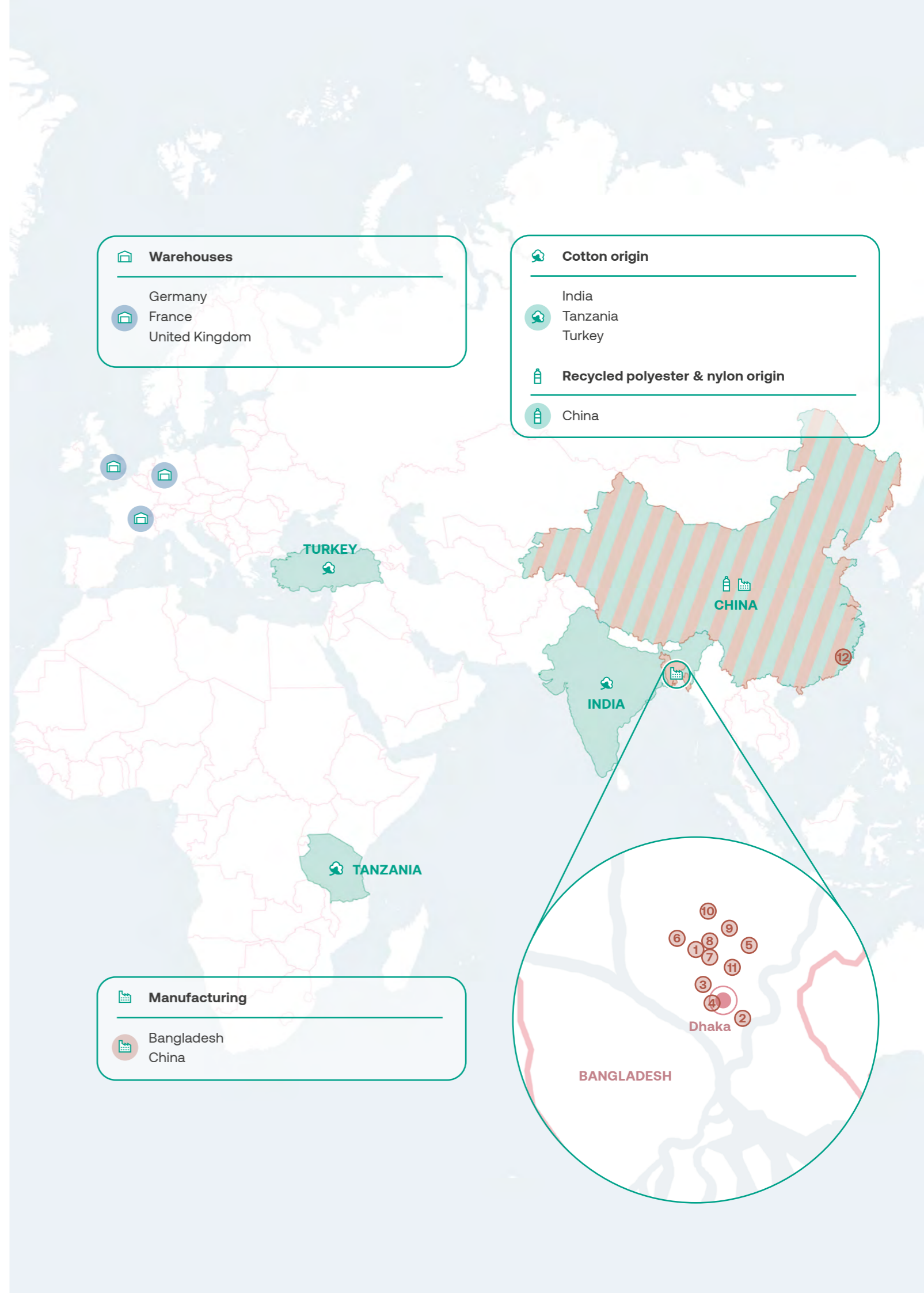
We carefully select our raw materials

We only use GOTS certified organic cotton and GRS certified recycled cotton, recycled polyester and recycled nylon, and these raw materials are sourced with the utmost care. Alongside India, the world's largest organic cotton producer, we recently started sourcing organic cotton in two non-GMO countries, Turkey and Tanzania. In Tanzania, we started our first 'direct-to-farm' programme in 2023 in partnership with Remei. Our recycled cotton comes from Bangladesh, while our recycled polyester and nylon are sourced in China.

We collaborate with state-of-the-art factories

We work with 11 partner factories in Bangladesh which are GOTS and GRS certified, and 1 partner factory in China, which is GRS certified. In both countries, we have local teams on hand to provide support.

Partner factory	Location	Products	Partnership since	Employees (June 24)
1 Ahsan Composite Ltd.	Chandra Polibidyut Road, Kaliakoir, Gazipur, BD	Knitted garments	2012	♂ 3660 ♀ 72% 28%
2 Aus Bangla Jutex Ltd.	Lengurdi, Fausha Bazar, Arai Hazar, Narayangan, BD	Accessories	2017	♂ 940 ♀ 30% 70%
3 Croydon Kowloon Designs Ltd.	Ganakbari, Ashulia, Savar, 1349, Dhaka, BD	Outerwear	2021	♂ 6067 ♀ 38% 62%
4 Dekko Knitwears Ltd.	Mirpur Industrial Area, Mirpur, Dhaka, BD	Knitted garments	2021	♂ 977 ♀ 54% 46%
5 Dird Composite Textiles Ltd.	Shatiabari, Dhaladia, Rajendrapur, Sreepur, Gazipur, BD	Knitted garments	2012	♂ 7400 ♀ 40% 60%
6 GMS Textiles Ltd.	Tansutrapur, Kaliakoir, Gazipur, BD	Knitted garments	2020	♂ 7456 ♀ 70% 30%
7 Interstoff Apparels Ltd.	Chandra, Kaliakoir, Gazipur, BD	Knitted garments	2015	♂ 5442 ♀ 65% 35%
8 Knit Asia Ltd.	Shafipur, Kaliakoir, Gazipur, Dhaka, BD	Knitted garments	2022	♂ 3491 ♀ 45% 55%
9 Executive Hi-Fashions Ltd.	Shirichala, Bhabanipur, Gazipur Sadar, Gazipur, BD	Knitted garments	2018	♂ 1436 ♀ 45% 55%
10 Executive Greentex Ltd.	Mulaid, Sreepur, Gazipur, BD	Knitted garment	2018	♂ 3498 ♀ 45% 55%
11 Target Finewear Industries Ltd.	Outpara, Chandona, Chawrasta, Alauddin Tower, Gazipur, BD	Beanie	2020	♂ 860 ♀ 60% 40%
12 Shuangxi	Luoyang Industrial Area, Quanzhou, Fujian, CN	Outerwear & accessories	2015	♂ 348 ♀ 38% 62%



Warehouses

- Germany
- France
- United Kingdom

Cotton origin

- India
- Tanzania
- Turkey

Recycled polyester & nylon origin

- China

Manufacturing

- Bangladesh
- China

Our partners for transport & storage

Our choice of transportation and warehouse partners is also a key consideration as we strive to reduce our environmental impact while ensuring a high service level. In 2023, we moved our European Distribution Centre (EDC) from Belgium to Germany and introduced a new UK warehouse. We added a third European warehouse, in France, in 2024.

European Distribution Centre

Our EDC is located in Duisburg in Germany and can be reached by barge from the port of Antwerp. The distribution centre is managed by DSV and is DGNB Gold and EcoVadis Platinum certified. DGNB is a certification assessing a building's performance based on environmental, economic and sociocultural aspects, among others. EcoVadis, on the other hand, evaluates a company's sustainability performance in areas such as environment, labour and human rights, and sustainable procurement. Having our EDC in Germany allows us to offer next-day delivery in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, while keeping our carbon footprint as low as possible.

UK warehouse

We opened our first partner warehouse in the UK in 2022, allowing us to streamline transport by receiving shipments directly from our partner factories in Asia, and to offer next-day delivery to our UK customers. In early 2024, we moved to a new, more modern facility. Located near Birmingham, this new partner warehouse is certified by the ISO 14001 standard which aids companies to implement effective management systems to improve environmental performance.

France warehouse

Our French warehouse is managed by ID Logistics and is ranked BREEAM Excellent. BREEAM is a certification that assesses the sustainability performance of buildings by measuring values across various environmental categories. Located south of Lyon, this warehouse started operations in mid-2024 and allows us to significantly enhance our service level in France, and improve deliveries to Spain, Portugal, Italy and Switzerland.

3
partner warehouses

100%
of our packaging
is re-used or recycled



Our dedicated distribution network

Our blank garments are brought to life by our exclusive network of partners who transform them using various decoration techniques like embroidery, Direct-to-Film (DTF) printing, Direct-to-Garment (DTG) printing, and screen printing. Once decorated, the garments are destined for different purposes like merchandising, events, or retail brands.

To complete the virtuous chain that started with certified organic cotton or certified recycled raw materials, we encourage and train our partners to implement GOTS certified printing techniques that use non-harmful inks and sustainable production methods.

By continually working to enhance the sustainability of not only our garments, but also their decoration, we hope to positively impact our value chain further and ensure our products have the least possible impact on the planet.

See the Stanley/Stella GOTS certified network of Official Dealers.



Choosing our materials consciously

Fibre selection has a considerable impact on a garment's quality, durability and recyclability, all of which contribute to its environmental footprint. All the cotton in our knitwear is 100% organic and our outerwear is made exclusively with recycled polyester and recycled nylon.

To guarantee the traceability of our raw materials, all our products are certified by GOTS (for organic cotton) or GRS (for recycled cotton, recycled polyester and recycled nylon). With the aim of further ensuring the integrity of our materials, we also go beyond certifications, undertaking various actions. For example, we have local teams in Turkey and India who are in direct contact with the cotton farmers, and we regularly test the lint cotton and yarn to verify its organic content.

Alongside environmental considerations, we also strive to foster positive social impact through our value chain. In 2023, we started our first 'direct-to-farm' collaboration with Remei Tanzania, whose participatory model ensures organic cotton farmers are supported to improve organic farming practices, are fairly paid and have the resources they need to develop their livelihoods.

“By using organic cotton and recycled materials, we are making the best possible choice for the planet, the people in our supply chain and our customers.”



Guido Alvino,
Chief Operating Officer

Organic cotton

Since Stanley/Stella began, we have used only organic cotton, grown from seeds that have not been genetically modified and that are cultivated without the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers.

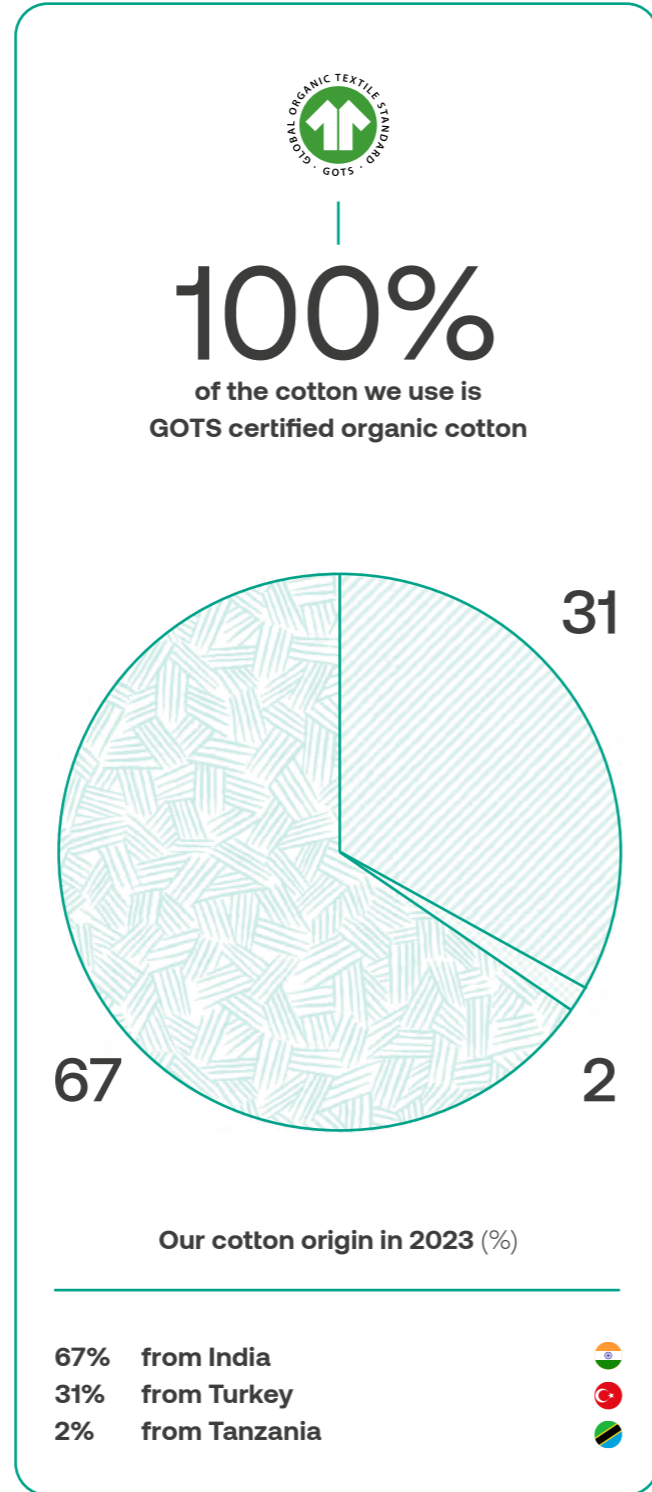
Globally, only 1.4% of the cotton produced is estimated to be organic. We initially sourced all our organic cotton from India, but in 2021, we began sourcing some of our organic cotton in Turkey, and in 2023 we started working with organic cotton farmers in Tanzania. Both Turkey and Tanzania are non-GMO countries, meaning they have banned the use of genetically modified cotton seeds.

Cultivating organic cotton ensures that no harmful chemicals flow into the soil or into rivers or lakes. This means that the water used for organic farming is not considered as lost water, as it can be used again and can safely return to the soil and other water sources. The overall positive effects on the environment contribute to safeguarding the well-being and livelihoods of cotton farmers and their communities.

Textile Exchange

Through its Materials Benchmark programme, Textile Exchange tracks companies' progress in more sustainable materials sourcing, creating the largest peer-to-peer comparison initiative across the fashion, textile and apparel industry. In the 2023 Materials Benchmark survey, Stanley/Stella ranked in the top 10 companies out of more than 150 that are using preferred materials, namely organic cotton. In fact, the 2023 Material Change Index (MCI) - a key component of the programme - confirmed that we are one of the largest purchasers of organic cotton in the world.

In 2024, we were one of the 154 signatories of Textile Exchange's Sustainable Cotton Challenge. This initiative aims to serve as a catalyst for shifting the market toward cotton grown with improved environmental and social sustainability practices. The challenge showed that we are among the 24% of companies that have already achieved the target of sourcing 100% of their cotton with sustainable programmes such as the GOTS certification.



GOTS certification

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is based on both environmental and social criteria. It certifies that the cotton is organically grown, without the use of genetically modified seeds or any harmful chemical products. Throughout our collections, we choose to work using only 100% GOTS certified organic cotton. Transaction certificates at every stage of production confirm the traceability and organic content of our products from the post-harvested raw material to the final consumer.



Certified by Control Union
CU 819434

Our GOTS certified product ranges

100% organic cotton

Product example: Cruiser 2.0



Organic
Certified by Control Union
CU 819434

85% organic cotton
15% recycled polyester

Product example: Drummer 2.0



Made with 85% organic materials
Certified by Control Union
CU 819434

Going beyond certification

On our journey to source our cotton in the most responsible way possible, we go beyond GOTS certification to provide our customers with consistently high-quality organic cotton. In addition to diversifying our cotton sourcing to include two non-GMO countries – Turkey and Tanzania – we also map our supply chain for full transparency and take other initiatives to reinforce the traceability and organic integrity of our cotton, including:

In-house expertise in cotton sourcing

To deepen our knowledge about the organic cotton industry, ensure we have the necessary in-house expertise in organic cotton purchasing, and be able to guarantee unrivalled quality and supply chain integrity, we now have two organic cotton sourcing specialists, one in India and one in Turkey.

Regular visits to farmers, ginners and spinners

In 2023, our team visited partner spinning mills in India on several occasions. There, we also met with ginners and cotton farmers to better understand the realities and needs of suppliers further along our supply chain. We also visited ginners, spinning mills, and warehouses in Turkey to discuss organic cotton bale quality and organic integrity, and met with cotton farmers in Tanzania to further enhance our understanding of their activities and conditions in the country.

Read more about GOTS here.



Anil,
Senior Organic
Cotton Sourcing
Specialist,
Turkey



Gaurav,
Global Cotton
Sourcing
Specialist,
India



53

samples tested
for GMOs and pesticides
(2023)



Remei Tanzania, our first 'direct-to-farm' project

In 2023, we embarked on an exciting collaboration with Remei Tanzania, part of the Swiss-based Remei Group. Remei is committed to creating value for all those involved in the textile supply chain, starting with organic cotton farmers in India and Tanzania.

Remei Tanzania provides farmers with continuous local support, including training in organic practices and access to natural pesticides. It also ensures fair pricing for organic cotton farmers through a purchase guarantee and a 15% premium on market prices, fostering financial stability and long-term commitment. After harvesting, the organic cotton is

ginned in Remei's nominated organic-certified ginning facility in Tanzania.

Through this collaboration, we are supporting 2,000 farmers across 32 villages in the Simiyu Region's Meatu and Maswa areas. Remei's participative model fully aligns with our commitment to sustainable practices, positively impacting both the environment and the lives of those who cultivate the land.

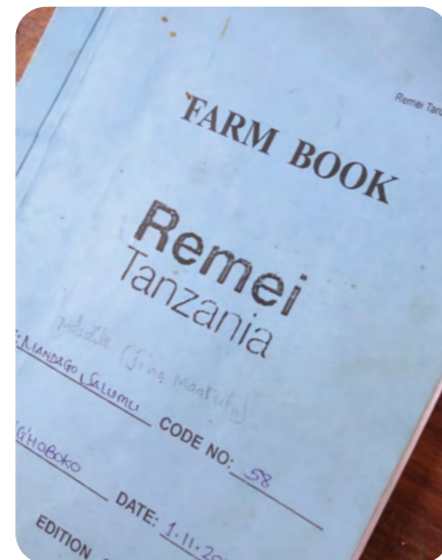


← Natural pesticides

Remei provides farmers with quality natural pesticides, allowing them to avoid being exposed to harmful chemicals. This, combined with crop rotation, ensures long-term soil fertility, which is critical for smallholder farmers' livelihoods.

↓ Education and training

Smallholder organic farmers have access to Remei's unique guidance services for coaching and training courses to continuously improve their knowledge and skills in organic cultivation. Remei organises different types of training, such as need-based farmer training and training specifically for female family members. They also have demo farms in each village where farmers can see farming techniques and learn them.



← Organic cotton support and control

The first step in producing organic cotton is using seeds that are not genetically modified. In Tanzania, GMO seeds are banned by the state which handles the controlled distribution of non-GMO seeds to farmers. Farmers then use natural methods to control pests and improve soil fertility, and Remei's extension services closely monitor production through detailed farm records.



← Organic cotton ginning and certification

Remei operates with an exclusive ginning facility in Tanzania for the organic cotton from the 2,000 farmers it supports. This ensures there is no contamination possible from conventional cotton. Thanks to its qualified extension officers, Remei also manages and controls the quality of the organic cotton and its Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certification.



← Supporting livelihoods and communities

Farmers' payments are secured thanks to Remei's commitment to purchase their organic cotton and pay an additional 15% premium above the market price. As well as empowering business growth, Remei also supports community projects. For example, a water project in Tanzania, which provides safe and accessible drinking water to villages.


Recycled materials


As part of our quest to reduce the environmental impact of our products, all the materials we use other than organic cotton are recycled materials. Recycling waste into textiles not only keeps waste out of landfills, it also decreases reliance on virgin resources, and typically requires less energy than producing new materials. Our RE-Range uses pre-consumer recycled cotton from cutting waste, while our outerwear garments are made using recycled polyester from post-consumer PET bottles. We also use recycled nylon from pre-consumer industrial waste.


Recycled cotton


We seek to minimise waste at production level and strive for more circular business models. Recycled cotton plays a key role in this. In 2017, we started using recycled cotton in our accessories range. Since then, we have increased our recycled cotton product range and even started using our own cutting waste to create new products.

For our RE-Range, our black, navy and white cutting waste is taken to a spinning mill where it is finely shredded before being blended with virgin organic cotton. These fibres are then spun into new yarn, which is knitted into durable fabric. Blending this cutting waste with virgin organic cotton creates a unique natural heather effect, eliminating the need for dyes and drastically reducing the amount of water used per garment.


100%
 of the recycled cotton we use
 is GRS certified


4
 partner factories
 collect cutting
 waste for
 our RE-Range


3
 colours used
 to produce
 our RE-Range


200+
 tonnes of our cutting waste
 was made into new products
 (2023)

GRS certification

Like GOTS, the Global Recycled Standard (GRS) provides assurance that products are made from verified recycled materials and in a way that respects both the environment and those involved in the value chain. It covers aspects such as traceability, environmental principles, social requirements, chemical content, and labelling. All the recycled cotton we use is GRS certified.



Our GRS certified recycled cotton product range

42% recycled organic cotton
 43% virgin organic cotton
 15% recycled polyester

Product example: RE-Cruiser



50% recycled organic cotton
 50% virgin organic cotton

Product example: RE-Creator



80% recycled cotton
 20% recycled polyester

Product example: RE-Tote



Recycled polyester & nylon

We use recycled polyester for our outerwear garments and blend it with organic cotton for some of our sweatshirts and accessories. Since 2018, we have exclusively used recycled polyester made from post-consumer PET bottles, sourced mainly in China. Depending on the style, it takes between 38 to 95 plastic bottles of 550mL (the standard size of a bottle in China) to produce our jackets.

For all our outerwear in recycled polyester, we use GRS certified fabrics. Just like with our organic cotton, we seek full traceability of our recycled polyester, including the origin of the PET bottles. In 2023, we visited collection points, spinners and factories in China to better understand our value chain and how the recycled materials come from waste. We also have an Operations Manager and Fabrics Manager in China whose expertise helps us ensure quality and supply chain integrity.

For two of our outerwear styles, we use pre-consumer recycled nylon, made from industrial nylon yarn waste. This GRS certified fabric is durable and strong, while at the same time being extremely lightweight and soft on the skin.

[Read more about GRS here.](#)




How many bottles are used to create our styles?


Puffer
70 bottles


Puffer Gilet
38 bottles


Liner
64 bottles


Trekker
71 bottles



Our GRS certified recycled polyester & recycled nylon product range

100% recycled polyester

Product example: Stanley Climber



94% recycled polyester
6% elastane

Product example: Navigator



100% recycled nylon

Product example: Tracker



Strengthening the recycled polyester supply chain through field visits

As we stand by our promise to deliver garments that meet the highest quality, environmental and social standards, we constantly strive to deepen our understanding of our supply chain. Field trips are a key part of this process. In 2023, our Sustainability and Sourcing teams travelled to China to trace the origin of our recycled polyester back to the collected post-consumer PET bottles collection and observe all steps of their transformation until the final material. We visited collection points, spinners and factories, meeting the people who make this transformation possible.



← Starting at collection points

The journey begins with the collection of PET bottles, commonly used for beverages and other consumer products. Once discarded, these bottles often end up in recycling bins or collection centres. The bottles are carefully sorted by colour and type to ensure the purity of the recycled material.

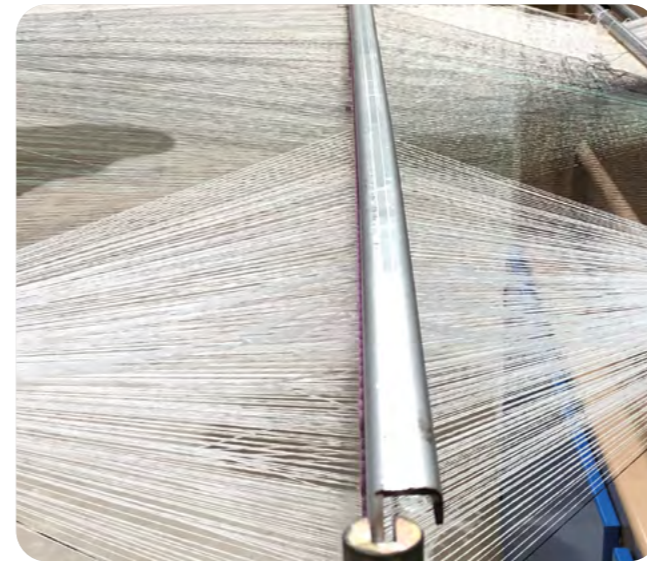
↓ A complex, multi-phase transformation

Once sorted, the bottles undergo a thorough cleaning process to remove labels, adhesives and any residual contents and impurities. After cleaning, the bottles are shredded into small flakes. These flakes are the building blocks of the recycled polyester.



← From waste to resource

The shredded PET flakes are then melted and extruded into tiny pellets. These pellets serve as the raw material for creating new fibres, marking a pivotal moment where discarded plastic starts to gain new value as a reusable resource.



← A new life begins

The pellets are melted again and spun into fine polyester fibres through a process called melt spinning. The thickness and length of the fibres are adjusted according to the needs of the fabric being produced. At this stage, the material moves from a solid plastic form to soft, flexible fibres that can be woven into textiles.



← The people that make it possible

Turning PET bottles into garments is a collaborative effort, starting with those who gather and sort the discarded bottles at the collection points. Their efforts, along with the work of everyone involved in every step of the process – from cleaning and processing to spinning, weaving, and garment production – are crucial in transforming waste into something new and valuable.

Dyes & finishing

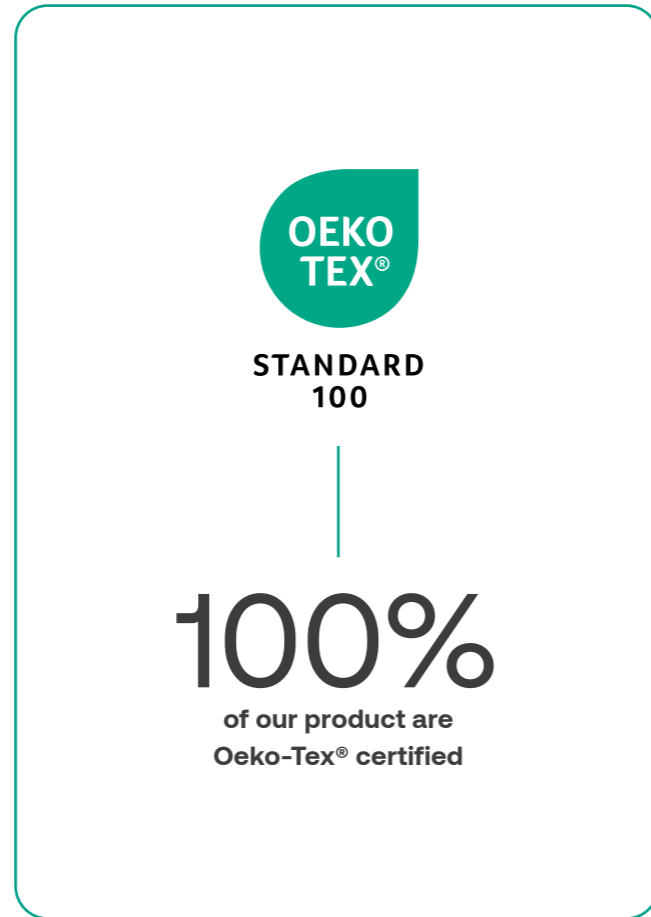
Our priority is to ensure that dyes, finishing and other additives going into our products are managed through ambitious standards throughout the entire supply chain to reduce and prevent harm to people and the environment. At production sites, our chemical management policies include compliance with the highest standards such as GOTS and STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX®.

OEKO-TEX certification

STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® is one of the world's best-known labels for textiles tested for harmful substances. The certification means that every component of a product, i.e. every thread, button and other accessory, has been tested for harmful substances and that the product is therefore safe for human use.

Tests are conducted by an independent OEKO-TEX® partner institute and take into account numerous regulated and non-regulated substances that may be harmful to human health. In many cases, the limit values for the STANDARD 100 label go beyond national and international requirements.

Read more about OEKO-TEX® here.



OEKO
TEX®

STANDARD
100

100%

of our product are
Oeko-Tex® certified





Minimising our environmental footprint

Human activities such as burning fossil fuels, clearing forests, and cultivating land for agricultural use contribute to climate change by emitting CO₂ and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) that are devastating for the earth.

At Stanley/Stella, we recognise that we have a responsibility to mitigate and reduce our impact on the environment, and we place a specific focus on CO₂ emissions and water use across our supply chain.

“Unveiling our decarbonisation strategy in early 2024 was a big step. Now, we have a clear and common agenda within the entire organisation to reduce our relative emissions by 30% by 2030.”



Marten Verheugt,
Sustainability Ambassador

Our carbon footprint

In 2022, we started collecting data on our Tier 1 (garment), Tier 2 (fabric) and Tier 3 (yarn) suppliers to build a more complete picture of our climate impact. Now, in our third year, we have primary data for all suppliers up to Tier 3, giving us a precise view of emissions and emission drivers per supplier.

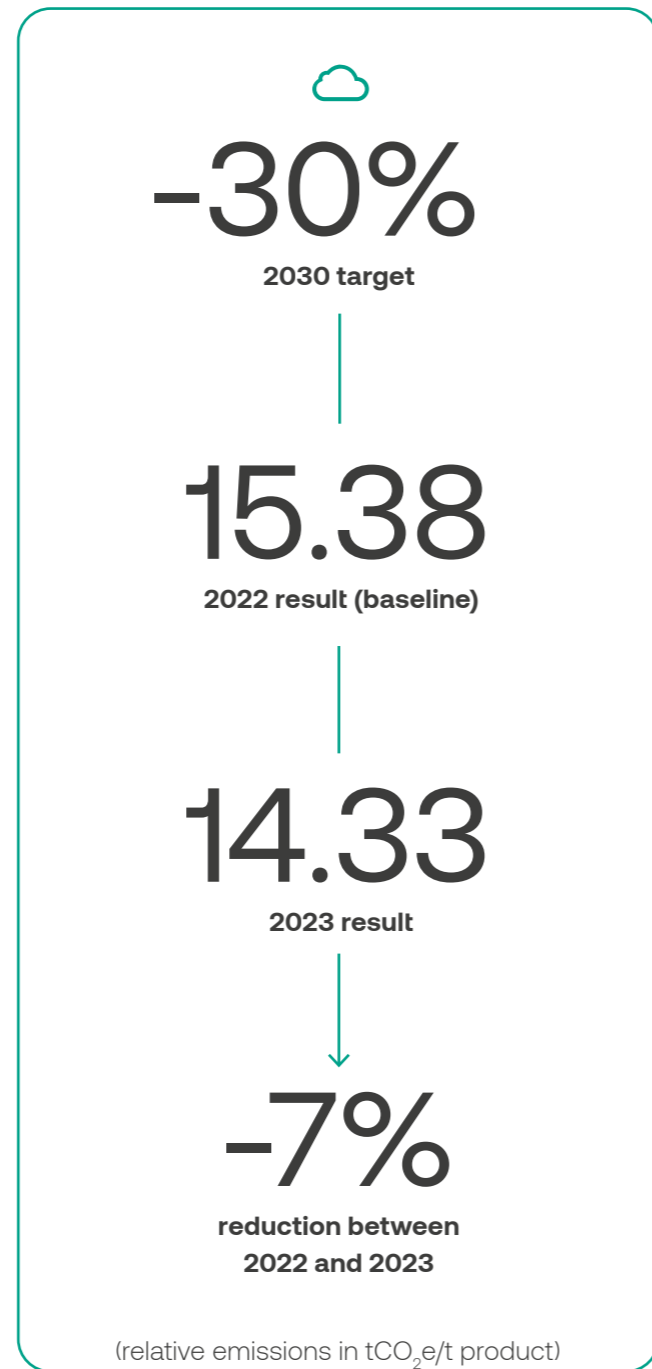
Our carbon footprint is calculated according to the leading GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, complemented with the Bilan Carbone method. Every year, we strive to improve our data collection and adjust our calculations where necessary. Based on the most up-to-date information, we have adjusted our previous years' total CO₂ emissions to provide a more accurate baseline for our decarbonisation strategy and objectives:

Changes to our previously reported 2022 emissions are due to a more granular understanding of our supply chain actors and shares, more granular primary data including validated and corrected data, and corrections to some emission factors, mainly natural gas.

In 2023, although we sold a similar number of products compared to 2022, 26% fewer products were produced. This is the main reason our absolute emissions dropped by 8%. Emissions did not drop in line with production as more yarn was produced and more lint cotton ordered in 2023 compared to 2022. This was in anticipation of production for 2024, including the launch of the Iconics 2.0 as well as our entry into the US market.

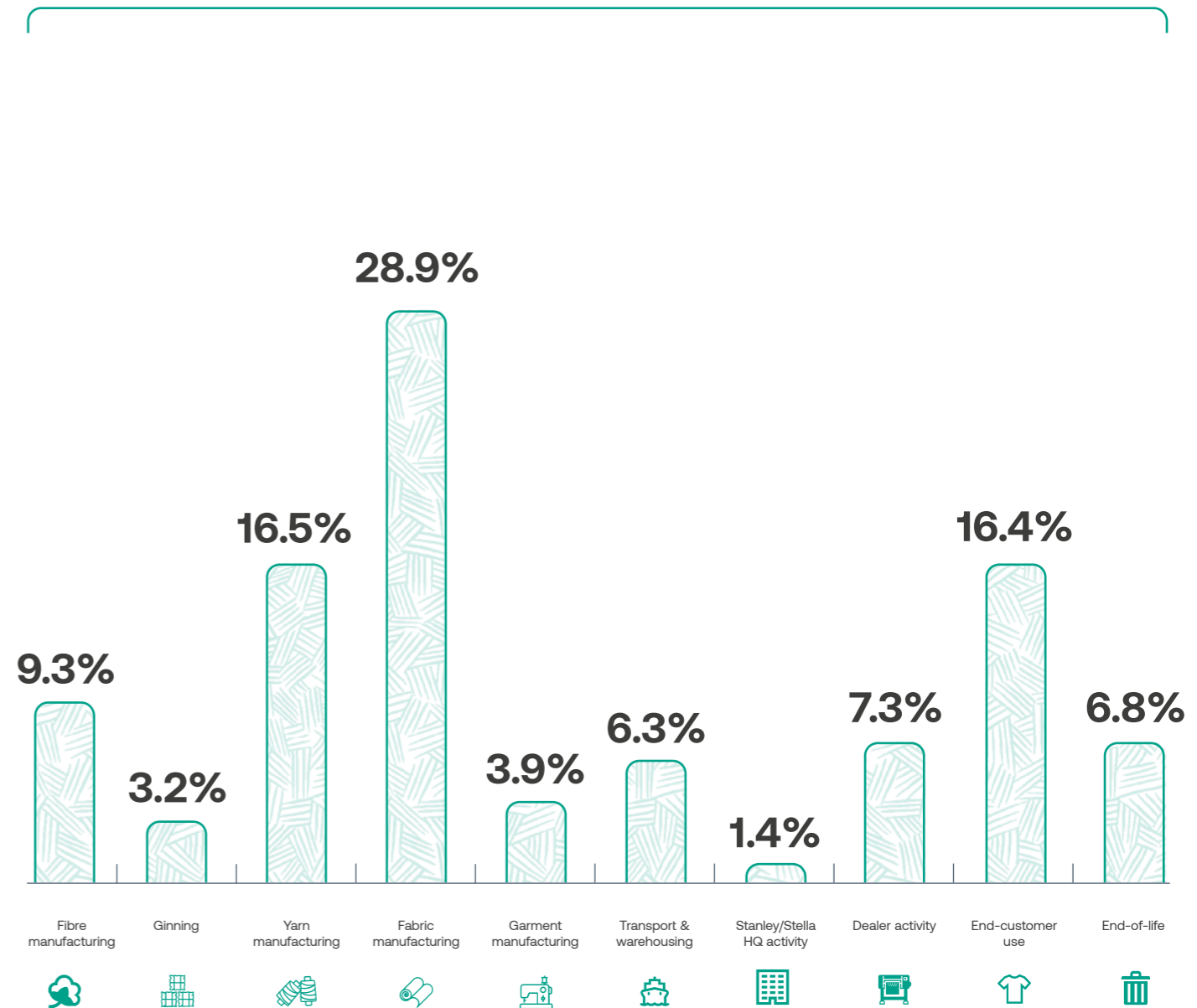
Starting in 2024, we are also measuring specific product impacts from the raw materials to end-of-life using Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs), which include CO₂ emissions and other factors like water use. In a first phase, we worked with experts to collect primary

data from our suppliers, and we validated the data through on-site visits. We expect to release the first product impact information on ten products before the end of 2024. Knowing the impact of our products is not only important in our quest for transparency, but it also helps our customers to make informed decisions and guides us in developing ever more sustainable collections.



Our 2023 carbon footprint

124,712 tCO₂e



Our decarbonisation strategy

After two years of intensive work mapping every aspect of our operations and value chain to measure our total carbon footprint, we have embarked on an ambitious decarbonisation mission: to reduce our relative carbon emissions by 30% by 2030, from a 2022 baseline.

Given our historic and projected growth, working with absolute reduction targets presents challenges. Our decarbonisation strategy therefore uses a relative target, taking the total absolute emissions and expressing them in relation to the weight of products produced and sold. This allows us to see, by produced and sold products, how we can reduce our relative impact by 30% in just under eight years.



← Full-company commitment to action

Setting an ambitious corporate goal is one thing, but achieving it requires a solid plan and a deep sense of ownership that is felt throughout the entire company. In April 2024, we brought all our employees together for an inspiring event to share the steps we have taken so far, explain the details of our decarbonisation strategy and our 2030 target, and reinforce the fact that we all have a role to play in this huge and exciting project.

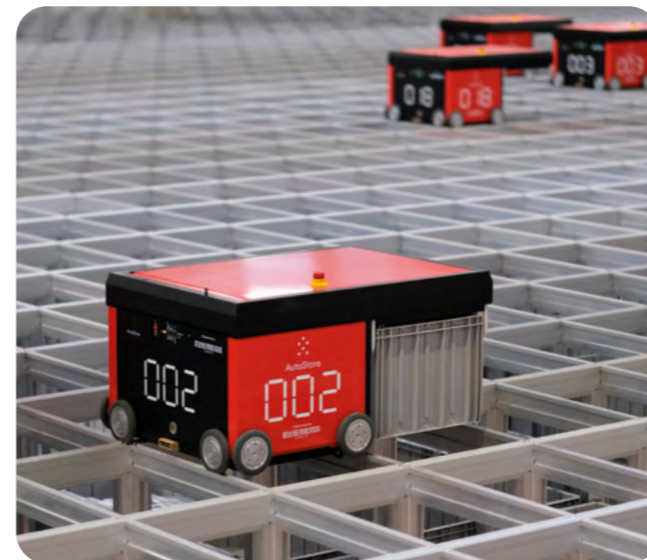
Collaboration across the value chain

With most of our emissions linked to activities outside our own operations, we know we need to work closely with those in our value chain to achieve our goal. Rather than simply setting benchmarks for our suppliers and partners, we are actively helping them to identify opportunities based on the primary data collected, and develop ambitious yet feasible action plans to transform their operations. Central to this approach are 12 multistakeholder working groups that unite our suppliers and partners, Stanley/Stella employees, and independent experts. Since launching our strategy at the beginning of 2024, some working groups have already started making progress.



← More energy-efficient manufacturing

In May 2024, after alignment and commitment meetings with each CEO and top management of our Tier 1 suppliers (garment level), we launched a pilot programme to identify energy-efficiency opportunities at supplier level. Accompanied by engineers, we measured each step of the fabric and garment manufacturing process to establish concrete actions we can take together to reduce their emissions. We plan to scale this programme to all our suppliers, and estimate it has the potential to reduce our total emissions by up to 10%.



← Lower-impact logistics

Although transportation from the cotton fields to end customers only represents around 5% of our total emissions, we aim to further reduce our impact. Our logistics working group is collaborating closely with our transportation partners to reduce their emissions by transitioning to lower-emission fleets. We have also given our partner warehouses a 25% emissions reduction target and have established strict emissions criteria for selecting future warehouse partners.



← Greener offices

Emissions from our own offices account for less than 1% of our total emissions, but through specific actions, we can reduce those emissions even further. For example, in 2024, we hope to install geothermal heat pumps at our Brussels headquarters – subject to a feasibility study by the building owner – which could potentially reduce natural gas consumption for heating by 50%. This, in addition to our green electricity sourcing, our 317 rooftop solar panels with a 90 kWp installed capacity, and our use of rainwater for toilet flushing, would help us turn our workplace into an even more resource-efficient space.

We have also defined a new green company car policy and travel policy to cut our carbon footprint. These and other actions should help us achieve our ambitious target of a 60% reduction in office emissions by headcount by 2030.

Water

We treat water as the invaluable resource it is. Across our entire supply chain, we aim to minimise the amount of water used and reduce its contamination.

Just like for all agricultural production, water is a critical input for the successful cultivation of organic cotton. However, unlike conventional farming, organic farming does not involve harmful chemicals, so any runoff water is free from contamination.

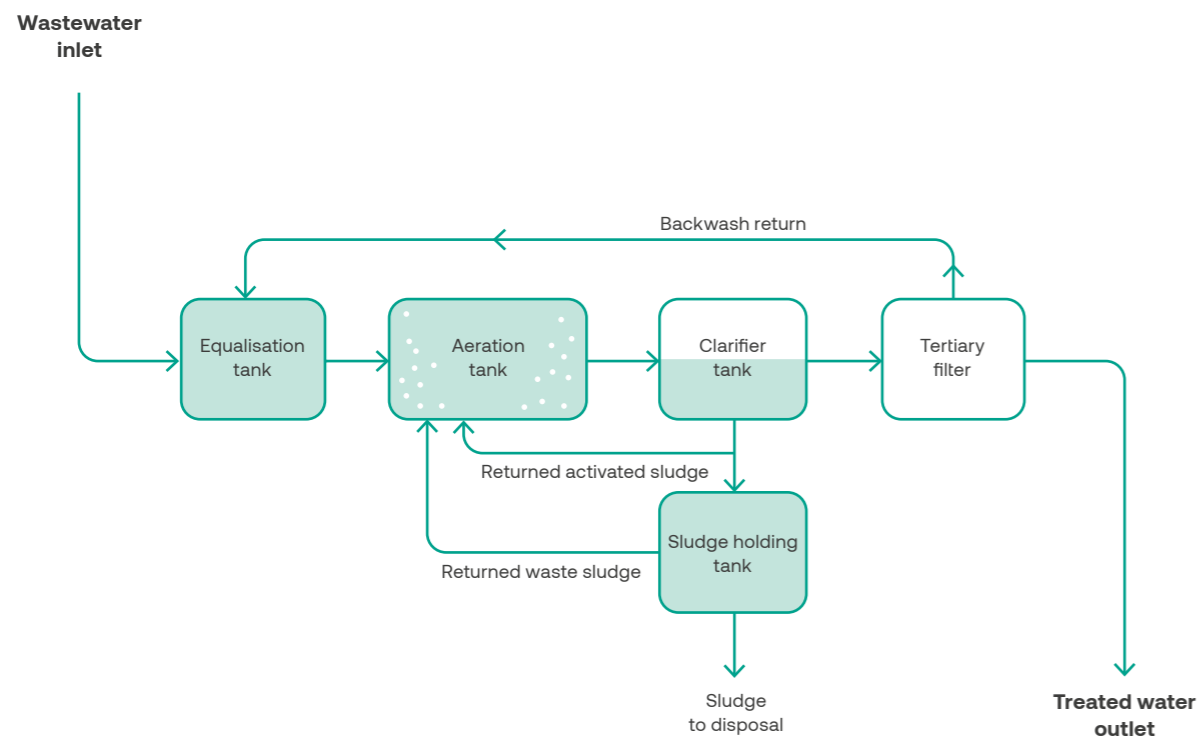
Water is also used for dyeing and washing textiles. These processes inevitably generate water-based toxic waste, known as effluent. All our partner factories

have on-site Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs), in line with legal requirements, and have in-house specialists and testing facilities. This ensures that wastewater can be treated and then released back into nature without harming the environment.

At some of our partner factories, the treated wastewater is also used for car washing and gardening. The remaining solid waste is typically preserved for a minimum of six months until it solidifies fully. It is then sent to contracted brick fields where it is used as fuel or to cement manufacturing companies where it is used as a raw material for making cement.

Effluent Treatment Plant process

The treatment process for clearing water in the factories begins in the equalisation tank, which regulates the inflow of wastewater. Next, in the aeration and clarifier tanks, microorganisms break down the organic pollutants. Solid waste is then collected and moved to the sludge holding tank. The tertiary filter removes any remaining fine particles and suspended solids from the water using various filtration methods. At the end of this process, the treated wastewater is ready to be discharged.



Different stages of water treatment at one of our partner factories in Bangladesh.



Caring about people

At Stanley/Stella, fair and safe working conditions, well-being in the workplace, and community engagement are at the heart of our operations and organisation.

In 2023, we reinforced our efforts to bring about more concrete positive impacts for the workers in our Tier 1 (garment) and Tier 2 (fabric) partner factories and their communities. We reviewed our approach to factory audits so our reports can be used as real management tools and we place more focus on Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) and the resolution of potential issues.

At community level, we are involved in several projects that are directly enhancing people's quality of life. In Bangladesh, we are financing a mobile hospital project that visits villages where the workers of our partner factories live. In Tanzania, we are collaborating with Remei Tanzania on a 'direct-to-farm' programme that supports organic cotton farmers through fair remuneration, education and training, and other specific projects. We also continue to strengthen our collaborations with charity organisations close to our Brussels headquarters.

“Transparent and authentic collaboration with our partners is essential if we are to keep improving conditions across our value chain.”



Jahin Rahat Khan,
Sustainability Officer,
Bangladesh Liaison Office

Our social responsibility

Like most global fashion brands, we do not own the mills, factories, and production facilities that make our fabrics and garments. Yet we see it as our responsibility to ensure workers in our supply chain have good working conditions and fair pay.

Our strategy has always focused on working with a limited number of suppliers and developing strong, long-term relationships so we can make responsible procurement a reality.

From the outset, we established robust policies outlining our commitments to human rights and environmental due diligence, making clear the standards we expect our suppliers to adhere to. Over the years, we have developed several internal tools and mapped and collected site-specific data, laying the groundwork for our ongoing due diligence processes.

In 2023, we significantly enhanced our internal tools and processes. Guided by the OECD due diligence framework, we standardised our data collection methods to align with industry standards. This led us to the development of a robust Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD) policy, which replaces our previous Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) policy, introduced in 2022.

Our policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence policy:
 - Responsible Purchasing Practices policy
 - Responsible Supplier Onboarding policy
 - Responsible Supplier Exit policy

Our onboarding tools:

- Country risk assessment
- Factory risk assessment
- Responsible supplier onboarding

Our monitoring tools:

- Daily Overtime Tracker
- Monthly Sustainability Observation Report
- Quarterly Supplier Sustainability Scorecard
- Yearly Sustainability Audit Report
- Corrective Action Plans



Our policies

Code of Conduct

To establish accountability for respecting social, environmental and safety standards, all our partner factories need to sign and comply with the Stanley/Stella Code of Conduct (CoC).

This document states our commitment to fair and ethical work practices and outlines the principles we consider essential to our business' operations. Its standards are derived from the fundamental conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and are in line with the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) Code of Labour Practices (CoLP).

In 2024, we are working to update our CoC to include new principles based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), including environmental aspects and to enhance transparency.

Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence policy

Our Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD) policy is our guiding framework for managing the social, environmental and ethical risks across the Stanley/Stella value chain. It outlines the core principles and guidelines that govern our business relationships with our suppliers, covering all stages from onboarding, through ongoing collaboration, to termination of the relationship.

This policy has adopted the UNGP's definition of human rights and environmental due diligence and is aligned with the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct. In 2024, we are updating our HREDD policy to include additional principles based on the Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices (CFRPP) and to reinforce our responsible exit processes.



Our tools

In 2023, we performed 13 internal audits in Bangladesh and two in China. The majority of these were monitoring audits to verify progress made at existing suppliers. We also carried out due diligence audits for potential new partners that were finally not integrated into Stanley/Stella's pool of suppliers, as well as audits of lower-tier suppliers.

Daily

The Overtime Tracker records working hours on the sewing lines at most of our partner factories in Bangladesh. The tool is monitored by Quality Assurance Officers (QAOs) from our Operations department, based in each factory. This integration of other departments in sustainability-related activities helps amplify the impact we have in our partner factories. Any excessive overtime is identified and should be remedied immediately by factory management.

Quarterly

Our quarterly Supplier Sustainability Scorecard (SSS) integrates information from sources such as the Overtime Tracker, the MSOR and CAPs from the annual Sustainability Audit Report, and provides a quarterly score for a supplier's sustainability and HREDD performance across different KPIs. This score aims to support business decisions and order allocation based on a supplier's adherence to labour standards. The scorecard is shared with suppliers and our Operations department every quarter to foster collaboration and enhance sustainability performance.

Monthly

Our Monthly Sustainability Observation Report (MSOR), prepared by the QAOs, assesses sustainability and HREDD compliance at each partner factory. The current version tracks 48 criteria across three categories: social, environmental and ethical. These criteria are scored, allowing for the performance scores to be easily consolidated by supplier. As part of the monthly report, the QAOs observe the production to ensure standards are met. The MSOR is carried out at most of our partner factories.

Yearly

Initially used during the supplier onboarding process, the Sustainability Audit Report (SAR) is then conducted at each supplier location annually. Through this report, we monitor over 150 social, environmental ethical and safety criteria, and follow up on any issues with CAPs. For an existing supplier, compliance is monitored and evaluated based on their previous year's SAR to guide incremental improvements in sustainability performance.

Fair Wear Foundation

Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) is an independent, non-profit organisation that works with brands, factories, trade unions, NGOs, and governments to provide better working conditions for garment workers around the world. We have been a member of FWF since our operations began in 2012. Every year, our whole company is audited by FWF and the results are published in a detailed Brand Performance Check report. This report describes our efforts on social issues and provides the results of monitoring and remediation measures in each of our partner factories.

Leader status

Based on the Brand Performance Check, FWF awards Leader status to companies that score exceptionally well and show best practices in the eight FWF pillars. 2023 saw us proudly maintain our FWF Leader status for the fourth year in a row and for 10 out of 11 years.

The 2023 edition of the Brand Performance Check introduced a new methodology aligned with the UNGPs and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector. This new methodology raises the bar, making us especially proud to have maintained our Leader status.

Ongoing actions to improve workers conditions

Three of the main actions linked to our FWF membership are social audits and Corrective Action Plans (CAPs), an easily accessible complaints helpline for factory workers, and training for workers to improve awareness and knowledge about their rights.

Read our latest Brand Performance Check report here.



Leader

2023 Brand Performance Check results



100%

Foundational system's criteria



59%

Sourcing strategy



80%

Identifying continuous human rights risks



92%

Responsible purchasing practices



93%

Quality and coherence of prevention and remediation system



67%

Improvement and prevention



91%

Communication, transparency and evaluation

2023 Fair Wear Foundation status



Leader



Good



Need improvement



Suspended



8 FWF Labour Standards:

Employment is freely chosen

Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining

There is no discrimination in employment

No exploitation of child labour

Payment of a living wage

Reasonable hours of work

Safe and healthy working conditions

Legally binding employment relationship



An action-driven leadership for the workers

FWF audits and Corrective Action Plans

In addition to our internal monitoring, we commission external audits at our suppliers to better understand the social conditions of their workers and their internal processes. These external audits are carried out by FWF. After each audit, a detailed report is shared with the factory and our Sustainability team. If necessary, CAPs are established and continuously monitored by our local teams in collaboration with the factories.

In 2023, FWF carried out three audits in our partner factories in Bangladesh. The main findings centred on ‘safe and healthy working conditions’, ‘reasonable hours of work’, and ‘payment of living wage’. The associated CAPs are either closed or ongoing, especially for long-term objectives like living wage.

FWF helpline

All our partner factories have their own internal mechanism for raising concerns and complaints, including workers’ committees. If workers are not comfortable with this, the FWF external helpline makes sure their issues are properly addressed by its member brands. Our Sustainability Manager in Dhaka handles complaints and discusses the root cause with suppliers until a solution is found.

In 2023, we received 17 complaints through the FWF helpline. We feel that this reflects a proactive and progressive approach to improving working conditions, with workers feeling able to voice their concerns without fear. This facilitates constructive dialogue between management, workers, and us as clients, fostering a positive relationship with our manufacturing partners.

As of July 2024, 12 of the complaints raised in 2023 had been closed and five are open. Some open complaints are related to the closure of one of our strategic suppliers, Dird. This affected over 13,000 employees, including around 6,500 from Dird Composite Textiles Ltd, one of our main suppliers. Since the end 2023, we continue to work with FWF and other member brands to ensure the workers will receive their legal dues.


Workplace Education Programmes (WEP)

Training programmes provide factory management and workers with an opportunity to openly address issues and opportunities in the workplace. Together with FWF, these programmes are organised in our partner factories. The goal is to raise awareness about labour rights and give people the knowledge and skills they need to improve their working environment and relations, from setting up an anti-harassment committee to strengthening the communication between management and the workers.

In 2023, we introduced an FWF training programme called the ‘Violence and Harassment Prevention Programme’ at one of our partner factories in Bangladesh. This programme focuses on workplace harassment and establishing and supporting workplace anti-harassment committees. If needed, FWF facilitates an election for an anti-harassment committee.


By June 2024, the factory had completed three courses in addition to the introductory meeting. Four more sessions are scheduled for 2024 to complete the programme.





3

FWF audits in Bangladesh
(2023)



12

complaints resolved
(July 2024)



Fair remuneration

For the workers in our garment partner factories

We choose to work with some of the most ethical and responsible factories and strive for all of them to pay fair wages.

In Bangladesh, the local government sets the minimum wage to ensure fair pay for garment workers, while at the same time, maintain competitiveness for garment producers. Our partner factories guarantee this legal minimum wage and fundamental legal requirements such as in-house childcare facilities, maternity leave, and medical facilities. Some of them also offer additional benefits like free transportation, performance and attendance bonuses, and progressive pay scales.

At the end of 2023, the minimum wage in Bangladesh increased by 56%, and we have, of course, reflected this increase in the price we pay for our garments.

However, the minimum wage does not correspond to a living wage as defined by the Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC)*. With the commitment and support of our CEO and management team, we continue to review the situation with our partner factories and explore the best ways to bring worker remuneration closer to the living wage.

*The GLWC defines a living wage as the 'remuneration received for a standard work week by a worker in a particular [time and] place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and her or his family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events'.

For the farmers growing our organic cotton

In 2023, we started our first 'direct-to-farm' programme in collaboration with Remei Tanzania, an organic cotton company that shares our vision for a more equitable textile industry (see also page 32).

Like Stanley/Stella, Remei considers a living income as an essential aspect of fair farming practices. As well as providing farmers with a purchase guarantee that gives them financial stability, it further rewards their efforts in organic production by purchasing their cotton with a 15% premium. This premium is based on the average market price for organic cotton over the past five years.

This two-pronged approach provides farmers with a secure and fair income, giving them the encouragement, means and opportunity to develop their livelihoods.



Community engagement

Beyond striving for safe and equitable working conditions and fair remuneration in our partner factories, we also aim to contribute directly to the social and environmental prosperity of local communities.

In 2020, our management and Board of Directors decided to allocate a percentage of Stanley/Stella's annual operating profit to a 'Stanley/Stella Fund' to support initiatives for the environment and community-based projects. This fund is operated in collaboration with the King Baudouin Foundation, whose mission is to facilitate philanthropic and charitable initiatives by individuals and companies.

Through the Stanley/Stella Fund, we aim to give back to the communities that are close to the cotton fields, close to our partner factories, or close to our operations in Europe, and to further protect the environment. All projects supported by the fund must first be approved by a Sustainability Committee consisting of our CEO, the Head of Sustainability, and a member of the Board of Directors, before being approved by the King Baudouin Foundation internal Committee.

Read more about the Stanley/Stella Fund's partnership with the King Baudouin Foundation.



Our projects close to cotton farmer communities

Through various initiatives, we support communities in areas where we source our organic cotton, striving to improve quality of life, enhance sustainability, and provide support in times of need.

Contributing to emergency earthquake relief



We also remain mindful of supporting communities in times of unforeseen circumstances. For example, at the start of February 2023, to help victims of the earthquake in Turkey's southern Gaziantep province – an area where we source some of our organic cotton – we donated 3,382 items of clothing and EUR 20,000 to the Belgian Red Cross who forwarded it to the Turkish Red Crescent and the Syrian Red Crescent.

Enabling access to safe drinking water in Odisha




Clean water is not only key to maintaining people's health and dignity, it also plays an essential role in many livelihoods, such as small food-related industries. In July 2022, together with Pratima Agro & Paper Pvt Ltd and the Pratima Organic Grower Group, we installed a solar-powered submersible pump to provide reliable, year-round access to safe drinking water to one of the farming communities we source organic cotton from. The installation continues to enhance the quality of life for the whole community of around 70 families.


Supporting renewable energy development in Gujarat




In 2024, through a partnership with Removal, we invested in a project providing green electricity in Gujarat, a province in India where we source organic cotton and yarn. Through this initiative, wind turbines with a total capacity of 300 MW have been installed, directly feeding the local grid and resulting in a reduction of around 0.8 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually. While this investment gives us 2,000 tonnes of carbon credits, equivalent to slightly more than our office emissions, our primary objective is to foster the development of renewable energy in India rather than just offset our carbon footprint.




300
wind turbines total capacity
(MW)


800,000
tCO₂e emissions reduction annually


2,000
tCO₂e carbon credits for Stanley/Stella

Our mobile healthcare project supporting factory worker communities

In 2023, we began a partnership with the non-profit organisation Drip by Drip and Agroho, its implementation partner in Bangladesh, through which we finance a mobile hospital that visits the villages close to our partner factories.

The mobile hospital aims not only to bring essential medical services to the villages, but also to promote health education, disease prevention, and community engagement. This brings long-term benefits that can gradually enhance well-being and quality of life.

We continue to support this project in 2024, including providing funding for doctors to spend longer time in the villages. We will also undertake a new project to tackle health issues at the root. Water wells will be built in 16 strategically chosen villages that already benefit from the mobile hospital, with the aim of improving access to safe drinking water for over 10,000 people.



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↑ Liaising with the community

In every village, at least one villager is selected to act as a spokesperson and liaise with the programme manager. Via this open channel, villagers can share their thoughts about the successes of the project and express any possible improvements or further needs. In one village, it was the village chief and his daughter who acted as the spokespeople, gathering feedback from the community and discussing it with the programme manager.

↓ A mobile hospital and pharmacy

More than just a means of transporting the doctors and nurses between villages, the mobile hospital truck is equipped to offer a discreet space for private consultations and even for minor surgeries. It also acts as a mobile pharmacy, with its stock of commonly prescribed medication. Fuel, maintenance, and the driver's salary are all covered by the programme financing.



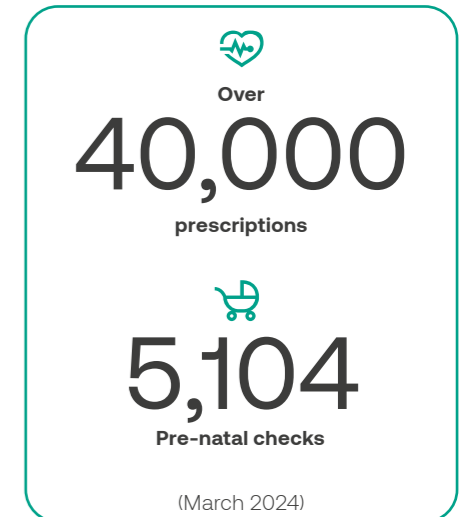
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← Regular visits for continuity of care

Every one to two months, each village is visited by the mobile hospital, accompanied by two doctors and two nurses. Villagers are informed in advance, and on the day of the visit, they gather at the designated site for an individual consultation. Registration books are used to centralise medical information and monitor the evolution of the villagers' health.



↓ Stanley/Stella's involvement on the ground

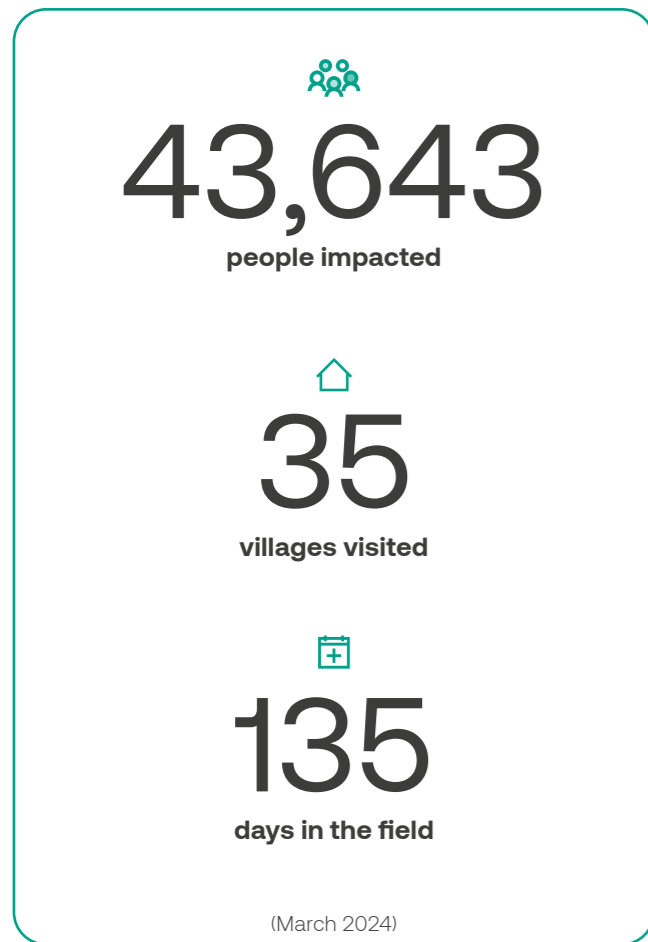
Our goal is to create real impact on the ground, and we want our involvement to be more than just financial. In addition to quarterly monitoring, we liaise with our partners Drip by Drip and Agroho to understand how the project is unfolding and discover ways we can help further.



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← Medical prescriptions and health checks

The mobile hospital has its own stock of commonly needed medication, all pre-financed by the project. Depending on the patient, the doctors will prescribe a treatment, distributed immediately e.g. for colds and fevers, gastric issues, scabies, rheumatoid arthritis, or vitamin deficiencies. Necessary equipment is also used for exams and tests e.g. blood pressure monitors, weighing scales, nebulisers, glucometers.



Our projects for the communities close to our headquarters

Our community engagement involves identifying and supporting those who need help in all the locations we operate in, including those close to our headquarters in Belgium.

To reach those in need, we have partnered with four Brussels-based associations that support refugees, migrants, homeless people and asylum seekers: BXL Refugees, Convivial, Solidarité Grands Froids, and Fedasil. Over the course of 2023, we donated a total of 26,000 garments to these associations.

In addition, to further instil circularity in how we operate, we collaborate with Circular.brussels so our old computers can be refurbished and distributed to local schools and philanthropic organisations in the Brussels Region. In 2023, we donated 19 devices that will be given a second life.

As we recently expanded our logistics network with new partner warehouses in Germany, France and the UK, we are currently exploring new charity partnerships close to those warehouse locations and hope to start new projects in 2024.

For more information about the main associations we currently support, visit their websites:

BXL Refugees
<https://www.bxlrefugees.be/en/>



Convivial
<https://www.convivial.be/>



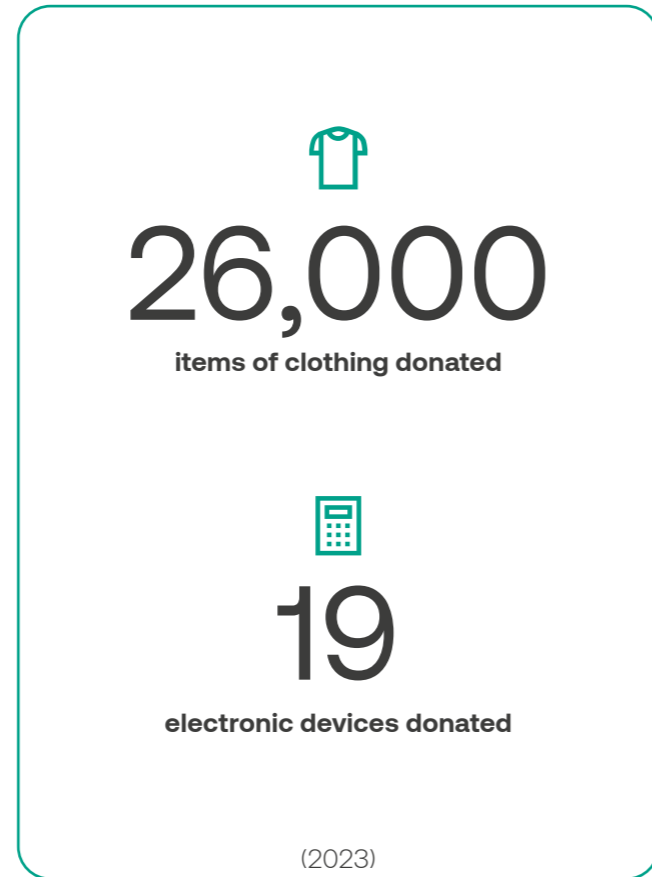
Solidarité Grands Froids
<https://www.solidaritegrandsfroids.be/fr/>



Fedasil
<https://www.fedasil.be/>



Circular.brussels
<https://www.circular.brussels/en/>



We believe that the textile and garment industry can act in a responsible way and care about people, the planet, and society. We don't need to tell you more about the reasons why we're fully committed to sourcing organic cotton, reducing our carbon footprint or urging our suppliers to pay a living wage to their workers because we believe these points are important to you too.

We thank you for joining us on our journey, and for sharing your support, enthusiasm and ideas. If you'd like to find out more about our path to sustainability or get involved:

Please contact us:

 stanleystella.com

 @wearestanleystella

 sustainability@stanleystella.com

Sustainability is an ongoing journey which can only be made possible through the commitment and ownership of all employees. We thank of course all employees of Stanley Stella not only for being part of this journey, but also for taking an active role in bringing our vision for a more respectful and sustainable textile industry to life.

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