

BETTER COTTON ASSURANCE PROGRAM

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT FIELD BOOK On IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

MEDIUM FARMS

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| **ORIENTATION** | *This field book supports BCI in collecting the necessary information while doing an external assessment on Improvement Requirements in the field (BCI needs to conduct credibility checks on the 10% highest PU performers at a national level). It indicates to Producer Unit the type of questions that the person conducting the assessment will ask to the PU manager, to farmers or workers, the documents that will be reviewed and what will be looked at during visual inspection. It should be printed and filled during the visit. The information collected will support the preparation of the external assessment report on improvement requirements for medium farms that presents the information from the visit in a summarised form.* |

1. **General Information about the visit**

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| Assessment Reference Number (the ref number should be country/state/PU Unit name/organisation conducting assessment/month-year of the visit |  |
| Assessment conducted by | BCI |
| Name of the person conducting the assessment (s): |
| Email: |
| Tel: |
| Date of assessment (dd/mm/yyyy) - start date |  |
| Date of assessment (dd/mm/yyyy) - end date |  |
| Country |  |
| State |  |
| Name of the Implementing Partner |  |
| Name of the Producer Unit |  |
| Names of the 3 medium farms visited |  |
| Exact location |  |

1. **Producer Unit manager interview & Documentation review**

Please refer to the medium farm self assessment report (to see the answers given by the Producer Unit on each question) to inform the discussion. Each question and answer should be discussed together with the PU manager and the associated documentation.

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| N° | Improvement requirement questionnaire | Documents | Comments |
| P1 | Number of best practices (validated locally) related to crop protection shared with farmers/pesticide applicators through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Dissemination material in local language on best practices |  |
| P2 | In the Producer Unit, the use of pesticides listed in WHO Class 1a and 1b and Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention is:  ( ) common ( ) limited ( ) Nil/banned  If applicable the time period for phasing out is  ( ) within the next year ( ) within the next 2-3 years ( ) 3 years or longer | Rotterdam convention and WHO class 1a and 1b list of pesticides available at PU level?  List of pesticides used in the unit  PU policy on the use of dangerous pesticides |  |
| P3 | Estimated number of farms where pesticides are prepared and applied by persons who correctly use appropriate protective and safety equipment  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Training records on PPE equipment  Distribution records of PPE  PU records on estimated level of adoption  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P4 | Estimated number of farms with separate and safe storage & cleaning sites available  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Internal policies and procedures  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P5 | Estimated number of farms applying pesticides in appropriate weather conditions, according to label directions with appropriate and well-maintained equipment  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Internal policies and procedures  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P6 | Estimated number of farms that dispose of pesticide containers safely  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Internal policies and procedures  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P7 | Number of best practices (validated locally) related to water management shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Dissemination material in local language on best practices |  |
| P8 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended management practices to ensure that water extraction does not cause adverse effects on groundwater or water bodies in accordance with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all ( ) not applicable | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Recommended Management practices on water extraction  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P9 | Number of best practices (validated locally) related to soil health management shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Dissemination material in local language on best practices |  |
| P10 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended soil management practices to maintain and enhance the structure and fertility of the soil in line with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Recommended soil management practices on soil fertility  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P11 | Estimated number of farms with nutrient application based on soil test results  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Soil test results |  |
| P12 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended soil management practices to minimise erosion  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all ( ) not applicable | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Recommended soil management practices to minimise erosion  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P13 | Number of best practices (validated locally) to enhance biodiversity on and surrounding the farm shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Dissemination material in local language on best practices |  |
| P14 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended practices to enhance biodiversity in line with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all  Increase in number and diversity of species can be demonstrated  ( ) yes ( ) no | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Recommended practices on biodiversity  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P15 | Estimated number of farms member of local group of landholders, or a biodiversity program that regularly works to improve the local landscape/ or biodiversity  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Meeting records  Membership records |  |
| P16 | Number of best practices (validated locally) to maximise fibre quality shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Dissemination material in local language on best practices |  |
| P17 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended practices to maximise fibre quality in line with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Recommended practices to maximise fibre quality  Training/awareness raising material for farmers |  |
| P18 | Number of alliance / partnership established by the Producer Unit with local organisations on Decent Work  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 | MoU, partnership agreement between partners |  |
| P19 | Number of outreach activities to specific target groups beyond farmers (e.g. women, children, casual workers, migrant workers, local authorities, school teachers, pesticide applicators, cotton pickers, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Records of outreach activities  Awareness raising material |  |
| P20 | Estimated number of farms with specific person or groups in place to actively promote Decent Work within their communities (e.g. Decent Work committees, child labour monitoring committees, local pressure group, lead farmer, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Meeting records, statutes of committees established, etc.  PU records on estimated level of adoption |  |
| P21 | Estimated number of farms with drinking and washing water facilities placed within reasonable proximity to the workplace and accessible to all  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption |  |
| P24 | Estimated number of farms with health and safety policy available and communicated to workers?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all  Estimated number of farms with formal workers training program that covers all relevant workplace health and safety requirements?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | PU records on estimated level of adoption  Health and safety policy at PU level?  Training records |  |
| P36 | The Producer Unit has a program in place (or is part of a program) to develop effective producer organisation and/or strengthen existing ones  ( ) yes ( ) no | Producer Organisation program |  |
| P37 | Estimated number of farms in the Producer Unit members of producer organisation  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Producer organisation records |  |
| P38 | Estimated number of Producer organisations with women holding a position of responsibility (e.g. decision making position, board membership, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Producer organisation records |  |
| P39 | Number of basic services provided by the producer organisation to their members (e.g. marketing, inputs, extension, storage, credit, market information, processing, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( )more than 3 | List of basic services provided |  |

1. **Farmers Interview**

(Reminder: 3 medium farms per PU need to be interviewed – If necessary this section can be printed for each individual interview and then summarised in the external assessment report)

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| N° | Improvement requirement questionnaire | Farmers Interview | Comments |
| P1 | Number of best practices (validated locally) related to crop protection shared with farmers/pesticide applicators through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Did you receive any documentation in local language on best practices related to crop protection? |  |
| P2 | In the Producer Unit, the use of pesticides listed in WHO Class 1a and 1b and Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention is:  ( ) common ( ) limited ( ) Nil/banned  If applicable the time period for phasing out is  ( ) within the next year ( ) within the next 2-3 years ( ) 3 years or longer | What pesticides did you use this season?  How do you select your pesticides?  List of pesticides |  |
| P3 | Estimated number of farms where pesticides are prepared and applied by persons who correctly use appropriate protective and safety equipment  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do you prepare your pesticides?  How does pesticides get applied on your farm?  What kind of protective and safety equipment do you have access to on your farm?  How do you know what type of safety and protective equipment you should be using? |  |
| P4 | Estimated number of farms with separate and safe storage & cleaning sites available  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Where do you keep your pesticides?  Where do you keep your pesticide application equipment?  Do you clean the application equipment after spraying? If yes how/where? |  |
| P5 | Estimated number of farms applying pesticides in appropriate weather conditions, according to label directions with appropriate and well-maintained equipment  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What weather conditions are important for spraying?  Are there weather conditions in which you do not apply pesticides? Why?  What type of instructions do you find on pesticide containers?  What time do you spray? |  |
| P6 | Estimated number of farms that dispose of pesticide containers safely  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do you dispose of your empty pesticide containers? |  |
| P7 | Number of best practices (validated locally) related to water management shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Did you receive any documentation in local language on best practices related to water management? |  |
| P8 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended management practices to ensure that water extraction does not cause adverse effects on groundwater or water bodies in accordance with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all ( ) not applicable | Do you need a licence to extract water? What conditions are attached to the licence? How does the water you extract for irrigation affect ground water or water bodies?  How much do you extract?  What problems are you facing? |  |
| P9 | Number of best practices (validated locally) related to soil health management shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Did you receive any documentation in local language on best practices related to soil health management? |  |
| P10 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended soil management practices to maintain and enhance the structure and fertility of the soil in line with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What techniques do you use to manage your soil?  When do you cultivate the soil?  What equipment do you use?  What is your rotation schedule? |  |
| P11 | Estimated number of farms with nutrient application based on soil test results  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do you decide which fertilisers to use?  How do you decide the amount of fertilisers?  How do you decide when to use fertilisers?  What tests are you able to do? Have done? |  |
| P12 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended soil management practices to minimise erosion  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all ( ) not applicable | What erosions problems do you have on your farms?  What do you do to manage erosion?  What do you do to stop water leaving your farm/ to protect off farm water bodies? |  |
| P13 | Number of best practices (validated locally) to enhance biodiversity on and surrounding the farm shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Did you receive any documentation in local language on best practices related to biodiversity? |  |
| P14 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended practices to enhance biodiversity in line with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all  Increase in number and diversity of species can be demonstrated  ( ) yes ( ) no | What invasive species (weeds and animals) are present on your farm?  What areas of significant biodiversity exist on or around your farm?  What practices do you use to enhance biodiversity on your farm? Around your farm? |  |
| P15 | Estimated number of farms member of local group of landholders, or a biodiversity program that regularly works to improve the local landscape/ or biodiversity  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Are you member of a local group to improve biodiversity? |  |
| P16 | Number of best practices (validated locally) to maximise fibre quality shared with farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) more than 2 | Did you receive any documentation in local language on best practices related to fibre quality? |  |
| P17 | Estimated number of farms adopting recommended practices to maximise fibre quality in line with continuous improvement plan  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What do you do to ensure that you grow good quality fibre?  What variety did you plant?  When did you obtain the seed?  How did you decide on which variety?  When did you plan?  When did you harvest? |  |
| P20 | Estimated number of farms with specific person or groups in place to actively promote Decent Work within their communities (e.g. Decent Work committees, child labour monitoring committees, local pressure group, lead farmer, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Do you have in your farm a specific person in place to promote Decent Work?  What types of committees have been established on decent work? |  |
| P21 | Estimated number of farms with drinking and washing water facilities placed within reasonable proximity to the workplace and accessible to all  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Where do persons working on the farm get drinking water from?  Where do persons working on the farm wash after work? |  |
| P22 | Estimated number of farms with workers members of a trade union  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Are the workers members of a trade union? |  |
| P23 | Estimated number of farms providing access and reasonable facilities for workers’ representatives  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | are there particular facilities for workers’ representatives on the farm? |  |
| P24 | Estimated number of farms with health and safety policy available and communicated to workers?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all  Estimated number of farms with formal workers training program that covers all relevant workplace health and safety requirements?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What are the main health and safety problems for workers on your farm? How familiar are workers with health and safety issues? What type of occupational health and safety training is offered to workers? What evidence is there of occupational health and safety training given to workers (e.g. records)? |  |
| P25 | Estimated number of farms providing to workers a clean place to eat, clean toilets, potable drinking water, adequate living quarters (if they reside on the farms) and access to adequate medical care at no charge?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do you provide workers’ basic requirements? |  |
| P26 | Estimated number of farms who have conducted a formal assessment of all potential workplace hazards that has led to safe work practices procedures being established for all hazards?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all  Estimated number of farms maintaining records of any accidents and occupational diseases?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do you provide a safe working environment to workers?  How do you minimise hazards in the workplace?  What type of records are being maintained? |  |
| P27 | Estimated number of farms with accident and emergencies procedures including first aid and access to appropriate transportation to medical facilities?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What do you do in case a worker has an accident on your farm?  How do you reach medical personnel in case of emergencies? |  |
| P28 | Estimated number of farms aware of the legally applicable minimum wage/s (statutory national or regional minimum wage applicable to agriculture, collectively agreed wage, industry minimum)?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all  Estimated number of farms with employees paid more than 15% higher than the applicable minimum wage?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do your wages compare to those of other farms in the area? How do you know? What is the applicable legal minimum wage or regional norm for your farm? How are wages negotiated between you and your workers?  How much are you workers paid? |  |
| P29 | Estimated number of farms providing piece rate adequate for workers to earn the applicable national minimum wage or regional norm (whichever is higher) during normal working hours and under normal operating conditions?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all ( ) not applicable | How are piecework rates for your workers agreed and calculated? How do these rates compare with the national minimum wage or regional norm? Do you have records showing how piece rates / prices are agreed and calculated? |  |
| P30 | Estimated number of farms with workers paid regularly in cash or in a form that is convenient to them?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | How do you pay your workers? When are payments made? What evidence is there that workers understand and agree on the mode of payment? |  |
| P31 | Estimated number of farms providing equal wages to people who perform the same job, irrespective of gender?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What differences are there in the type of contracts and payments offered to male and female workers? What evidence is there that the principle of equal pay for equal work is understood and observed? |  |
| P32 | Estimated number of farms aware of minimum legal requirements on working conditions for farm workers (including requirements relating to working hours and overtime)?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all ( ) no legislation available | Do you know what are the legal requirements on working conditions in your country/region? |  |
| P33 | Estimated number of farms with workers employed with written contract?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | What do you and your workers know about the national / state legislation with regards to contracts of employment? What type of employment contracts are offered to workers (verbal? written?) and why? |  |
| P34 | Estimated number of farms keeping records on the following:   1. details on legal requirements for wages, including rates, working hours and overtime requirements 2. information on wages (including form of payment) 3. date of birth (age), 4. gender, 5. working times (working hours and overtime) 6. date of entry and period of employment 7. number of permanent/seasonal workers.   ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Record keeping |  |
| P35 | Estimated number of farms with a policy that deals with how temporary, seasonal and sub-contracted workers are treated?  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Policy on temporary workers |  |
| P37 | Estimated number of farms in the Producer Unit members of producer organisation  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | Are you member of a producer organisation? |  |
| P38 | Estimated number of Producer organisations with women holding a position of responsibility (e.g. decision making position, board membership, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) a few ( ) some ( ) most ( ) all | In your organisation are women holding a position of responsibility? |  |
| P39 | Number of basic services provided by the producer organisation to their members (e.g. marketing, inputs, extension, storage, credit, market information, processing, etc.)  ( ) none ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( )more than 3 | What type of services are provided by the Producer organisation? |  |

1. **Workers Interview**

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| N° | What to ask? | Comments |
| P.1  Best practices | *For workers that work directly with Crop Protection (e.g. pesticide applicators)*  Did you receive any awareness raising material from the Producer Unit? |  |
| P.3  use of PPE | *For workers that work directly with Crop Protection*  Have you received the necessary PPE for preparing and applying pesticides?  Do you have access to appropriate facilities for washing yourself after handling/applying pesticides?  Did you receive training (and refresher training) on safe work procedures and the use, maintenance, and proper storage of PPE? |  |
| P4  Storage, handling, cleaning | *For workers that work directly with Crop Protection*  How do you clean pesticides containers and application equipment?  Where do you store it? |  |
| P6  Pesticide containers | *For workers that work directly with Crop Protection*  How do you clean the empty pesticide containers?  Are they triple-rinsed?  Where are the empty containers disposed of? |  |
| P16  Best practices | Have you received any training or instruction about what to do to preserve the fibre quality? |  |
| P20  Strengthened local capacities | Is there anyone available in the community to promote decent work (e.g. decent work committees, child labour monitoring committees, local pressure group, etc. )? |  |
| P21 Health and safety | Do you have access to potable and washing water? |  |
| P22  Trade union membership | Are you a member of a Trade Union?  Do you have regular meetings with your employer? |  |
| P23  Access by union representatives | Do you know if the union representatives visit the farm?  Where are the meetings conducted with them? |  |
| P24  Health and safety policy and training | Did you receive any formal training program on health and safety requirements?  Is there a policy available at farm level? |  |
| P25  Basic requirements | What do you think about the places that the farm offers to eat and to live?  Do you have access to medical care? |  |
| P27  Accidents and emergencies | Do you know the procedures in case of an accident or emergency? |  |
| P28  Wages | Are you aware of the legal/minimum wage for the type of work you are performing?  Is your wage equal or higher than the minimum wage?  What is the average wage that you generally receive? |  |
| P30  Form of payment | How do you receive your payment? Cash or bank deposit?  Is that your preferred option? |  |
| P31  Equal pay for equal work | Do you know if there is any wages difference between men and women who perform the same work? |  |
| P32  Working conditions | Does the Farmer or manager meet with you to discuss about working conditions (including discussion on working hours and overtime)?  Do you feel comfortable to talk to the farmer or manager about working conditions?  How satisfied are you with your current working conditions? Are they better or worse than before? |  |
| P33  Employment contracts | Do you have a written and regular contract with the farmer? |  |
| P34 Record keeping | Do you know if the farmer keeps records such as your age, wage, working times, etc.? |  |
| P35  Temporary and seasonal workers | Do you know if temporary workers receive the same rights and treatment than regular workers? |  |

# VISUAL INSPECTION

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| Improvement Requirements | Key issues to be addressed during visual inspection | Comments/description – (Remember to take photos) |
| Crop Protection and Decent Work | Work practices on the farm that may affect the health and safety of workers (e.g. preparation and application of pesticides, personal protective equipment usage and conditions, re-entry periods for treated areas, working hours, etc.) |  |
| Crop Protection | Type of pesticides used |  |
| Crop protection and soil | Storage and disposal, recycling of pesticides and fertiliser used (dedicated areas, pesticides containers, contamination risks, etc.) |  |
| Water | Water management practices observed on water extraction |  |
| Soil | Soil management techniques observed in the farm (e.g. tillage, cover crops, crop rotation, choice of tillage equipment, eroded areas and areas at risk of erosion, etc.) and fertiliser used |  |
| Natural Habitat | Natural habitat management observed in the farm (e.g. protection of riparian land, biodiversity, control of invasive species, wildlife, etc.) |  |
| Fibre Quality | Management practices to maximise fibre quality observed on the farm |  |
| Decent Work | Type of labour used in the farm (children/young persons, pregnant women, permanent, temporary, migrant workers) and work performed by each of them |  |
| Decent Work | Living space provided by the farmer to workers – rest area, access to potable and washing water, clean toilets, places to eat |  |
| Decent Work | Existence of specific group/person to promote decent work (e.g. decent work committees, child labour monitoring committees, local pressure group, etc.) |  |
| Decent Work | Facilities for workers’ representative |  |
| Decent Work | Medical and other facilities provided to workers, availability of first aid kits/supplies, transport available in case of accident |  |
| Decent Work | Storage and display of appropriate documents for workers (marking of danger areas, display of policies and procedures, signposts about accidents and emergencies, etc.) |  |