Better Cotton Assessment Report Template

For use with v2.1 of the Better Cotton P&C

Smallholder Farms

# Introduction

This reporting template is required for each Licensing Assessment (LA) or Surveillance Assessment (SVA) carried out on Smallholder Producer Units (by Better Cotton teams or third-party approved verifiers). Better Cotton has developed an optional *Better Cotton Assessment Field Checklist* which may also be used to help guide the assessment process and record notes in the field.

For detailed guidance on the assessment of Principle 6 Decent Work, please refer to a separate [Decent Work Assessment Guidance Pack](https://bettercottoninitiative.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/CountryProgrammes/EuceVaXS1aRKsyEt9IBEfGMByhu0Yk91ckrch23Mn0bdfg?e=hbrK2P) developed by Better Cotton, which includes indicator level guidance on an expanded set of indicators under Core Indicator 6.3.1 on forced labour, farmer and worker interview guides and standard operating procedures for incidents/risks of forced labour.

Types of Indicators

This reporting template covers all **Core Indicators** from the Better Cotton P&C v2.1; organized under the 7 Principles.

Advice on navigating this document

Please turn on the ‘Navigation Pane’ (under ‘View’ menu) to allow easy referencing of Indicators under each Principle.

Summary Information

**NOTE: Once you have completed the entire form, please save as a PDF using the Reference Number as the file name.**

## 1. General Information about the assessment

Type of assessment: Select assessment type

Season of assessment: Select season

Reference number:

*(Format: Country code\_Assessment type\_PU/LF code\_Organisation conducting visit, if Better Cotton enter “BCI assessor”,\_season of assessment, e.g.* ***IN\_LA\_BCI\_TU085\_BCI assessor\_2023-24****)*

Implementing Partner:

Local Partner (if applicable):

PU Code:

Assessment Conducted by: Lead Assessor:       Assessor 2:       Assessor 3:

Agency/Institution:       Telephone/ email:

Translation/interpretation: Name of translator/ interpreter:       Translation/interpretation company:

Assessment Date:       Country:       State:

Format of the Assessment?  On-site  Remote  Hybrid

3 LGs Visited:

Names of the 15 Farmers visited:

Please explain briefly how these LGs and Farmers were selected for visits:

## 

## 2. Summary Outcome of the Visit

**Summary of key findings (strengths and challenges) based on Assessors observations:**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Overall outcome of Assessment based on Assessor’s observations:**

Compliant: *assessor has observed compliance on all indicators*

Compliant with Incidental: *assessor has observed at least one incidental non-conformity and no systemic non-conformity*

Systemic Non-Conformity: *assessor has observed at least one systemic non-conformity*

**Escalation of incidental non-conformities:**

*Note that under Better Cotton assurance procedures, incidental non-conformities (NC) that re-occur at the next assessment can be escalated to Systemic non-conformities by the Better Cotton Assurance team, unless there is clear evidence that the PU has made significant progress to address the issue, or the NC relates to a separate finding (under the same indicator).*

Are any incidental non-conformities observed also found in previous assessments on the same PU?  Yes  No

Does assessor recommend escalation of at least one incidental non-conformity to systemic non-conformity? Yes  No

**List of non-conformities:**

*Please list all non-conformities below and indicate the non-conformity grading as per assessor’s observations. If any incidental non-conformities are recurrent from previous assessments on the same PU and assessor recommends escalation, please also tick option “Escalate incidental to systemic NC” under Comments.*

| **Indicator No.** | **Description of Non-Conformity** | **Non-Conformity Grading** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |
|  |  | Incidental  Systemic | Escalate incidental to systemic NC |

## 3. Information collected from external sources *(Required only for third-party verification)*

Please detail contact information for individuals/organizations consulted, and information gathered that relates to the Better Cotton Principles and Criteria and/or farmers that have poor or good practices.

Source 1 Name:       Contact Info:       Info gathered:

Source 2 Name:       Contact Info:       Info gathered:

Source 3 Name:       Contact Info:       Info gathered:

# P1: Crop Protection

| **Indicator No.** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence/ Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core**  **1.1.1** A locally adapted and time-bound plan, based on agro-ecosystem analysis and which identifies appropriate specific practices to implement the five components of Integrated Pest Management, is established.  *[Reference to Criterion 1.1 The Producer must adopt an Integrated Pest Management Programme that includes all of the following principles:*  *(i) growing a healthy crop;*  *(ii) preventing the build-up of pest populations and of the spread of disease;*  *(iii) preserving and enhancing populations of beneficial organisms;*  *(iv) regular field observations of the crop health and key pest and beneficial insects;*  *(v) managing resistance.]* | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.1.3** A timeline for implementing the 5 components of the Integrated Pest Management plan is established. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.1.4** There is no calendar or random spraying. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.2.1** All pesticides used are registered nationally for the use on cotton. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.2.2** All pesticides used are correctly labelled in at least one *de facto* or *de jure* official national or applicable official regional language. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.3.1** Pesticides listed in: (i) Annex A and B of the Stockholm Convention; or (ii) Annexes of the Montreal Protocol; or (iii) Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention; are not used. | Select grading |  |
| ***Core***  **1.4.1** The Producer has a plan to phase out by 2021 pesticides listed in category 1 of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS); 1a of the World Health Organization classification (WHO). | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.4.2** The Producer has a plan to phase out by 2024 pesticides listed in category 2 of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS); 1b of the World Health Organization classification (WHO). | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.5.1** The Producer has a plan to phase out Pesticides defined as carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic (CMR) substances according to Categories 1a and 1b of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **1.6.1** The Producer must ensure that any person who prepares and applies pesticides is: (i) Healthy; (ii) Skilled and trained in the application of pesticides; (iii) 18 or older; (iv) not pregnant or nursing. | Select grading | hhhhh |
| **Core**  **1.7.2** Minimum Personal Protective Equipment is worn while preparing and applying pesticides, which includes protection of the following body parts from dermal absorption, ingestions and inhalation: (i) Face and airways: eyes, ear canal, nose, scalp (ii) Limbs: arms, forearms, palms, legs, feet  (iii) Abdomen and genital area. | Select grading | * ***How does the PU check whether PPE is actually used in practice?*** * ***How many farmers were consulted? How many of these cover all body parts vs only some body parts?*** * ***What are the major challenges in adoption, and what is the PU planning to address these?*** |

# P2: Water Stewardship

| **Indicator** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence/ Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core**  **2.1.1** A time-bound Water Stewardship Plan is defined that addresses each of the following components: (i) Mapping and understanding of water resources; (ii) Managing soil moisture; (iii) Applying efficient irrigation practices to optimise water productivity (applicable to irrigation farms only); (iv) Managing water quality; (v) Engaging in collaboration and collective action to promote sustainable water use. | Select grading | * ***Is the plan realistic and locally-relevant?*** * ***Are activities implemented as per the plan?*** * ***Are FFs and Farmers aware of key points in the plan? (specify how many were consulted)*** |
| **Core**  **2.1.2** A timeline for implementing the five components of the Water Stewardship Plan is established. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **2.1.9** Opportunities for collaboration and collective actions (beyond the Producer’s unit of production) to achieve sustainable water use are identified. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **2.1.10** By March 2022, collaboration and collective actions (beyond the Producer’s unit of production) towards local sustainable use of water are implemented as per opportunities identified in the Water Stewardship Plan. | Select grading |  |

# P3: Soil Management

| **Indicator** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence/ Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core 3.1.1** A time-bound soil management plan is defined that addresses each of the following components:  (i) Identifying and analysing soil type;  (ii) Maintaining and enhancing soil structure; (iii) Maintaining and enhancing soil fertility;  (iv) Continuously improving nutrient cycling. | Select grading | * ***Is the plan realistic and locally-relevant?*** * ***Are activities implemented as per the plan?*** * ***Are FFs and Farmers aware of key points in the plan? (specify how many were consulted)*** |
| **Core 3.1.2** A timeline for implementing the four components of the soil management plan is established | Select grading |  |
| **Core 3.1.3** Soil testing is conducted that includes NPK and pH analysis. A minimum of 1 soil test per Learning Group on a minimum of 20% of the Learning Groups within a Producer Unit must be conducted each year, and with different Learning Groups each year, so that all Learning Groups are covered over a period of 5 years. | Select grading | * ***If soil testing has been carried out, are the PU Manager and FFs knowledgeable on how to use the results?*** * ***Do farmers understand how to use the findings to improve soil health?*** |

# P4: Biodiversity and land use

| **Indicator** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence/ Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core**  **4.1.1** A time-bound Biodiversity Management Plan that addresses each of the five following components, is defined: (i) Identifying and mapping biodiversity resources; (i) Identifying and restoring degraded areas; (iii) Enhancing populations of beneficial insects, as per the Integrated Pest Management plan (Principle 1); (iv) Ensuring crop rotation; (v) Protecting riparian areas. | Select grading | * ***Is the plan realistic and locally-relevant?*** * ***Are activities implemented as per the plan?*** * ***Do FFs and farmers have a good understanding of biodiversity and actions that can improve it? (specify how many were consulted)*** |
| **Core**  **4.1.2** A timeline for implementing the five components of the Biodiversity Management Plan is established. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **4.1.3** Biodiversity resources are identified and mapped. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **4.1.4** Degraded areas on the farm are identified. | Select grading | * ***How were degraded areas identified? (i.e. via survey? Site visits?)*** * ***Do farmers and FFs understand this concept? (specify numbers of FFs and farmers consulted)*** * ***Did visual visits or farmer interviews suggest there are degraded areas the PU is not yet aware of?*** |
| **Core**  **4.2.1** In case of any proposed conversion from non-agricultural land to agricultural land, the BCI High Conservation Value (HCV) risk-based simplified approach must be implemented | Select grading |  |

# P5: Fibre Quality

| **Indicator** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence/ Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core**  **5.1.1** Good management practices for the harvest and storage of seed cotton are adopted. | Select grading |  |

# P6: Decent Work

| **Indicator** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence/ Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core**  **6.1.2** The Producer has a time-bound plan for the prevention of child labour in accordance with ILO Convention 138. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.1.3** There are no workers below the age of 15 (14 in certain specified countries), or below the minimum age for employment defined by local law (whichever is higher) unless they meet all of the following conditions:  (i) the child is helping on his/her own family’s farm;  (ii) the child's work is structured so as to enable him/her to attend school;   (iii) the child's work should not be so demanding as to undermine his/her education;  (iv) the child should not perform tasks that are hazardous for him/her because of his/her age;   (v) the child must be guided – both in terms of learning skills and supervision of tasks – by a family member;   (vi) the child has received appropriate training. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.1.4** A written child labour policy, specifying under which circumstances and for which tasks children can or cannot work or be employed and why, has been communicated to farmers/workers/employees. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.2.1** Hazardous work is not conducted by workers under 18. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.3.1** All forms of forced or compulsory, including bonded or trafficked labour, are prohibited. | Select grading | ***Questions to ask Farmers:***   1. ***Do you use any workers, for example to help with the harvest? If so, how do you recruit them?*** 2. ***Do you use labour brokers? Do you check if they have a legal permit to work as labour brokers? Do you have an agreement with them?*** 3. ***Do you give workers payment advances?*** 4. ***Have you been given a loan by the landlord?*** 5. ***How are workers paid – directly or through a someone else (e.g. labour broker)?*** 6. ***Do you keep workers’ ID originals or copies?***   ***Summary of information gathered from questions to farmers:***    ***Questions to ask Workers:***   1. ***How did you get this job? Did you have to pay anyone?*** 2. ***Did you receive a payment advance or loan from a labour broker or farmer?*** 3. ***Please, describe your average working day.*** 4. ***How frequently do you get paid?*** 5. ***How long will you work on this job/farm?***   ***Summary of information gathered from questions to workers:***    ***Other general observations and summary comments:*** |
| **Core**  **6.4.3** The Producer Unit has a time-bound plan to improve the position of disadvantaged groups. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.5.2** There is no evidence of any policy, practice or customary rule that results in the payment of unequal wages on the basis of gender to workers who perform the same job. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.13.1** Farmers in the PU are aware of the legally applicable minimum wage/s (statutory national or regional minimum wage applicable to agriculture, collectively agreed wage, industry minimum). | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **6.19.1** Use of corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion, sexual harassment or physical or verbal abuse or harassment of any kind, is prohibited. | Select grading | ***Questions to ask PU Manager/FF:***   1. ***Have you received any complaints from workers about working conditions?***   ***Questions to ask workers:***   1. ***How can you raise complaints if there is an issue with the farmer or the person who helped you get this job (e.g. labour broker)?***   ***Summary of information gathered from questions:***    ***Other general observations and summary comments:*** |

# P7: Management System

| **Indicator** | **Grading** | **Specific Evidence / Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Core**  **7.1.1** A Continuous Improvement Plan is available, implemented and monitored according to the applicable BCI Continuous Improvement planning process, and reviewed annually. | Select grading | ***How was the CIP developed? Did this follow the BCI CIP process?***    ***Are the CIP priority areas relevant and realistic?***    ***Are CIP priorities well understood by the PU Manager and Field Facilitators?***    ***Is there evidence that the PU is making progress against priority areas in the CIP? (consider farmer and field facilitator feedback)***    ***Other comments:*** |
| **Core**  **7.2.1** A training plan identifying the key sustainability issues to be addressed for the Producer, the name of training provider(s), scheduling and expected participants is available and implemented. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.2.2** Training materials for Better Cotton Initiative farmers and workers are available to cover Better Cotton Initiative Principles and Criteria Core Indicators, with a focus on key sustainability issues in the local context. Best practices (validated locally) related to production are shared with Better Cotton Initiative farmers through appropriate dissemination material in local language. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.2.3** The Producer reports annual data on number of Better Cotton Initiative farmers and workers trained by gender and topic to demonstrate the implementation of the training plan. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.2.4** The Producer operates a system to:  (i) Assess and document the level of adoption of practices promoted through training;   (ii) Identify and address the risks associated with adopting the practices promoted through training;  (iii) Evaluate the training materials continuously to improve their content and delivery. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.3.1** The Producer collects and maintains accurate and complete Producer Unit data in the format required by the Better Cotton Initiative. This will include (but not be limited to) name and contact information of Producer Unit Manager; list of farmers organised into Learning Groups (for smallholder Production Units); age, gender, education, level of farmers; expected seed cotton production per farmer and area under cultivation; geo-location of Producer Units; names of gins. The Producer Unit data is updated annually, at the latest by the end of sowing. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.3.2** The Producer maintains a farm-level record keeping mechanism (e.g. Famer Field Book) for essential production data on inputs and outputs in an accurate manner. | Select grading | ***Additional questions to be answered by verifier/assessor:***  ***Does the PU use a Farmer Field Book template which includes all RIR indicators?***  Select option    ***Are previous season’s Farmer Field Book available for auditing?***  Select option    ***Assessor to indicate the number of the Farmer Field Books (or farmer records) reviewed in total (provide a number below).***    ***How many of them were complete and up-to-date for the current season (please indicate a percentage)***  **Complete:**  Select option  **Up to date:**  Select option |
| **Core**  **7.3.3** The Producer operates a system to collect, compile and report complete and accurate Results Indicator data in accordance with the Results Indicator Reporting template. | Select grading | ***Additional questions to be answered by verifier/assessor***  ***How many years has the PU Manager been in their role (record number of months or years below)?***    ***Does the PU Manager’s responsibilities include checking that the RIR data received is complete and of good quality?***  Select option    ***Can the PU Manager say what a completed RIR data set would include?***  Select option |
| **Core**  **7.3.4** The Producer creates and maintains a profile of the farm labour force, including estimates of numbers of workers, as per the Better Cotton Initiative defined worker categories and disaggregated by gender. The labour profile is updated annually, at the latest at the end of sowing. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.3.5** The Producer ensures that all farmers within the PU maintain receipts of sales of Better Cotton, including the buyer name, date, and volume, for at least one year and is able to collect and submit these sale records to BCI upon request. | Select grading |  |
| **Core**  **7.4.1** The Producer operates a system to:  (i) Identify and address the risks of non-conformity with core indicators;  (ii) Plan and enforce the implementation of Corrective Actions resulting from monitoring activities. | Select grading |  |

# List of workers interviewed

Please provide details of workers interviewed – if no worker interviews were carried out, please explain why.

Note that worker names can be excluded if necessary due to confidentiality; in this case please provide a description of the worker’s role instead.

Worker role/ responsibilities       Location of interview       Topics covered/ Comments

Worker role/ responsibilities       Location of interview       Topics covered/ Comments

Worker role/ responsibilities       Location of interview       Topics covered/ Comments

Worker role/ responsibilities       Location of interview       Topics covered/ Comments

Worker role/ responsibilities       Location of interview       Topics covered/ Comments

# **Women interviewed**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Role | Number |
| PU staff |  |
| Farmers |  |
| Workers |  |