

## Climate change adaptation of women smallholders and cotton producers from Vidarbha region, Maharashtra State, India

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**Aims and Objectives:** The aim of the project is to promote environmentally sound, climate-resilient and inclusive agriculture among cotton producers of Vidarbha region.

**Location :** Buldhana District, Maharashtra

**Statistics :** The project will work directly with 1500 tribal cotton farmers (>50% women) and their households in 10 project villages of Jalgaon Jamod block of Buldhana district in Vidarbha (Maharashtra).

**Project Duration:** Three years, 2018 – 2020 (crop season will cover from 2019 season)

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### Project Objectives:

- To enhance the capacities (including knowledge and skills), capabilities and confidence of women smallholders to engage in environmentally sound and climate-resilient cotton production.
- To strengthen inclusive, strong and effective collectives for building solidarity, promoting gender equity and facilitating access of women smallholders from poor and vulnerable households to resilience-building resources, services, and opportunities.
- To build an enabling environment of supportive cotton value chain actors for adoption of sustainable cotton production practices by tribal women smallholders and their communities

### Challenges we seek to address:

- Poor Production practices
- Farmers falls in trap of vicious cycle of input suppliers
- Rainfed cotton cultivation practices
- Lack of knowledge on environmental vulnerabilities
- Poor post-harvest management and marketing
- Involvement of child labour
- Migration of agricultural labour
- Lack of convergence amongst relevant stakeholders

### CARE'S Solution:

The Environmentally sound climate resilient cotton production practices (ESCRCPP) package will include modules on good practices for cotton pre-production to postproduction. The proposed ESCRCPP package will comprise of adoption of ecofriendly preproduction aspects (soil testing, green manuring/ farm yard manure), seed selection (preferably organic or improved variety), seed treatment to implementation of organic package of practices (biofertilizers, biopesticides/ biocontrol based pest management (IPM), pheromone traps, bird perches, etc.), high

density plantation, efficient utilization of water under rainfed condition, scientific application of fertilizer and pesticide etc. The post production elements of ESCRCP include activities like maintenance of contamination free cotton fiber, market linkage development with ginners and strengthening and linkage development of community institutions with other allied stakeholders to make these practices sustainable.

A learning group of 15 women smallholders will be organized around each 0.5 acre demonstration plot and one to two seasons of learning cycles will be completed to enhance knowledge, skills and practices of women smallholders and their cotton growing households for practicing ESCRCP.

The collectives (Self Help Groups of women and Farmers' Groups) will provide platforms for reinforcing and propagating these learning as well as the delivery of women's literacy and leadership interventions, meant to enhance women's confidence, self-esteem and efficacy for pursuing environmentally sound and climate resilient agricultural production. These collectives will also be strengthened to facilitate access of women smallholders from poor and vulnerable households to resilience-building resources, services, and opportunities.

CARE will also work to develop a supportive ecosystem of actors, which include men within households and communities, government functionaries and market actors to provide necessary package of inputs, services, tools and technologies to women smallholders - intent on shifting from the current set of input intensive and environmentally harmful cotton production practices.

Also, particular efforts in terms of specific interventions will be made to ensure zero tolerance to child labour in cotton production in project villages.

Finally, with consideration that the proposed production practices are well-entrenched in the rural economy, with markets and public extension system driving the farmers, CARE proposes to make use of multi-stakeholder platforms to disseminate the learning and experiences of participating women smallholders and provide evidence to push for environmentally sound and climate resilient cotton production in the district as a whole.