

TAKING CHILD LABOUR OUT OF FARMS

Challenge

Despite being the second largest producer of cotton in the world, India is still dominated by a large number of small farms; usually less than 2 acres. This small size makes automation economically unviable for majority of the farmers. The only option left is manual labour.

Cotton farms in India have also involved child labour during various stages of farming: sowing, weeding and cotton picking. What makes child labour at farms different from other situations, is the fact that quite often the children work on the farms owned by their own family. Although in such situations, the work environment is slightly better than in conventional child labour, it is still robbing the children off their childhood and education. Child labour in cotton farms also have an adverse health impact on children over a period of time.

Intervention

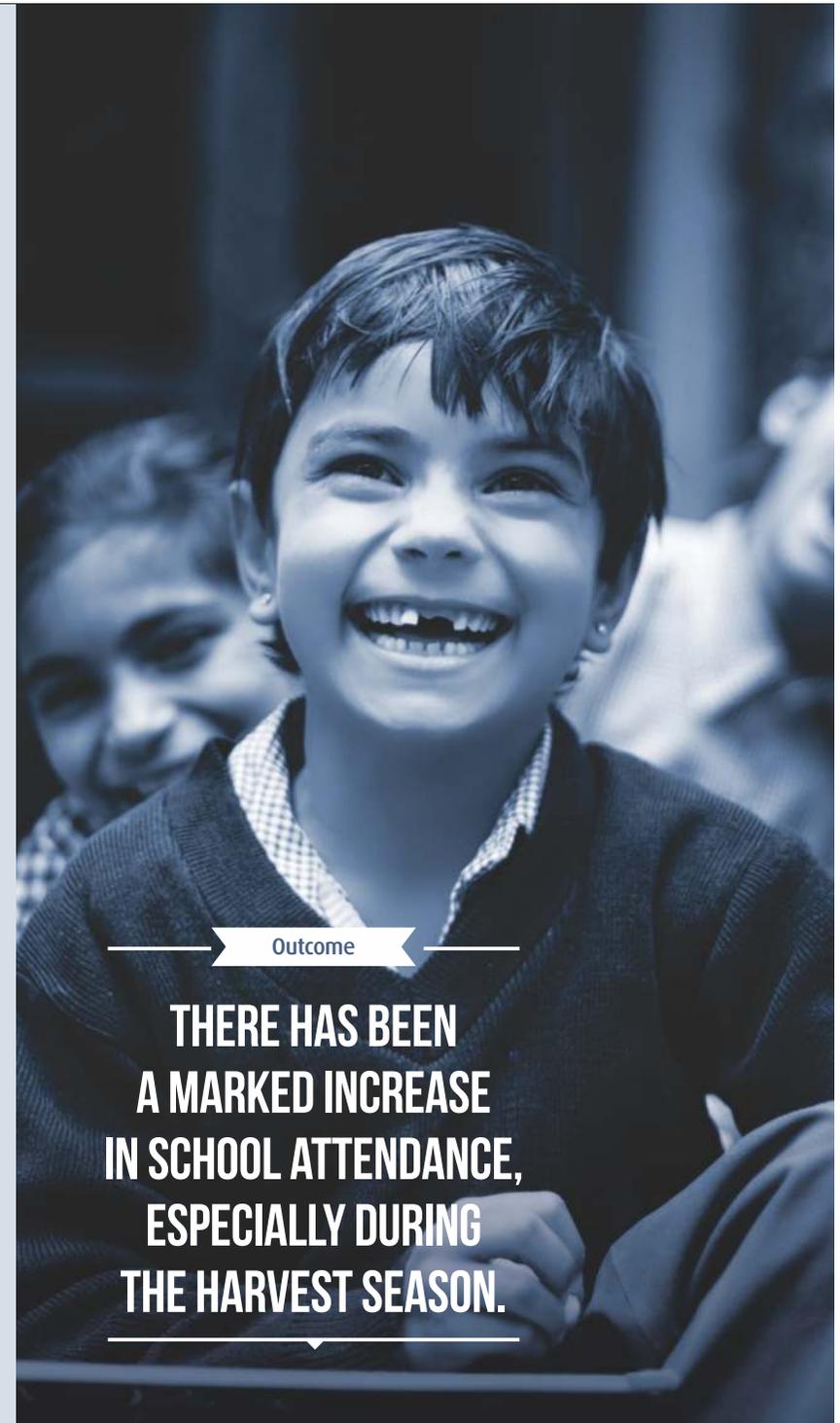
At the inception of the supply chain project of Organic and BCI cotton farming at Akola, we did a detailed study by conducting field surveys in different villages, to analyse the issue of children working in the farms.



To ensure its discontinuation, we set up a dedicated team which is based in the farming area to sensitise farmers about the adverse impact of involving child labour, and benefits of education and schooling through:

- Regular training programmes, conducting events like street plays, essay competition, film screening, children's summer camps, etc.
- Formation of child group and its awareness training, learning group awareness training
- Interactions with labourers to ensure that they don't send their children to work in farms
- School visits & interaction with school authorities

Our procurement policies are in line with our no child labour policy. We are also implementing mechanisation projects to reduce manual labour, thus impacting child labour. Regular visits and monitoring at the farms and the schools, ensure that no child below 18 years is employed in the farm.



Outcome

**THERE HAS BEEN
A MARKED INCREASE
IN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE,
ESPECIALLY DURING
THE HARVEST SEASON.**