



## COTTON 2040

### MASTERCLASS 6 SUMMARY

## Social Value and Community Vulnerability



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This document presents a summary of the recent masterclass “Social Value & Community Vulnerability”. The masterclass, the final in a series of six co-hosted by [WTW](#) and [Forum for the Future](#) in October 2022, provided guidance on how brands and retailers can ensure climate adaptation strategies reflect the needs of those who are reliant on the sector.

This masterclass emphasised that **cotton producers and other stakeholders in the value chain are crucial for managing climate risk and building a resilient cotton sector**. The reality is that the cotton sector relies on small-scale farmers working in climate vulnerable countries. Without concerted efforts from all industry actors, the potential for climate-driven social disruption to cotton production is high.

**Climate risks may undermine the ability of producers to meet cotton demand.** As climate risks are global and systemic, this is an issue that cannot be avoided. Investing in communities to increase the social and environmental conditions is essential to build sustainable, climate resilient supply chains.

The masterclass showed how central social value is for the cotton climate resilience by showing how it related to each of the topics covered in the previous five sessions. This includes improving the flows of information across supply chains and participatory ‘community-based’ engagement, extending financing to producers to transition to regenerative practices, creating meaningful ‘seats at the table’ in decision-making, regularly engaging with actors in the supply chain to embed a sense of buy-in and committing to social justice and equitable climate adaption measures.



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## Key Takeaways

- The cotton sector is heavily reliant on small-scale farmers, many of whom face an increasingly volatile set of environmental, economic and social circumstances.
- The circumstances in which cotton producers are operating in can impact our capabilities to effectively and collectively rise to meet the urgent needs of the cotton sector.
- Investing in key social aspects of production can be a form of climate adaptation. Measures include improving flows of information across supply chains, community engagement, extending financing for transition, and changes to governance and meaningful representation.

“Without acknowledgement of the social circumstances which underpin the cotton sector, and subsequently meaningful action and design, effective climate adaptation is improbable.”

- Hannah Cunneen, Forum for the Future