


Make Small And Marginal Farmers Resilient



An exploration of the **5 major challenges small and marginal farmers face**, along with possible solutions. And, how to make knowledge and expertise regarding these **solutions accessible to farmers.**



Why this handbook?

To amplify challenges faced by farmers, highlight the importance of resilient agriculture systems and investment required to implement some of these solutions and strategies to build resilience of farmers.

What do we mean by Building Resilience?

Resilience here means to recover from adverse effects and setbacks, particularly those stemming from climate change, such as intense storms/hail storms and prolonged droughts. For smallholder farmers, such events can deplete already limited resources including finances, seeds, and livestock.

Context

Farmers encounter numerous challenges in farming, ranging from natural factors like climate change, soil erosion, and loss of biodiversity to human-made issues such as water scarcity, insufficient funds, and labour shortages. These problems are often worsened by a lack of awareness, slow adoption of modern techniques, and difficulties accessing capital and support from government agencies. While these challenges may not be completely eliminated, they can be eased by promoting smarter farming methods, sustainable resource management, and improving communication and cooperation between rural farmers, government bodies, and financial institutions. **At CAC, we believe in empowering civil society organisations in fostering continuous and harmonised systemic action necessary to build resilient communities.**

Resilience According To #CommunityActionCollab

The ability of marginalised and vulnerable households to absorb, bounce back from, or adapt to any disruption without compromising their long-term wellbeing

5 Impact of Climate Change



PROBLEM

- Increased frequency of extreme weather events (droughts, floods, storms, heatwave)
- Reduced productivity and income for farmers

SOLUTIONS

Investing in climate-resilient crops, pest management practices, and water management techniques. Access to crop insurance, and risk pooling network. Provide weather data to farmers.

Kashiram Kushwaha, a farmer of Maunpura village of Niwari district in Madhya Pradesh broke down in tears as his crop got destroyed by 96 hours of rain and hailstorm over the weekend. (NDTV, March 03, 2024).

Small and marginal farmers lack awareness, training, technology which if they could access could build their resilience. CSOs play a significant role in supporting farmers and their networks. CAC under Farmers' Node has facilitated 12 CAC member CSOs working with farmers to come together to drive the agenda towards shared goals of making farmers resilient.

Help scale and deepen some of the best proven solutions for farmers that are already being implemented by some of the CAC partners in limited geographies due to limited resources. For more information on investing to support marginal farmers in India, connect with us at:
<https://communityactioncollab.org/cac-investment-2024>

Poor Irrigation Facilities

PROBLEM

- Over-reliance on rainfall, limited irrigation infrastructure
- Decline in groundwater table

SOLUTIONS

Investing in irrigation infrastructure, promoting micro-irrigation systems, and improving water management practices. Rejuvenation of existing water sources.

In India, many farmers don't have enough access to water for their crops, so they rely on rainfall. About half of the land where crops are grown depends only on rain, and it makes up almost 40% of all the food grown in India. When farmers do have water, they mostly flood their fields, which isn't always the best way. Even though there are newer methods like using less water through micro-irrigation, it's mostly the big farmers who can afford it, leaving smaller farmers struggling.

We believe with meaningful financial investment into proven solutions and programmes aimed at addressing gaps and challenges faced by small and marginal farmers, we can build long term resilience of these farmers ready to meet future demand for increased production and quality (nutrition.)

Farming in India faces many challenges that make it hard for farmers to earn enough money from their crops. But despite these difficulties, there's still a lot of untapped potential in India's agriculture. To make a joint impact, connect with us.

3 Soil Fertility Depletion

PROBLEM

- Excessive use of chemical fertilisers leading to soil degradation
- Imbalanced use of urea affecting soil fertility

SOLUTIONS

Training in improved agronomic practices composting, agroforestry, conservation tillage, soil testing), promoting crop diversification, and reducing food loss.

Using too much urea can harm the soil's fertility over time. In 2022-23, urea (chemical fertiliser) made up more than half of all fertiliser production, consumption, and imports in India. Another reason for soil depletion is not having diverse crops and always growing the same thing. In 2015-16, about 47% of all the land used for crops in India was used for growing just one type of crop, which is called monocropping. The knowledge gap among small and marginal farmers is evident.

CAC member CSOs are working with farmers in most vulnerable geographies and districts. Help our members scale and deepen their programmes for farmers. Connect with us at: <https://communityactioncollab.org/cac-investment-2024>

Credit Availability



PROBLEM

- Limited access to timely, adequate, and low-cost credit for marginal and small farmers
- Impact on productivity and quality of produce

SOLUTIONS

Improving agricultural credit policies, reducing regional imbalance in credit distribution, and promoting financial inclusion for farmers. Greater subsidy in credit, seeds, and agricultural equipment can motivate farmers.

In farming, it's really important for small farmers to have access to affordable loans from banks or other financial institutions. With loans, farmers can manage their cash flow better throughout the farming season, meeting expenses for planting, harvesting, and personal needs.

In the 2010-11 Agriculture Census in India, it was found that 85% of land holdings belong to marginal and small farm categories. These categories are for farms with less than 2 hectares of land. There is a need to bring these small and marginal farmers together to access training, government schemes and market access.

CAC member CSOs are working towards building resilience of farmers and the agriculture sector in India. To support solutions and programmes delivering services to farmers, [connect with us:](https://communityactioncollab.org/cac-investment-2024)
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Changing Demand and Competition

PROBLEM

- Increasing demand for quality and nutritious food
- Pressure of producing food enough to feed India, environmentally sustainable and globally competitive

SOLUTIONS

Promoting precision farming (Precision agriculture is a farming management concept based on observing, measuring and responding to inter- and intra-field variability in crops), and enhancing digital connectivity for farmers. long-term multi-stakeholder partnerships with private-public sector, use of technology.

Farming in India faces many challenges that make it hard for farmers to earn enough money from their crops. But despite these difficulties, there's still a lot of untapped potential in India's agriculture. India's food processing sector is one of the largest in the world and its output is expected to reach \$535 billion by 2025-26.

To ensure the long-term viability of agriculture, it must be aligned with enhancing farm incomes and the prosperity of farmers. Otherwise, farmers may not prioritise sustainability concerns. Across the globe, various entities are crafting sustainable agricultural models that also bolster farmers' earnings. This presents a promising prospect for small & marginal farmers in India.

CAC member, Vrutti is on a mission to build the wealth and resilience of small producers and vulnerable communities through transformative livelihood solutions. Vrutti has supported 26,000 small-scale farmers become prosperous, resilient, and environmentally conscious under the threefold model. Learn more about Vrutti's work: <https://vruttiimpactcatalysts.org/>





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