



# THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN FOOD AND WATER SYSTEMS

THE RIGHT TO FOOD, WATER AND NUTRITION ANNUAL REPORT

2023

# Foreword

In the Global South, where agriculture often forms the backbone of economies and livelihoods, young people's involvement is pivotal. However, they face various barriers that hinder their full potential, and it's crucial to recognize and address these challenges. Many adolescents and young people lack access to land, credit, and agricultural inputs, making it challenging to start or expand their agricultural activities. Young women in agriculture often face gender-based discrimination, unequal access to resources, and limited decision-making power, which hinders their full participation. Many young people are drawn to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities, leading to a depletion of the rural agricultural workforce. Climate-related uncertainties and extreme weather events can disproportionately affect young farmers .

Despite these barriers, youth represent a potent force for change. Their enthusiasm, willingness to adopt new technologies, and innovative thinking can drive agriculture and water systems transformation. Young farmers are more likely to embrace and adapt to modern agricultural practices and technologies, contributing to increased productivity and sustainability. Many young people are keen on agribusiness ventures, introducing new value chains, processing, and marketing ideas that can diversify agricultural income streams. Youth are often tech-savvy, making them well-suited to leverage digital solutions for precision farming, market access, and data-driven decision-making. Engaging youth in agriculture also helps to revitalize rural areas, reducing rural-urban migration, and ensuring food security.

In CARE we are committed to empowering adolescents and young women and men farmers, recognizing the immense potential they bring to the agricultural sector.

This includes an understanding of the unique challenges they face and the successes they achieve in their critical journey towards empowerment.

CARE is undertaking several programs and initiatives to support and uplift young farmers. These efforts encompass training, access to resources, and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices. In this report, we highlight the remarkable successes and positive impacts that have emerged from some of these initiatives. These stories of triumph illustrate how, through support and empowerment, young women and men as well as adolescents, can overcome obstacles, enhance their livelihoods, and make significant contributions to the agricultural sector's growth and sustainability.

We firmly believe that by empowering the youth , we contribute not only to their individual growth but also to the overall development of the communities in which they operate.

**Juan Echanove**

**Associate Vice President, Food and Water Systems**



Water and food are essential to human life and dignity while healthy ecosystems protect and conserve natural resources that provide and sustain life.

CARE commits to work with partners around the world to support 75 million people, most of them women and girls, to fulfill their right to food, water and nutrition as part of Vision 2030.

This year, CARE will be highlighting a key and dynamic group in improving access to healthy food and water systems: **youth**. Through the [She Feeds the World](#) framework, CARE promotes a focus on young women and men as positive change agents who bring creativity, energy, commitment, and novel perspectives to understanding and addressing food, economic and social insecurity in their communities. CARE pursues Positive Youth Development strategies, viewing young people as key partners in all development efforts, from nutritional programming to strengthening agricultural markets.



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**63%**

of Right to Food, Water, and Nutrition programs in CARE engaged adolescents and youth in FY22.

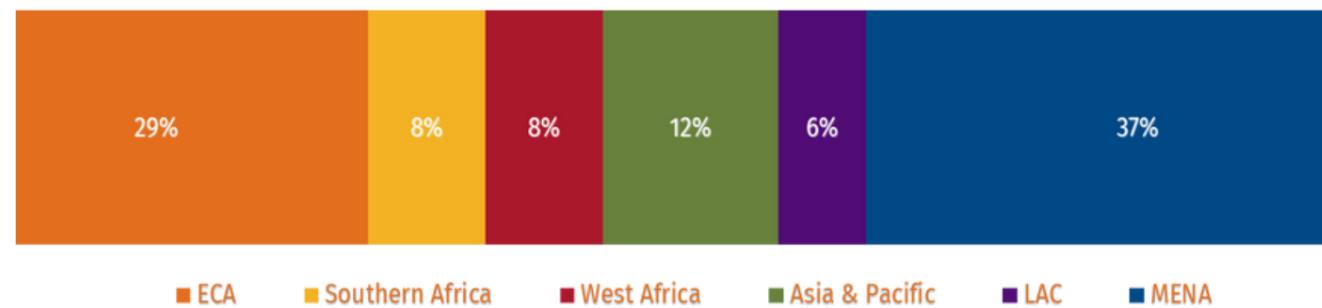
# Right to Food, Water, and Nutrition

## Tracking Program Impact

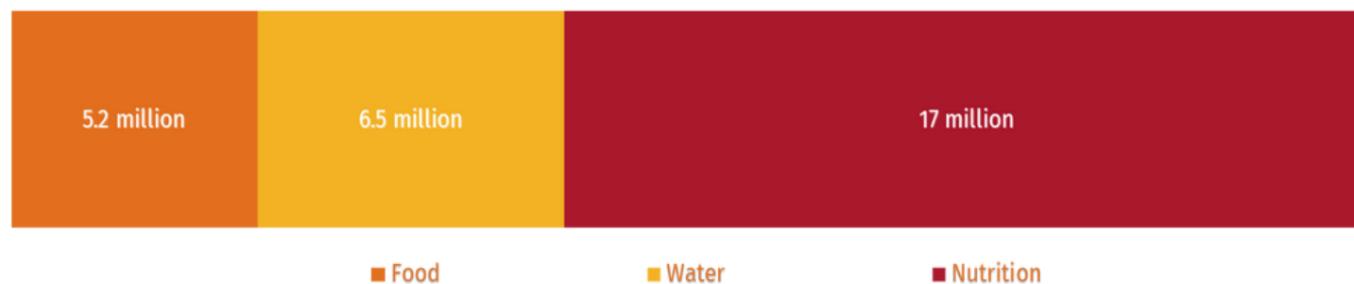
By 2030, CARE commits to work with partners around the world to support **75 million people, the majority women and girls, to fulfill their right to food, water, and nutrition.**

In FY22, our food, water, and nutrition portfolio **reached 41.8 million participants directly, 63% of them women, through 693 projects across 78 countries.** Our portfolio also **engaged adolescents and youth in 63% of our programs and also engaged children in 41%.** Since the beginning of the Vision 2030 strategy period, the portfolio has supported **8.5 million people** to fulfill their right to food, water and nutrition.

RFWN Impact by Region



RFWN Reach by Thematic Area



### RFWN Impact by Indicator



#### Reduced food insecurity for 237,732 people

Lowered percentage of people with moderate or severe food insecurity, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale



#### Contributed to 246,224 children under 5 escaping stunting

Lowered percentage of children 0-59 months experiencing malnutrition (stunting, wasting, or overweight).



#### Improved access to water for 392,652 people

Improved percentage of people using at least basic drinking water services



#### Improved sanitation for 684,859 people

Improved percentage of people using at least basic sanitation services

# Gender at the Center

Food and water systems face serious challenges with multiple drivers and risks. Gender-based discrimination and the denial of women’s human rights continue to drive food and nutrition insecurity, limit access to safe water and sanitation, and increase everyone’s vulnerability to climate change and natural hazards and shocks. The lack of women and girl’s voice and leadership in decision-making spaces — from the household to global levels — further drives gender inequality and cripples food systems as decisions are predominantly made by men.

CARE places gender justice and the agency of women and girls at the center of its food, water and nutrition work. Our research has shown that gender equality approaches have measurable impacts on political and social development, household economies, empowerment, livelihoods and resilience. [The Right to Food, Water, and Nutrition](#) Theory of Change is based on CARE’s Gender Equality framework and is framed around three levels of change to build agency of women and girls in all their diversity and life stages, change relations between them and transform structures in order that they realize full potential in their public and private lives and are able to contribute equally to, and benefit equally from, social, political, and economic development.



In FY22, CARE’s Food and Water programs were  
**53% gender responsive**  
**18% gender sensitive**  
**18% gender equality**



In FY22, FWS either partially or fully engaged men and boys in **87% of programming which is an increase from the previous year’s percentage of 82%.**

## Empowering the Young Women and Children of Zimbabwe

Unemployment across youth (persons between 15 to 35 years of age) is high in Zimbabwe, with percentages higher for female youth (22%) when compared to male youth (20%). Young people also suffer from unaffordable education, lack of access to healthcare, forced migration due to limited opportunities, child marriages, and sexual abuse. Participation in public decision-making platforms is also often skewed towards adult men with women, young people, and people with disabilities being the least represented.

CARE’s [Takunda](#) program aims to increase youth empowerment through interventions aimed at reducing gender disparities as well as increasing the capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making at the household, community, and institutional levels.

Through this program, 51% of young women in program areas report that they now have a voice in public spaces and 65% have taken up leadership positions, showing a significant number of young women being active participants in decision-making processes.

Across all target communities, 50% of adult women believed in the leadership of young people and pledged to support them. Additionally, 81% of adult females supported joint planning and decision making with children. This indicated a cultural shift towards recognizing children’s agency and perspectives as valuable and important, rather than solely relying on adult knowledge and experience. It also suggests a desire to empower and include children and youth in community decision making, giving them a voice and a say on issues that affect their lives.

## BUY

The ability to buy and sell food and WASH-related goods and services in inclusive markets allows women and youth to be able to change relations in communities while diversifying their livelihoods and using market-based approaches. Applying the best of our food and water systems and women's economic justice approaches enables women and girl's access to inclusive market which will unlock greater production, expansion of profits and social and environmental returns for women and girls from small-scale agriculture and WASH services.

## Inclusive Markets & Market Based Approaches

Agriculture and markets can play a transformational role in improving the livelihoods of youth and their families. To effectively integrate youth into market systems, CARE identifies "entry points" within value chains that are both relevant and accessible to young people. This includes identifying the roles that young women and girls are already playing in value chains, facilitating young women's entry into traditionally male-dominated value chains, and addressing the structural constraints that create barriers to young women's participation in agricultural value chains.

It is estimated that two of three youth that live in rural areas of low- to middle-income countries live where there is also the most agroecological potential and the role of youth in agriculture has immense possibility to grow more food, transform local food systems and build economies that lift entire communities out of poverty.

## Establishing Last-Mile Local Private Service Providers

Over 50% of Malawi's population lives below the poverty line. CARE's [Titukulane](#) program aims to promote sustainable, equitable, and resilient food and nutrition security for ultra-poor and chronically vulnerable households with a focus on livelihoods for women and youth.

Through this, the program is strengthening the capacity of youth as local service providers in last-mile services provision of crop and livestock extension advisory services. Youth are taking on the role of community animal health workers to deliver basic animal health care and vaccination services that reduce livestock mortalities and improve livestock productivity. They are also acting as market facilitators through providing market information and enabling collective marketing of produce from FFBS groups.



Private Service Providers supported producer groups to collectively market their soya to buyers, with 2,448 farmers participating in soya markets.



Over 130,000 USD worth of soya was sold, representing 197% of the target volume to be sold during the 2023 marketing season

## Youth Micro-Enterprise Groups and Producer Organizations

Titukulane also established 21 micro-enterprise groups following technical trainings. The project facilitated access to equipment for youth engaged in peanut butter making and maize flour milling, solar drying of fruits, and fruit jam production. Maintenance training was provided to these youth groups and the program also facilitated the participation of three youth business groups in the 33rd Malawi International Trade Fair in May 2023. The participants were able to form business networks, understand market demand and capture business opportunities. They were able to sell \$1,244 of their products to buyers at the fair.

Agro-entrepreneurship is particularly attractive to youth populations. Building capacity and creating opportunities for entrepreneurship enhances young people's interest in agriculture. Using Junior [Farmer Field and Business Schools](#), youth clubs, savings groups and other safe spaces as platforms, CARE helps to build skills, competencies, and attitudes to successfully participate in food systems. Youth also participate in agricultural value chains, as hired seasonal workers, daily laborers, or full time workers in farms and processing centers, and marketing outlets, where CARE's programs actively engage private sector actors to ensure dignified work opportunities with potentials for upward mobility.

In the WASH sector, women and youth can become managers or staff in small to large water supply utilities, set up sanitation and hygiene enterprises that sell toilets and sanitary pads, or join government technical service teams that monitor and support the development of WASH services. CARE recruits and trains women and youth to equip them with skills and tools to achieve professional development and manage and grow their WASH businesses.



# Livelihood Diversification

When households and individuals purposefully engage in a variety of activities to diversify their sources of income, it can help them and their community better withstand economic shocks. In most communities where CARE works, agriculture is and will remain the mainstay for food security and livelihoods. Beneficial livelihoods diversification remains hard to reach, particularly for rural women and youth, due to lack of information, basic education, market-driven skills, assets, capital, and digital tools. Despite barriers, women and youth continue to seek out diverse income-earning opportunities and businesses, both on and off of farms.

Diversification is especially important to address the growing youth disengagement in the agriculture sector and growing unemployment rates globally. CARE is implementing both youth-sensitive and youth-focused interventions that build the capacity of young people to engage in diversified livelihoods. Recognizing the constraints to land access, financial services, inputs and extension services, program participants are engaged in mixed on-farm, off-farm and non-farm livelihood strategies.

**80% of the world's extremely poor people live in rural areas and are dependent on agricultural activities.**

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### DIVERSIFYING INCOMES FOR YOUTH IN ETHIOPIA

Strengthen PSNP Institutions and Resilience Phase II (SPIR II) in Ethiopia has provided soft skills training and mentorship services needed to support youth job seekers. In their respective program kebeles, they were able to reach 100% of their quarterly target. As of July 2023, soft skills trainings were conducted for 622 youth (189 of them girls) in all five project woredas. There was a total of 44 existing and newly created youth-run VESA groups composed of 846 youth (272 of them girls). Youth managed to secure loans from local RuSACCOs (local financial cooperatives) to invest in shoat fattening businesses in addition to existing agricultural-based earnings. Life skills competencies, entrepreneurship skills, and adapted financing are contributing to better prospects for job creation, market linkages to support employment and enterprise development among vulnerable young people.

### FUNDING BUSINESSES FOR YOUNG WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Women and youth participation in diversified livelihoods depend on a range of support services to address the high barriers to entry into profitable value chains and non-farm employment. Programs such as Hamzari in Niger are intentional at offering adapted vocational and entrepreneurship skills training to prepare youth for wage or self-employment opportunities. Hamzari engages 540 youth, predominantly adolescent girls, and young women in rounds of entrepreneurship training and business plan development for funding. The first round of funding in FY22 supported 69 individual and group projects of which 90% are still operating and monitored by project staff and local committees. For the beginning of FY24, 184 business plans were submitted to compete for start funds for a range of business ideas and services both on-farm and non-farm.

# USE

The use of resources, approaches, social protection mechanisms, and innovative technologies can allow for communities to transform structures to positively impact the lives of small-scale women food producers. To effectively use food to create healthy and sustainable diets, we must address food loss and waste and create sustainable climate resilient agriculture models. Work must also be done to improve nutrition through local collectives, support dietary diversity and promote positive nutrition practices. Sustainable services through systems approaches, such as building WASH governance, and addressing social and gender norms that influence WASH behaviors, allows for an increase in leadership roles for women and youth in WASH decision-making.

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Every two minutes a child dies from a water-related disease, while 160 million children suffer from WASH-related stunting and chronic malnutrition.

## Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

CARE's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions focus on the provision of sustainable and equitable services and the protection and conservation of water resources. Our programs strengthen local and national systems, including the public, private and civil society actors responsible for WASH services. To do this, CARE works closely with local and national governments, local organizations, communities, and the private sector across multiple sectors: education, agriculture, health, and nutrition. WASH services should not only be available to all, but should intentionally work with women, youth and

marginalized populations to elevate their voices and include their perspectives in the design, roll-out and improvement of programs.

Inadequate WASH services and facilities in homes, schools, and community centers particularly contribute to health and educational outcomes of youth. Millions of children are forced to seek alternative options to clean water and are vulnerable to life-threatening yet preventable malnutrition and waterborne diseases, such as diarrhea, cholera, and typhoid fever.

CARE programs from the past year included interventions that strengthened the capacity of government teams to plan, budget, and monitor WASH services at the national, sub-national and local levels, expanded access to water and sanitation services using private sector models and solutions, layered marketing and enterprise development with innovative behavior change to increase sales and use of WASH products and services, and addressed structural barriers to gender equality in WASH.

### A Systems Approach to Improving WASH Services

In Madagascar, approximately 57% of the population lacks access to safe drinking water and only 17% use at least basic sanitation services. These low levels of access have a higher impact on girls in communities. They are typically more involved in household activities that depend on WASH services as well as combatting stigma against menstruation, limited access to menstruation materials, unsafe toilets, and insufficient water access.

CARE's [Rural Access to New Opportunities in WASH \(RANO WASH\)](#) program aimed to improve equitable and sustainable access to WASH services to better health, nutrition, and environmental outcomes across 250 rural communes in Madagascar by engaging the government and private sector as well as encouraging healthy behaviors and the use of WASH services through advancing gender equality and inclusive approaches. Upon the close of this program, nearly 1 million people in the RANO WASH regions live in an open defecation free environment and over 740,000 have gained access to basic or limited sanitation services. The creation of 40 new public-private partnerships for water service delivery gave over 300,000 people access to clean water. There was an increased public investment in WASH initiatives across 146 communes, including \$2 million in public funding mobilized for WASH services across seven regions.

Rasta, a father of four and construction worker, received training in building latrines that are designed to improve access for persons with disabilities through the RANO WASH program. In 2023, Rasta and his team of construction workers built a latrine block at a local primary school and a college in Andonabe, Madagascar. Both are suitable for youth with reduced mobility and include ramps instead of stairs and textured surfaces to help safely guide visually impaired youth through the layout of the latrine block.

**“I am happy to see that these students with disabilities can easily use this toilet block,” said Rasta.**

## Youth Improving Village Latrine Access

Khuki, a 55-year old woman from the Madhya Uriya village in Bangladesh, was born with a clubfoot and deformed wrist. Her husband abandoned her early in their marriage since she was unable to bear children and left her with no one to care for her. Unfortunately, Khuki does not own a latrine. Every time she needs to use the latrine, she was forced to go to her neighbor's house. This often becomes taxing, given her movement challenges, and especially difficult at night and during the monsoon season.

Manik (24) is a youth participant of CARE's [SHOUHARDO III](#) program and a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Local Service Provider (LSP). He is also a Sales Agent under the program and iDE's Scaling-up WASH Innovations in Remote Locations (SWIRL) project. After meeting Khuki and learning of her situation, he was able to convince her to save money – little by little – to purchase an improved latrine. Through the SHOUHARDO III and iDE partnership, latrine producers provided improved latrines at a discounted price for SHOUHARDO III participants. Since these latrines are produced and sold by community members themselves, Manik and his team were able to link Khuki directly to a latrine producer in her community to buy an improved ring slab latrine at a discounted price.

Manik and five other youth members, who are also SHOUHARDO III participants, are raising awareness in their community to install improved latrines in their homes. These improved latrines have water-sealed technology to prevent bad odor, they are easy to clean, water-efficient, and visually appealing. Most importantly, the latrines are affordable even for the poorest. During a three-month promotional period, these youth groups went door-to-door to inform and encourage households to purchase the discounted improved latrines. Within just three months, the youth group managed the replacement of conventional latrines in 90 households.

Due to these youth-led community movements, the villagers have changed their behavior and now consider an improved latrine essential to ensuring their family's privacy and dignity. When asked about the sustainability of this intervention, Kakoli (20), a youth member, mentioned:

**“Latrines come first. [...] The community will continue to use improved latrines.”**



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# Nutrition

Good nutrition serves as a catalyst for advancement in health, education, employment, women’s empowerment, and the productive capacity of women and men. CARE ensures that all our Food and Water Systems programs include objectives for improved nutrition, especially for women and children during the critical 1,000 days window from conception to the child’s second birthday. How well or how poorly mothers and children are nourished and cared for during this time has a profound impact on a child’s ability to grow, learn and thrive. CARE’s strategic and integrated approach to improving nutrition and food security is based on our experience showing that change is needed across sectors to achieve sustainable and equitable nutrition impact.

Nutrition-sensitive interventions support core nutrition specific and social and behavior-based approaches, ensuring not only the promotion of improved nutrition practices, but also the enabling environment for adopting them. CARE uses a multi-sectoral and food systems approach to increase access, availability and affordability of nutrient rich foods through Farmer Field and Business Schools and home gardens, integration of WASH services for hygiene and increased food production in water scarce environments, and gender equality nutrition programming across relevant CARE FWS programs.

## PROMOTING INNOVATIONS IN HEALTH & NUTRITION

Many adolescents suffer from malnutrition in urban and rural areas of Bangladesh and the prevalence of malnutrition is found to be much higher among adolescent girls. Pregnant and lactating women have about 60% or over insufficient caloric intake, which can produce malnourished children.

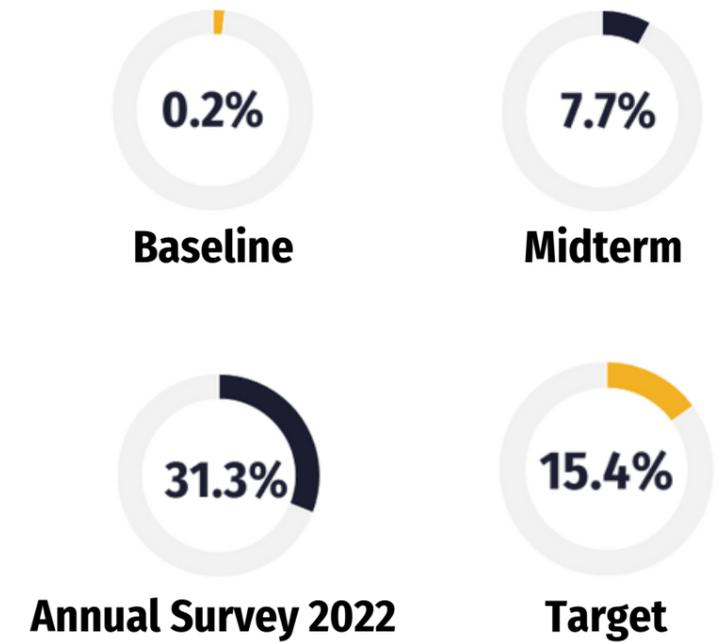
In its fifth year of implementation, the [Joint Actions for Nutrition Outcomes \(JANO\)](#) program in Bangladesh continues to build upon and scale innovations in health and nutrition. Its [Talking Books](#) audio devices, which convey nutritional information in the form of songs and messages, have proven extremely popular amongst key target groups, including pregnant and lactating women, adolescents, and those in remote and hard-to-reach areas. Amongst households using Talking Books, annual survey results in 2022 showed a 47.9% increase in dietary diversity among children and a 13% increase in dietary diversity among women and youth of reproductive age. Given its success, JANO has begun incorporating more interactive tools (apps, e-manuals) to promote learning and Social and Behavior Change messages.

The JANO Project also set up School Management Committees (SMCs) that set agendas on nutrition-specific and sensitive services for adolescent students in the project areas. In the fourth year of the project, over 30% of students reported applying key learning points regarding nutrition, health, and hygiene at home – an increase from the baseline percentage of 0.2%.

70% of students reported that they knew about nutrition and hygiene. Nearly half of the students mentioned that they knew about gardening, food nutrition management, and the use of sanitary latrine as well as reported applying nutrition and gardening at home. The application of learned knowledge was higher for girls than boys on a few issues, like nutrition, food ingredients, adolescent health, and hygiene, apart from puberty/reproductive health.



## Percentage of JANO students who apply key learning points regarding nutrition, health and hygiene at home



## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

Through a partnership with Emory University and a local NGO, CARE’s Leveraging Transformative WASH program in Odisha, India aims to demonstrate how home gardens and use of grey water can be used to improve dietary diversity for women and children. This three-year program and research aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of these approaches, through the promotion of homestead food production alongside layered trainings in WASH, women’s empowerment and food marketing against a control site.

## Combatting Food Loss & Waste

**One third (1.3 billion tons) of food produced globally is lost or wasted.**

44% occurs in low-income countries where small-scale farmers and hungry, undernourished people suffer the most.

Many low-income countries experiencing the problem of food loss and waste have a large youth population, with median ages around or below 20 years, who are in need of nutritious food for their developmental needs. When these constraints are reduced, youth can become champions for information sharing, good practices, and solutions to mitigate food loss and waste. This could lead to improved food security, better nutrition, as well as income opportunities.

### Scaling FFBS to Engage Youth Members

CARE's [Farmer Field and Business Schools \(FFBS\)](#) are being scaled globally through four pathways that adapt to different contexts. One of them will deepen all FFBS, new and old, to target new users, including youth.

FFBS has been incorporated into numerous university curriculums in Nigeria, Uganda, Honduras, Kenya and more to engage more youth in the FFBS approach to strengthen young farmers globally.

## GROW

Healthy ecosystems, integrated water resources management and climate resilience are critical for sustaining water access, growing food and other income-generating products, and lead sustainable and resilient lives. Building on decades of experience in integrated water resources management, climate change adaptation and water-smart agriculture, our programs work to ensure that communities and governments are addressing and nurturing the ecosystems upon which they depend, while effectively and equitably benefitting from them.



## Water Ecosystems & Management

Our programs focus on environmental sustainability, promoting Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Ecosystems Protection so that CARE WASH programs consider the surrounding watershed, climate and water and soil conditions in planning. By articulating the role youth and women play in these areas, CARE can address the interconnected roots of poverty, social injustice, and environmental degradation. Our programs over the past year engaged multi-disciplinary actors to address climate change and water conservation.

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

#### YOUTH TAKING THE CHARGE ON LAND AND WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Tanzania's Great Ruaha River flows have been decreasing since 1990, threatening the lives of millions of people and wildlife. Unsustainable farming and natural resource use practices are among the main drivers of environmental degradation in the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT) region. The displacement of small-scale farmers from their land is increasing due to large-scale agriculture, leading to conflicts over land tenure and natural resource access. The overuse and degradation of natural resources are exacerbated by a lack of coordinated management and planning.

In this region, the [CARE-WWF Alliance](#) introduced innovations into the country's Village Land Use Planning (VLUP) process to make this legal framework for common pool resource planning and land titling more accessible for women and youth, and inclusive of water resources management. During VLUP processes in 21 villages, the Alliance structured meeting times and locations to accommodate the schedules of women and youth and hired facilitators skilled in working with women and youth. Youth specifically were included in the process of mapping water resources and monitoring water quality. Key aspects of the piloted approach were incorporated into Tanzania's current National Land Use Planning Guidelines, including ensuring participation of women and youth in VLUP processes to improve community ownership and development outcomes, and use of an integrated approach in decision-making processes that considers land use issues such as biodiversity conservation, water resources, and climate change. As a result of strengthening these capacities, particularly among women and youth, communities have planted over 98,336 water-friendly trees around water sources across the 21 villages, and 887 ha of water sources are now under sustainable management.

# Climate Justice

Climate change is one of humanity's greatest contemporary challenges. It jeopardizes the benefits and progress already made in addressing the injustice of poverty and gender inequalities, while increasing the demand to respond to urgent humanitarian needs. This is a crisis that is disproportionately affecting the communities that have contributed to it least. 74% of the world's poorest countries account for less than one-tenth of global greenhouse gas emissions. And even in these communities its impacts are not uniform, with women and youth facing exacerbated risks due to their higher levels of vulnerability. Left unaddressed or under-addressed, climate change, along with additional challenging economic and political conditions, creates heightened levels of risk for all of us but especially for our youth, who will continue to grow in an increasingly precarious environment. CARE and its partners are working to increase resilience and tackle the causes and consequences of climate change, such as water scarcity, flooding, and increased temperatures. Building resilience goes beyond the ability to recover from shocks and includes addressing the context that makes people vulnerable, and working to ensure communities have the resources, capacities, and institutional supports necessary to realize their own goals.

## Climate Resilient Agriculture in Tanzania

Globally, CARE programs are promoting climate resilient agriculture practices for small-scale farmers. In sub-Saharan Africa, these practices promoted by the [CARE-WWF Alliance](#) can help to increase crop production and alleviate poverty, producing more nutritious food while increasing incomes through access to local, national and regional markets. This approach combines access to credit, markets and extension services with climate resilient agriculture and sustainable watershed management practices that are critical to productive small-scale agricultural systems.



## Building Sustainability through Social Capital and Resilience in Communities

Youth VSLA groups and networks are key platforms for ensuring good governance and inclusiveness within community interventions designed to build resilience in CARE's [Hamzari](#) program in Niger. Mature VSLA groups (MMD Federations) nurture youth groups and encourages them to engage in activities that support livelihoods such as cereal banks, access to credit for income-generating activities, financial linkages, and platforms to share their voices. The program provides capacity building support tailored to specific needs, including field and exchange visits, production and marketing workshops, and facilitation support. Hamzari empowers and supports MMD Federations to advocate for community groups and producer platforms to be involved in the governance and management of community structures, as well as in the management of government interventions such as the sale of cereals at reduced prices and food distributions. The groups within this program envision sustainability for the community's future by engaging youth groups to also be involved in these issues from a young age.

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# Advocacy

CARE's 2030 Vision is focused on influencing change beyond the communities we directly work with by scaling our impact. For CARE to meet this goal, we must prioritize advocacy interventions that contribute to sustainable change on a large scale. Our advocacy ranges from grassroots mobilization to civil society and government capacity-strengthening, and prioritizes evidence-based advocacy, drawing on policy analysis and evidence to inform our advocacy and the change we seek. Our global food and nutrition security advocacy reflects a prioritization of those areas where we believe policy change can best support impact at scale and where external landscapes present the most opportunity for change. CARE's global advocacy is the collection and aggregate of our local, national, and regional advocacy work.



## PROMOTING DECENT WORK IN THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

CARE's Policy Director chaired the weeklong negotiations to establish [the ILO Guidelines for the Promotion of Decent Work in the Agri-Food Sector](#). These Guidelines have the potential to impact the lives and livelihoods of more than 1.3 billion workers, which include the poorest and most vulnerable people on the planet. The Guidelines specify the roles and responsibilities of governments, employers, and workers and, since it was negotiated by the workers, employers, and governments themselves, there is complete ownership by all constituencies to carry their work forward.

The Guidelines address the role of youth in agri-food by:

- Laying out guidance for decent jobs and just incomes for youth
- Strengthening outreach effort for migrant and seasonal youth workers
- Raising awareness of national minimum age legislation in the agri-food sector, including the distinction between acceptable youth employment and hazardous child labor

Stemming from CARE's rich history advocating for decent work in the garment and domestic sectors, the UN Secretary General selected CARE to lead a work stream on "Advancing Equitable Livelihoods" during the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit process. The momentum and knowledge generated from that 18-month process led to the formation of the [Decent Work Coalition](#), which is led by CARE, ILO, and IFAD and formalized through a Letter of Intent signed by CARE International's Secretary General and the Presidents of ILO and IFAD. The coalition has more than 190 members worldwide and a growing list of accomplishments on the coalition's website. As a result of the successful ILO process, we now have the roadmap to carry the work forward.

Additionally, members of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) agreed to build on the work of the ILO in order to prioritize workers' rights in the agri-food sector. Decent work is endorsed as a focus area during the 2024-2027 CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work to educate governments and CFS members on the ILO guidelines and how to best implement them at national level.

# RFWN Program Highlights from Around the Globe

Top 10 countries by impact	
Country	Amount of people impacted by RFWN programming
1. India	15.5 million
2. Bangladesh	4.3 million
3. South Sudan	3 million
4. Ethiopia	2.9 million
5. Yemen	2 million
6. Nepal	1.9 million
7. Zimbabwe	1.2 million
8. Sudan	1.1 million
9. Somalia	0.8 million
10. Niger	0.8 million

**Guatemala**

Promoting a Sustainable and Food Secure World III (PROSPER III) works to ensure food security with equal access to markets, control of productive resources, and increased resilience to climate change.

**Bangladesh**

SHOUHARDO III Plus is a two-year program (2022-2024) funded by USAID. SHOUHARDO III Plus works with participants to pursue diversified sources of income, support inclusive and sustainable agricultural-led growth, enhance access to markets, especially for women and girls, and improve access to financial services for PEP participants.

**Madagascar**

RANO WASH is a five-year program (2017-2022) funded by USAID. The program works to help communities in rural Madagascar create solutions for sustainable and equitable water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) systems so people can live healthier lives and preserve the environment.

**Timor Leste**

Hatutan is a five-year program (2019-2024) funded by USDA. The initiative aims to improve literacy, health and nutrition outcomes in preschools and primary schools at Timor-Leste. It also strives to strengthen literacy, education, nutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and gender equality.



[care.org/our-work/food-and-nutrition/](https://care.org/our-work/food-and-nutrition/)

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