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she heals the world

Overview

She Heals the World (SHTW) is a comprehensive initiative implemented by CARE and partners to support and advocate for an enabling environment for Frontline Community Health Workers (FCHWs), particularly women, to effectively carry out their lifesaving work. SHTW aims to ensure that by 2030 over 1 million female FCHWs are equitably trained, equipped and paid to do their lifesaving work increasing equitable access to healthcare at the last mile.

Limited access to healthcare disproportionately affects marginalized and last mile populations, especially adolescent girls, pregnant women, those with chronic illnesses, and other vulnerable populations. FCHWs connect communities with health systems, but often face barriers like heavy workloads, low pay, inadequate training and career advancement opportunities, additional household responsibilities, and in some contexts, mobility restrictions and risks of gender based violence. Investing in this cadre of health workers promotes gender equality and women's leadership, while expanding access to care for all.

Who are FCHWs?

FCHWs, 70% of whom are women, serve the communities in which they live. They are largely under/unpaid unrecognized by the formal health system and undertrained.¹ They provide home visits, health education & counselling, health screenings, data collection, basic first aid, and referrals to health facilities. In many contexts they face gender-based discrimination and yet they are critical to health system strengthening everywhere.





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Why invest in FCHWs?

- ✓ They help provide care to 5 billion people around the worldⁱⁱ
- ✓ They contribute to the reduction of \$6 trillion economic loss annually due to poor quality careⁱⁱⁱ
- ✓ Doing so can prevent 7.4 million deaths by 2035^{iv}
- ✓ They play an essential role in pandemic responses^{v,vi}
- ✓ Investing in equitable pay and work conditions for women is key to a gender equal future^{vii}

SHTW Theory of Change

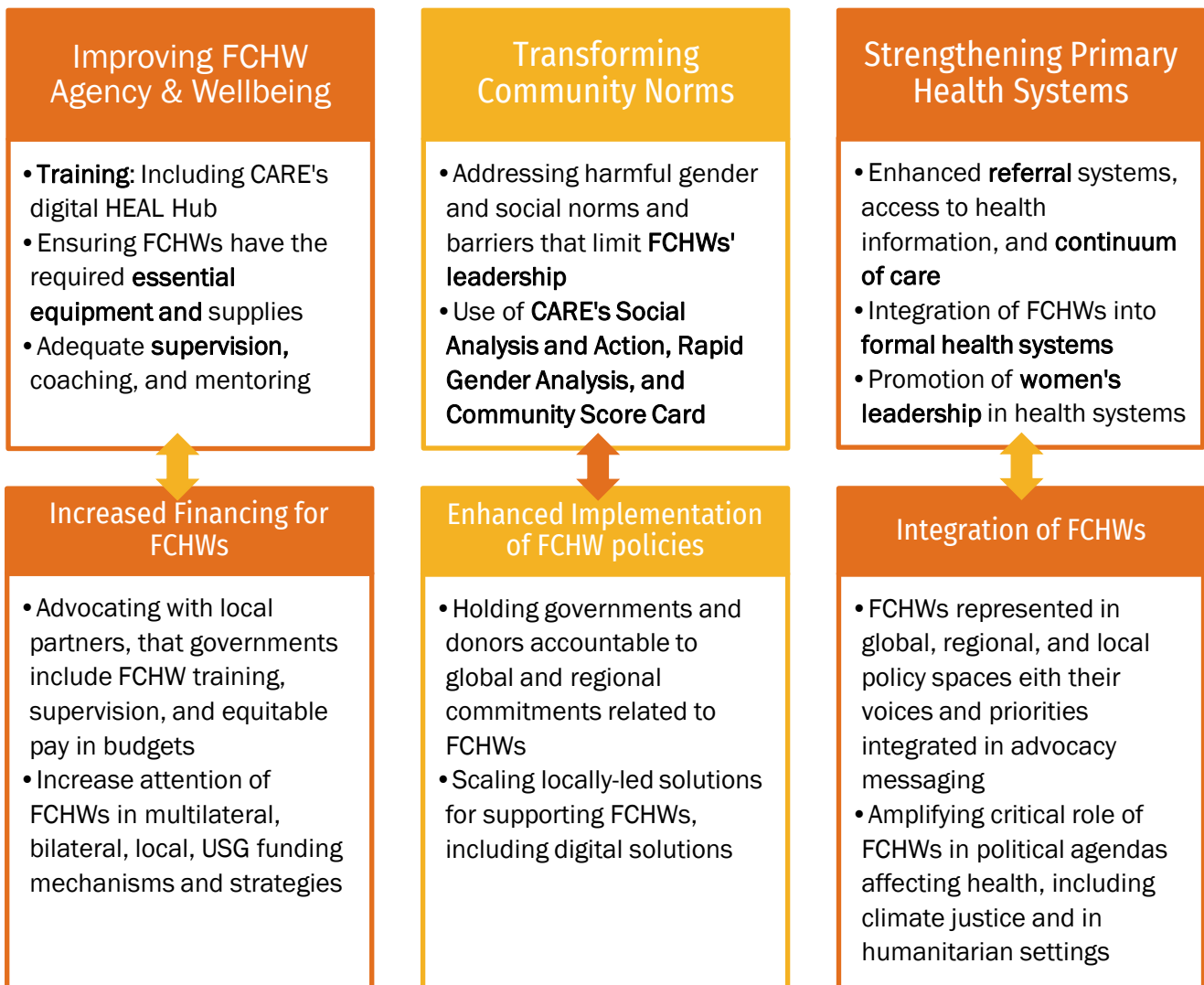
Through a global, coordinated, and interdisciplinary effort, CARE seeks to ensure that:

1. FCHWs are adequately trained, supervised, equipped, paid, and certified to deliver health education and services, AND
2. Gender barriers are dismantled and FCHWs are supported by communities and households to do their jobs, AND
3. Healthcare systems are strengthened by recognizing, enabling, and integrating FCHWs.

Resulting in a world in which frontline community health workers, particularly women, are empowered, valued, and prioritized as key to resilient, responsive, equitable, and sustainable health systems.

SHTW Components

CARE aims to support FCHWs at individual, community, and systems levels in the countries where we work. This includes:



She Heals the World Will:



Elevate women's voices in health leadership



Integrate FCHWs into health systems



Support governments to fully fund FCHWs



Ensure FCHW access to digital health tools

SHTW Addresses Important Challenges

FCHW burn out and high turnover due to:

- Little or no pay^{viii}
- Unsafe working conditions
- Limited resources^{ix}

Limited quality healthcare access:

- Remote/dispersed health services
- Limited last mile distribution of supplies^x
- Shortage of trained health workforce^{xi}

FCHWs becoming recognized as part of the health system and being more fully integrated into the health system is a critical step to ensure their effectiveness and advocate for equitable pay and support.

CARE FCHWs Around the World

Each bubble represents a CARE office working directly with FCHWs



ⁱ Ballard M, et al. (2022). Payment of community health workers. *Lancet Glob Health*.10(9):e1242.

ⁱⁱ Delivered by women, led by men: A gender and equity analysis of the global health and social workforce, Human Resources for Health Observer Series No. 24, WHO.

ⁱⁱⁱ Kruk, et al. (2018) High-quality health systems in the Sustainable Development Goals era: time for a revolution, *The Lancet Global Health*, 6(11), e1196-e1252

^{iv} Jamison et al., (2013). Global health 2035: a world converging within a generation, *The Lancet*, 382(9908), 1898-1955.

^v Salve S, Raven J, Das P, Srinivasan S, Khaled A, Hayee M, et al. (2023) Community health workers and Covid-19: Cross-country evidence on their roles, experiences, challenges and adaptive strategies. *PLOS Glob Public Health* 3(1): e0001447.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0001447>

^{vi} Ballard M, et al (2022) Community Health Workers in Pandemics: Evidence and Investment Implications. *Glob Health Sci Pract*, 10(2):e2100648.

^{vii} Ballard M, et al. (2022). Payment of community health workers. *Lancet Glob Health*.10(9):e1242.

^{viii} Ibid.

^{ix} World Bank and WHO: Half of the world lacks access to essential health services, 100 million still pushed into extreme poverty because of health expenses (2017). WHO News Release.

^x Ibid.

^{xi} Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2016.