



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 oppoturnities, 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. 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.





Why invest in FCHWs?

- ✓ They help provide care to 5 billion people around the world

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- ✓ 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:

Improving FCHW Agency & Wellbeing

- Training: Including CARE's digital HEAL Hub
- Ensuring FCHWs have the required essential equipment and supplies
- Adequate supervision, coaching, and mentoring

Increased Financing for FCHWs

- Advocating with local partners, that governments include FCHW training, supervision, and equitable pay in budgets
- Increase attention of FCHWs in multilateral. bilateral, local, USG funding mechanisms and strategies

Community Norms

- Addressing harmful gender and social norms and barriers that limit FCHWs' leadership
- Use of CARE's Social Analysis and Action, Rapid Gender Analysis, and **Community Score Card**

Enhanced Implementation

- Holding governments and donors accountable to global and regional commitments related to **FCHWs**
- Scaling locally-led solutions for supporting FCHWs, including digital solutions

Strengthening Primary **Health Systems**

- Enhanced **referral** systems, access to health information, and continuum of care
- Integration of FCHWs into formal health systems
- Promotion of women's **leadership** in health systems

Integration of FCHWs

- FCHWs represented in global, regional, and local policy spaces eith their voices and priorities integrated in advocacy messaging
- Amplifying critical role of FCHWs in political agendas affecting health, including climate justice and in humanitarian settings

She Heals the World Will:



Elevate women's voices in health leadership

Integrate FCHWs into health systems



Support 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 payviii
- 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 workforcexi

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



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

w 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.

wii 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.