



Executive Summary

Pathways Annual Report 2013

THIS ANNUAL REPORT covers progress on the CARE Pathways program between November 2011 and November 2012. The overall goal of Pathways is to increase poor women smallholder farmer productivity and empowerment in more equitable agriculture systems at scale. The program builds on and is inspired by the vital roles that women play around the world in smallholder agriculture, meeting the food and nutrition needs of their households and contributing to economic development. The vision of the program is one of empowered women smallholder farmers celebrated for their contributions to achieving secure and resilient livelihoods and sustainable futures for their households, communities and beyond. This is being achieved by promoting women's leadership and productive and profitable engagement in intensified, sustainable agriculture value chains. In its first phase, Pathways targets direct impacts on 150,000 poor women smallholder farmers and 555,184 members of their households across six countries (India, Mali, Tanzania, Malawi, Bangladesh and Ghana).



The past 13 months have included a 10-month inception phase and three months of active implementation. The following highlights reflect CARE's top line achievements during that period. Overall, CARE has achieved nearly all milestones scheduled to be completed during this period with other milestones 'on track' and a very limited set of delays. These factors are discussed in detail throughout the report and in Annex A.

Key Program Highlights

A. TEAM DEVELOPMENT

- **Staffing:** All Pathways teams are fully staffed and all positions have been filled. This includes a core program team of five full time staff and technical assistance from an equal number of staff from within other units in CARE as well as fully staffed implementation teams in each Pathways country. Country-level teams are comprised of a mix of CARE and partner staff members.
- **Capacity Building:** A capacity assessment was conducted shortly after staffing was completed. This exercise covered key competencies ranging from agriculture to monitoring to gender equity. As a foundation for the Pathways approach, gender, equity and diversity trainings were prioritized for all implementation staff and have been completed in Tanzania, Malawi, India and Ghana. Bangladesh training is planned, while Mali is on hold due to the current security situation (see Challenges and Risks section). In addition, 11 Pathways staff participated in a learning journey in September to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) supported Strengthening the Dairy Value Chain (SDVC) project to build skills in market engagement and value chain programming. Training on other Pathways programmatic approaches are continuing and will continue through the life of the program.
- **Collectives Typology, Assessment and Engagement:** Central to the Pathways theory of change is the engagement and support of collectives to reach and deliver program interventions to poor rural smallholder women farmers. As each implementing context is unique, priorities for the program during this reporting year have been to a) develop a collectives' typology, b) identify and characterize the collectives with which Pathways would work and c) assess the readiness of Pathways targeted collectives to promote the program objectives. These exercises have allowed CARE to identify 3,528 collectives across the six countries with which Pathways is now engaging. The collectives' readiness assessment informed CARE's development of a unique implementation model, the Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS, see below) and CARE has now defined a collective's learning agenda in collaboration with the Coady Institute.

B. IN-COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION

- **Reaching the Impact Group:** The program has identified and has begun working with a total of 57,611 women smallholder farmers who are members of 3,528 collectives. Guided by the agricultural cycle and group readiness, preliminary activities with participants has ranged from immediate formation of Farmer Field and Business Schools and other agricultural interventions to activities more centrally focused on analyzing inter-household and community-level gender dynamics.



- Program Operational Framework:** Due to the integrated nature of the program, an operational framework that brings together the Pathways strategic approaches has been finalized. The framework outlines a set of push- and pull-interventions CARE will pursue and illustrates how these interventions will be combined and sequenced to support the progressive transition of women smallholder farmers from positions of vulnerability and food insecurity to positions of resilience and food security. As implementation progresses, the framework will enable better analysis of country-level progress and cross-country results and lessons.
- CARE Farmer Field and Business School Development:** Building on the Operational Framework and collectives' readiness data, CARE has developed a unique implementation model for enhancing women smallholder farmer productivity and market engagement while also promoting changes in household decision making, nutrition and other priority impact areas. The "CARE Farmer Field and Business School," (FFBS) methodology was generated via cross-country collaborations and incorporates all key trainings and capacity building exercises in a delivery method that synchs with agricultural cycles, delivering lessons on production practices and business practices on a 'just in time' basis, which CARE believes will reduce farmer time burdens and enhance adoption rates of Pathways promoted activities.
- Value chain selection and development:** Value chains of focus in each country have been finalized. The criteria for selection of the value chains included among others

profitability, geographical suitability and potential to benefit women and transform gender roles in agriculture. For each country, a set of value chains reflecting these criteria and the BMGF priority commodities has been selected. These include:

- Tanzania:** Cassava, cowpeas, sesame
- Bangladesh:** Vegetables (chilies), indigo
- Malawi:** Groundnuts and soybeans
- India:** Cereals (maize, rice), livestock, non-timber forest products
- Ghana:** Groundnuts and soybeans
- Mali:** Rice, millet, livestock, vegetables



The table below summarizes the collectives identified by the readiness assessment exercise as appropriate for Pathways engagement. It is important to note that the current level of activity with the total population varies significantly across countries. This reflects the level of previous engagement with the groups, which is quite high in some countries (Malawi) and non-existent in others (India, Tanzania) as well as factors such as the agricultural season and, in the case of Mali, ongoing and emerging conflicts in implementation areas.

	Mali	Tanzania	India	Malawi	Ghana	Bangladesh	TOTAL
VSLAs	499	41	0	683	14	0	1,237
Producer groups	35	154	32	232	0	0	453
Self help groups	0	0	1,384	0	0	0	1,384
Co-ops/Networks	36	0	4	0	0	0	40
Other	9	9	342	0	0	54	414
Number and types of collectives identified for Pathways Collaboration							3,528

C. LINKAGES AND LEVERAGE

- **Communications and Media.** The Pathways website (www.carepathwaystoempowerment.org) was created during the inception period as a tool to share information about the Pathways program with external audiences. The website includes content about the Pathways program including the theory of change and country profiles. In addition, CARE's programming in Malawi – upon which the Pathways programming in that country is built – was featured in the New York Times via articles by Nicholas Kristoff, citing CARE's approach as unique and impactful in its ability to improve the lives of poor women smallholder farmers. CARE also contributed a blog post to the BMGF Impatient Optimists website following the program's African launch in Tanzania. Pathways was officially launched in September at the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Arusha, Tanzania.
- **Internal Linkages:** Pathways Objective 2 commits CARE to establishing Pathways as a programming platform within CARE USA and other CARE International members. The progress over the reporting period has been significant and includes:

Over USD 15 million raised by CARE Australia and CARE Canada to implement programs modeled on Pathways in Tanzania, Malawi, Mali, Ghana, Ethiopia and Bolivia. In countries, where there is overlap with Pathways, the new initiatives are using common tools and approaches in many instances.

CARE Ethiopia is using baseline tools developed by Pathways in their food security programs. The collaboration between Pathways and CARE Ethiopia also heavily informed the Pathways operational framework, which builds on lessons learned over the past four years of food security programming in that country.

CARE India has used the Pathways theory of change for their long term program on Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) and is adopting the Pathways indicators to measure women's empowerment.

- **External Partnerships:** Pathways Objective 3 focuses on informing and influencing dialogue and practice beyond CARE and engaging others pursuing a similar agenda. To this end, Pathways staff members have formed linkages with external

organizations in support of Pathways activities globally and in specific countries. CARE is linking with Landessa to work on women's land rights in multiple countries. The program is collaborating with TANGO International for the evaluation plan and baseline assessments and with the Coady Institute on the collectives learning agenda. The program is also attracting interest from multi-national corporations including Wal-Mart, Cargill, and Syngenta willing to explore how to better integrate smallholder farmers and gender equality into their supply chains. Additional partnerships being explored include collaborations with the Global Fund for Women, The International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), Land O'Lakes International Development, Oxfam GB, Farm Radio and Dimagi.

D. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Development:** A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan has been developed and finalized for the program. Generated through active engagement of implementing countries, the plan incorporates a formal third-party evaluation, a series of annual reviews, ongoing monitoring of key program activity areas, forward accountability mechanisms, and a cohort study to track the pathways of specific households over the life of the program. The plan also integrates a robust approach to program learning, initially grounded in a collectives learning agenda, which CARE is pursuing in collaboration with the Coady Institute.
- **Baseline Study:** In partnership with TANGO International, Pathways developed research protocols and an evaluation plan in spring of 2012. The evaluation is a panel study using a pre/post-analysis and mixed methods to assess program contributions to change and impact over the life of Pathways. Baseline data collection was complete as of October 2012 in all six countries and country-level reports have been completed for Tanzania, Malawi and India. All reports, including a global cross-program summary will be completed by April 2013.

Over the reporting period, CARE has made substantial strides toward achieving the program objectives. The process has also yielded significant lessons both on what works for programming for women smallholder farmers and on how CARE can best manage the global program to maximize return on investment for all involved.

To learn more, visit the Pathways website at www.carepathwaystoempowerment.org

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