



Approaches and Tools

SuPER Food: CARE's Principles for Food and Nutrition Security

OVERVIEW In 2014, CARE reached nearly 14 million people with food and nutrition security programs, and we have committed helping 50 million poor and vulnerable people improve their food and nutrition security and their resilience to climate change by 2020. How are we going to get there? By working toward SuPER food systems: food systems that are Sustainable, Productive (including Profitable and Nutritious), Equitable, and Resilient. All of CARE's work in food and nutrition security promotes the right and ability of the poorest and most vulnerable to have the same access to nutritious foods and fair markets as everyone else.

The Problem

Today's food systems are broken. Over 800 million people are under-nourished; 160 million children are stunted; and one-third of all food produced is wasted, from post-harvest loss to other points along the value chain. It isn't an issue of 'not enough food' – there is enough for everyone, but access

is unequal. Further, the footprint of current food systems is environmentally unsustainable. Two-thirds of ecosystems are already used unsustainably; one-fifth of cropland is degraded and unsuitable for farming; and agriculture is both one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gasses, and already showing reduced yields as a result of a changing climate and unpredictable weather patterns.

In the meantime, a projected global population of 9.6 billion people by 2050 means food production must increase by as much as 60%. And for women the challenges are even greater: they are often the last to eat when food is scarce; carry a heavy labor burden that is largely natural resource dependent; and do not have equal access with men to productive inputs. Simply put, business as usual will not create sustainable and equitable food and nutrition security for the planet, much less for the poorest and most vulnerable people. ***Business as usual is not a just and sustainable food system.***

At its root, poverty is a result of inequality. In today's food systems, the poor—especially women—cannot access power, resources, and opportunities. CARE believes that we cannot end poverty without improving equality.



The Solution

We know it is possible to have just and sustainable food systems that provide adequate and nutritious food for everyone in the system—especially women and girls. Getting to just and sustainable food systems will help end poverty now and for generations to come. Smallholder farmers using sustainable conservation agriculture techniques can dramatically increase productivity and overall food production without relying on unsustainable practices, and can help fix broken food systems.

The Evidence

How do we know change is possible? We've seen the results in our programs around the world.

- Preliminary results from work in **Mozambique** suggest that using conservation agriculture and improved varieties—core principles of CARE's SuPER Agriculture approach—have increased yields of cassava by more than 400% in just 3 seasons. Smallscale farmers can increase their production to feed and nourish the planet's population in the face of a changing climate, without destroying the ecosystems we depend on.
- CARE's work in **Kenya** through the Adaptation and Learning Project shows that investing \$1 in community based adaptation generates between \$1.45 and \$3.03 of wealth for communities. The costs of more equitable

planning to be resilient to climate change and shocks were 2.6 times lower than the cost of doing nothing.

- CARE's **Pathways** program in six countries focuses on getting women farmers access to the resources and power they need to improve their lives. In two years, the project has mobilized enough additional land for women to cover half of Manhattan, and an extra \$3.9 million in income. Women and men are also sharing power at home to improve their lives.
- CARE's work in **Ethiopia** suggests that working with the whole food system—agriculture, water, health, women's empowerment and nutrition together—is 6-12 times more impact on improving nutrition that working with just nutrition as a focus.

Our Principles For Just Food Systems

Sustainable food systems that are grounded in healthy ecosystems, stable, accountable and enduring institutions and sustainable financing

Productive (including profitable and nutrition-sensitive) intensification that increases returns on investment, including of labor, by farmers, results in nutritionally balanced diets, and is climate 'smart'

Equitable outcomes that enabling equal rights, opportunities, resources and rewards for the poor and vulnerable, taking into account the needs and constraints of women, and supporting access to affordable nutritious food by rural and urban consumers

Resilience for individuals, families, communities and systems to be able to withstand shocks and stresses, including climate impacts and other risks.

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