



SOAR

Strengthening Opportunities for Adolescent Resilience

WHAT: Support a proven accelerated education and leadership program for 3 million out-of-school adolescents over five years.

WHERE: Six countries in Africa and Asia.

WHY: Without action while they are still young, we are accepting their planned poverty. SOAR's learning outcomes outperform formal education, even while focusing on the most marginalized. SOAR directly impacts six Sustainable Development Goals.

Millions of adolescents are out of school because they were forced to drop out or they never had a chance to enroll in the first place. As a result, they lack the knowledge, skills, confidence and resources to make informed and empowered decisions as they approach adulthood. This leaves far too many of them vulnerable to financial insecurity, exploitation, early marriage and pregnancy.

Without action, we are accepting their inevitable poverty.

At CARE, we fight for these children. Our Strengthening Opportunities for Adolescent Resilience (SOAR) program provides them a second chance. SOAR includes an accelerated learning program in which students complete the equivalent of four years of school in 11 months.



1.8 billion young people live in the world today



They make up more than half the population in least developed countries



175 million adolescents in low-income countries cannot read a full sentence

WHAT makes SOAR

UNIQUE?

SOAR provides an integrated solution containing:

- The on-ramp for formal education or business entrepreneurship
- A comprehensive curriculum that addresses barriers to level the playing field
- Partnerships to influence government education strategies

SOAR focuses on:

- Hardest-to-reach populations: marginalized out-of-school adolescents, unlikely to return
- Rural, urban, migration and crisis settings
- Barriers related to gender, mental health, poverty and displacement

To level the playing field for marginalized adolescents, SOAR's highly interactive four-part curriculum includes financial literacy, such as savings clubs and business training; life skills, such as leadership clubs to increase voice, decision-making and negotiation; literacy and math; and sexual and reproductive health.

SOAR's target population faces complex problems such as protracted conflict, disabilities, gender-based violence, food insecurity, instability at home and displacement. Up to 20% of out-of-school girls in our target population experience anxiety or depression.

For example, the program trains female community mentors, establishes supportive peer groups, engages parents, teachers and community members, and conducts personalized student assessments to note learning levels, mental health issues and disabilities.

SOAR's monitoring and evaluation uses real-time data tracking and feedback, which enables us to adapt the program with agility.

Personalized Assessments and Learning:

- Teacher-developed assessments track individual progress and signal needs.
- Teachers personalize learning plans to match student needs and progress.

Ministry of Education Dashboards

- Real-time data dashboards enable agile adaptation and continuous improvement.
- Real-time data collected by SOAR facilitators, aggregated centrally.
- Teachers and PTAs get specific feedback based on data; programs adjust as needed.
- Data findings inform Ministry of Education planning strategies.

Predictive Analytics

- We are leading groundbreaking work in predictive analytics on literacy and numeracy outcomes in fragile and complex contexts.
- We have one of the largest caches of field-level data, helping us design better programs and influence at ministry levels.



Nicolas Axelrod/ CARE



Rafeef / CARE Jordan

SOAR's learning outcomes outperform formal education, even while focusing on the most marginalized. For example, in Afghanistan, SOAR's literacy scores were 68% higher than for girls enrolled in primary public schools. SOAR curriculum and materials have been validated by the Ministries of Education in Malawi and Zambia.

SOAR continues to build evidence of impact across all parts of the program. For example, in Zimbabwe, girls who participated in leadership clubs and special camps had significantly higher gains in leadership competencies than girls who didn't participate. In India, 95% of girls who completed the accelerated learning program passed the national exams to be eligible to transition back to formal schools. In Kenya, CARE saw adolescents report a 30% increase in average savings. In Nepal, only 7% of the SOAR graduates got married early, compared to 40% nationwide.

Our Goal

Our goal is to grow SOAR's reach from 4 million participants in six countries (India, Pakistan, Somalia, Nepal, Malawi and Zambia) to 7 million across seven countries by 2025. We will need \$25.2M to achieve our scaling goals.

The start-up program in a **country costs \$350 per participant**, which covers management and coordination, curriculum development, pilot and program refinement, and facilitator training. Once we scale the existing program in the country, **the cost can be reduced to \$10 per participant** due to a critical mass of facilitators trained, shared costs with the government, and lower material and logistical expenses.

CARE is a recognized leader in girls' education, specifically marginalized out-of-school adolescents, by partners such as U.S. Agency for International Development, UK Department for International Development, U.N. Girls' Education Initiative, Brookings Institution, as well as Ministries of Education in multiple countries. We have deep expertise addressing gender barriers and social norms that hold girls back. Unlike single-issue or tech-centric literacy organizations, CARE incorporates complex external contexts into its approach. We engage governments early to ensure scalability, sustainability and lasting change. We have 75 years of experience working with hardest-to-reach populations, with deep community and government relationships. We adapt to specific cultural contexts and influence national education strategies.

CARE is best positioned to scale this work. We are recognized by industry experts as a leader in education. Given the breadth of our networks and the depth of our community relationships, we already have the infrastructure in place to scale this program. In order to be successful, we adapt the model to specific cultural contexts and take a whole-system approach to our work.



John Hewat / CARE

We can ensure equal opportunity for 3 million of the world's most at-risk adolescents. That's \$25.2 million to get 3 million young people on a path out of poverty.

STORY

Adolescent girls like Laxmi, who either had never enrolled or were forced to drop out, are given a second chance to learn through a fast-track course.

A Brighter Future

Josh Estey / CARE

Girls like 12-year-old Laxmi Pal in rural India grow up believing they don't belong in school. Often seen as outsiders, they do housework and look after their younger siblings until they marry and move out at about age 14. Being the oldest of five kids, Laxmi assumed those burdens in her family. She would spend her days at home feeling trapped with her siblings, while her mother cleaned houses and her father did seasonal farm work.

Laxmi, whose name means "goddess of money," broke that tradition when she set foot in a classroom for the first time, becoming the only member of her family to go to school. At CARE's SOAR school, she hit the jackpot. Adolescent girls like Laxmi, who either had never enrolled or were forced to drop out, are given a second chance to learn through a fast-track course.

After just 11 months, she graduated from the fifth grade and was enrolled in a government secondary school to continue her education. Laxmi's dream is to become a teacher. Thanks to CARE and our donors, Laxmi and her classmates are now on their way to becoming well-educated women.

"If I didn't go to school, I would have been cleaning houses with my mom and soon married off," Laxmi says. "Being at school allowed me to dream about my future for the first time."



With your help, CARE and our partners can reach 3 million more girls like Laxmi by replicating this proven education model in other countries.