



ANNUAL REPORT 2023





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CARE'S LEGACY

Partnership is central to CARE's global vision and mission, and as a leading INGO in Bangladesh our aim is to be partner of choice for government, civil society organisations, social movements, the private sector and donors. CARE is currently implementing 35 projects with 36 partner NGOs. With a revised program strategy guiding implementation until 2030, in 2024 CARE Bangladesh looks forward to marking 75 years of operation in Bangladesh, a milestone in its journey as one of the largest international humanitarian organisations, and of the wider development sector. We invite you to join us as we work side-by-side with communities to achieve gender equitable poverty reduction.



VISION

We seek a world of hope, inclusion and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and all people live in dignity and security.



MISSION

CARE works around the globe to save lives, defeat poverty and achieve social justice.



VALUES

Diversity, excellence, equality, transformation and integrity.



TARGET 2030

CARE and our partners commit to supporting 200 million people from the most vulnerable and excluded communities to overcome poverty and social injustice.



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Starting in 1949, continuing through its active role in rebuilding the country after liberation, to the challenges brought about by COVID-19, and all the historical moments in-between, CARE's deep commitment to the people we work for has established us as a long-standing development partner for Bangladesh. As we take joy and pride in being the partner of choice for development and humanitarian activities in Bangladesh, we are deeply humbled by this incredible faith that so many have in us.

In the past year, we delved into our programmatic work and looked back at our impact. It made us think about the work that we need to do in the coming days, to be more impactful and live up to the honour and trust bestowed upon us. Led by CARE's vision of 2030, we aim to harness our collective powers to fight poverty and achieve social justice, while making sure that our work is gender equal, locally-led and globally scaled, is rooted in a market-based approach, and builds resilience for the people and the systems that are lifting up Bangladesh as the decade unfolds.

As we look forward to 2024 to mark 75 years of operations in Bangladesh, we want to take a moment to acknowledge the CARE Bangladesh team, current and past, for their undeterred commitment to humanity. While the organisation has stood firm for 75 years, it is the people here who have ensured its survival and the goodwill it continues to generate throughout the country. I also want to thank our donors, partners and peers for their contribution. Last but not least, we are truly thankful to the agencies, ministries and individuals of the Government of Bangladesh for their support, cooperation and input. This valuable – and valued – contribution has been vital to the success of the work of CARE in Bangladesh, and we look forward to continuing this fruitful relationship throughout the coming year and beyond.



Ramesh Singh

Country Director, CARE Bangladesh



IMPACT DATA AND REACH



48+ Projects



5.3 M Direct reach

Reach ratio



64%



36%



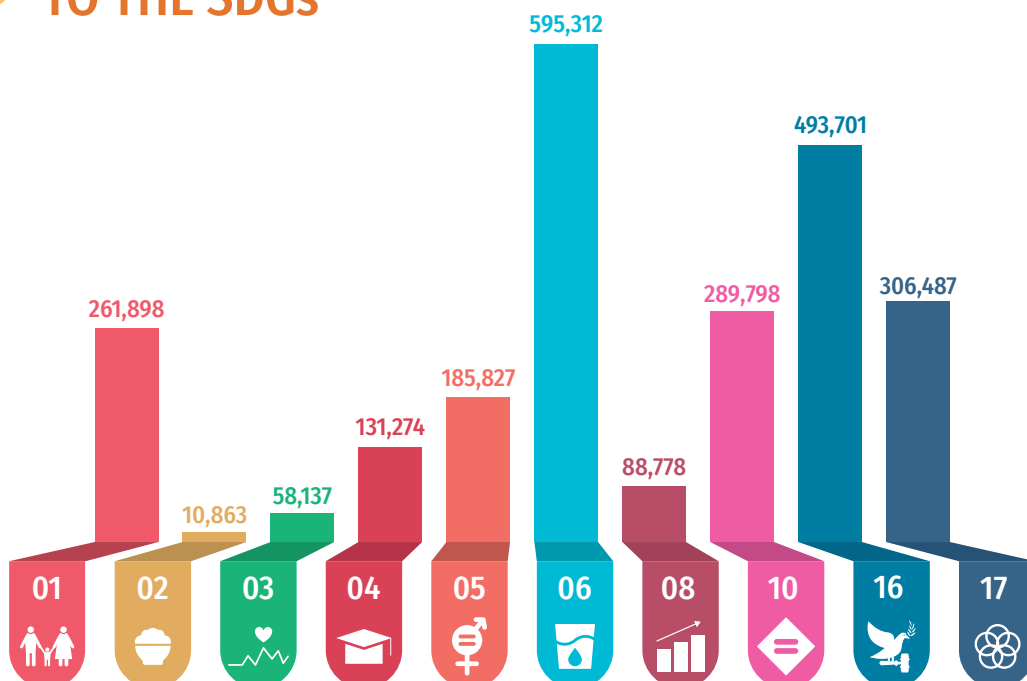
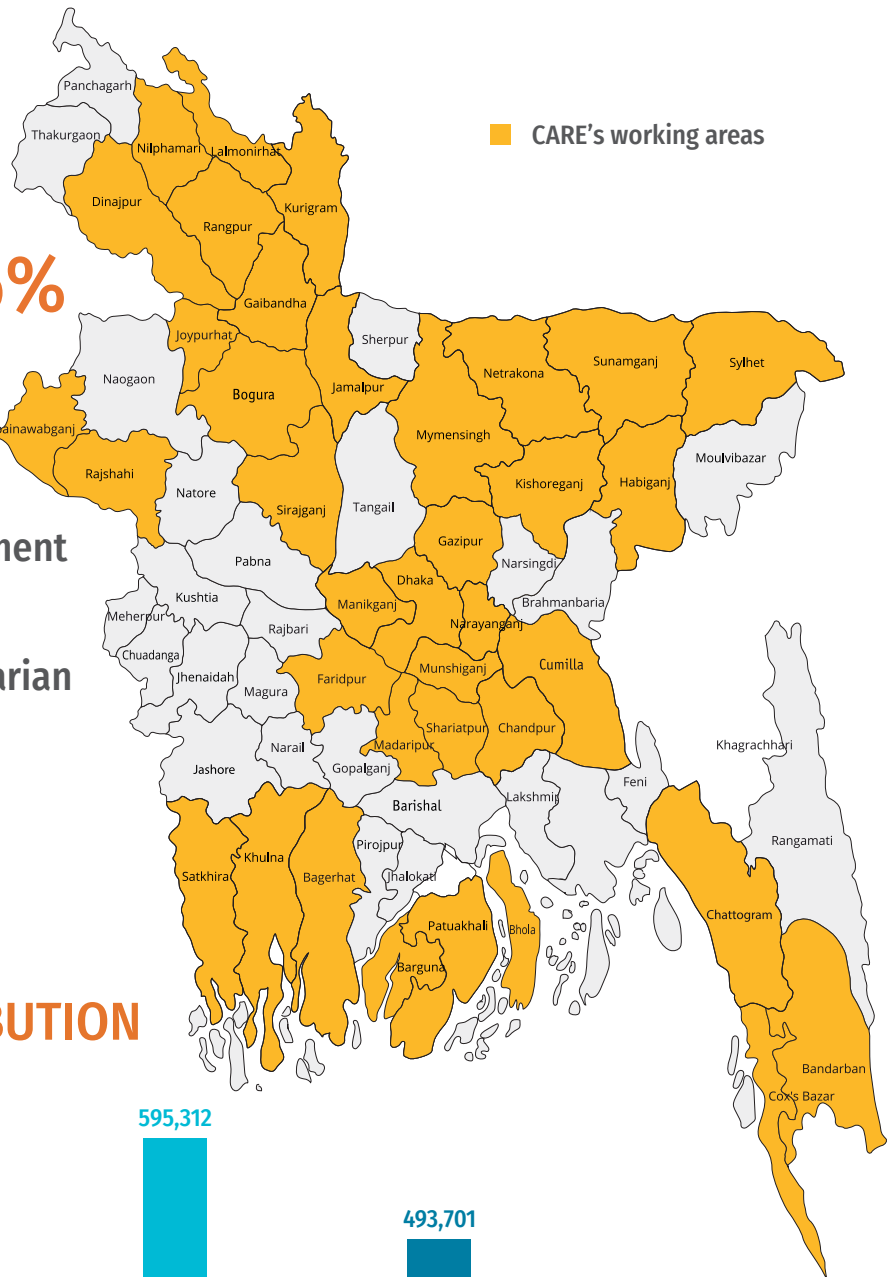
3.8 M Development reach



1.5 M Humanitarian reach



CARE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SDGs



PROGRAM STRATEGY 2030

GOAL: 15 million people in Bangladesh, especially women and girls, are leading gender equal and resilient lives by 2030

Purposes: 1) People, especially women and girls, are empowered to set and achieve their development goals and 2) Socio-economic norms and institutions support gender equality

Impact Areas	Gender Equality	Economic Justice	Inclusive Humanitarian Assistance	Climate Justice	Food, Water and Nutrition Security	Health, Sexual and Reproductive Rights
Outcomes	Women and girls live a dignified life and experience greater gender equality	All people, especially the economically disadvantaged, have equitable access to markets and control over productive resources and assets.	People's lives especially women's, are safe and protected during humanitarian crises.	Socially excluded people, particularly women and girls, are resilient in the face of climate-related shocks and stressors.	All people, especially poor and extremely poor households, and women, are food secure and enjoy good nutritional outcomes.	Men and women and female and male adolescents have access to equitable, resilient, and comprehensive and appropriate SRH services, including in humanitarian and fragile settings.
Key Interventions	i) Build the capacities of women's platforms to advocate for the needs and desires of women and girls ii) Build leadership skills among women, female youth, and girls iii) Support local advocacy campaigns to change harmful norms such as GBV and child marriage iv) Lead dialogues to create more equitable gender relations at the HH and community levels v) Build the capacities of local governance bodies to provide gender sensitive services and support vi) Champion models of women-led and girl-led networks	i) Develop financial service provider capacity to create products appropriate for economically disadvantaged groups ii) Build the skills of collectives and the economically disadvantaged to access financial, digital and information services, engage in business activities and participate in value chains iii) Transform markets so they are accessible and safe iv) Create social support for women's participation in productive activities, markets and value chains.	i) Facilitate collaboration between communities, governments, and local actors to prepare for and respond to shocks and crises ii) Build the capacities of government and civil society to engage in these efforts following an Area-Based Disaster Management Coordination Approach iii) Create women and girl-friendly safe spaces iv) Empower youth and women to engage in disaster planning and response	i) Support coordination within and between departments and ministries to tackle climate change ii) Support HH adoption of climate-resistant and nature-positive livelihood practices and energy solutions iii) Increase community capacity to prepare for and respond to climate-related shocks and stressors iv) Increase accessibility to climate-resilient homes, infrastructure and WASH facilities v) Establish climate and weather-related information services and early warning systems	i) Support community uptake of SuPER (Sustainable, productive, equitable and resilient) agriculture practices and community-led WASH approaches ii) Support for the recognition of women's role in agriculture iii) Rehabilitate food and WASH-related infrastructure so it is accessible and safe for all	i) Transform social norms to enable adolescents and young people to make choices that support SRH ii) Create feedback mechanisms to improve service delivery iii) Build the capacities of SRH service providers to appropriately respond to the SRH needs of women and female adolescents iv) Strengthen community voices and leadership to seek and advocate for services

Problems and Shocks

Harmful social norms; discriminatory laws, **gender inequity** in access to education; health & financial services; **violence against women;** high rates of child marriage & adolescent motherhood; gendered **food insecurity;** child stunting an maternal death; **unemployment** among women and youth; **service gaps** in MNCH and SRH; **limited employment opportunities** & skills development; workplace exploitation, participation in decision-making; loss of biodiversity; **inadequate social safety nets;** **unequal gender power relations;** **exploitative** market systems; social exclusion; **inadequate investment** in human development and economic capital.

Shocks - Climate change and climate-related displacement; Severe flooding; Influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar; COVID-19 pandemic; Inflation / Price Hikes

Theory of Change

NEW PROGRAMS

USAID's Community Nutrition and Health Activity in Bangladesh

Malnutrition is a significant challenge in Bangladesh, particularly among mothers and children. Bangladesh's 2022 Demographic and Health Survey found that 24% of children under age five are stunted (not tall enough for their height), 22% are underweight, and 11% are wasted (too thin for their height). Poor maternal nutrition and infant and young child feeding practices, micronutrient deficiencies, and low birth weight all contribute to malnourishment. The country also has the highest prevalence of child marriage in South Asia, with 51% of young women married before the legal age of 18. Social and economic factors including climate change and natural disasters, sanitation and hygiene, and availability and access to clean drinking water and food are major constraints.

Leading a consortium to implement the USAID-funded Community Nutrition and Health Activity (CNHA), CARE aims to impact sustainably the nutrition and health of women and children in the first 1000 days of life.



14 Districts: Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Netrokona, Sunamganj, Kishoreganj, Habiganj, Faridpur, Shariatpur, Madaripur, Patuakhali, Bhola, Barguna

Key interventions

-  Strengthen nutrition supervisory system and coordination
-  Introduce community scorecards to strengthen local government accountability
-  Improve quality of nutrition and health services through digital tools and training
-  Provide malnutrition community surveillance, screening, and treatment
-  Facilitate community group engagement
-  Encourage household behaviour change

Specific targets



470

Union Health & Family Welfare centres



1,329

Community clinics



1,329

Community groups



3,987

Community support groups



3,993,525

Direct participants



9,882,257

Indirect participants



2,228,294

Women of reproductive age (20-49)



376,151

Children under two years of age



539,851

Married adolescents (15-19)



7,573

Frontline health and family planning workers/supervisors



Duration

April 2023 – April 2028



Consortium partners

icddr,b, Jhpiego, VISCOM, mPower



Funded by

USAID



Local partners

ESDO, FIVDB, PSKS, SAINT Bangladesh

USAID'S Bijoyee Activity – enabling youth today to build a promising nation for tomorrow

Bijoyee Activity focuses on Positive Youth Development (PYD) approaches, dedicated to effective and inclusive development for Bangladeshi youth, particularly young women and socially excluded young people. Bijoyee emphasises skills development, economic opportunities, empowerment, and inclusion for youth in its management structure, and promotes localisation. The initiative works to strengthen the national youth system and advocates for an improved policy environment that is responsive to youth.

18 Districts: Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Gazipur, Chattogram, Khagrachhari, Bandarban, Cox's Bazar, Magura, Jessore, Satkhira, Khulna, Kurigram, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Sherpur, Bogura

Bijoyee's approach

Shifting power relations, to foster locally-led and youth-driven development and system strengthening to ensure an enabling environment for the youth.



Duration

June 2023 – June 2028



Funded by

USAID



Consortium partners

Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC), JAAGO Foundation Trust, Underprivileged Children's Educational Project (UCEP), Dhruvotara Youth Development Foundation (DYDF), The Earth



Inclusion partners

Society Access Bangladesh Foundation, Bandhu Social Welfare Society, Safety and Rights Society (SRS), TAHZINGDONG

Specific targets



250,000

youth trained in soft skills



300

grassroots YLOs will be strengthened to ensure locally-led development



500

youth group **conducting** civic engagement, social entrepreneurship, and climatepreneurship will be supported



60%

of trained youth with increased income/career progression



10,000

youth entrepreneurs starting/expanding businesses



30,000

youth mobilised to conduct civic engagement activities



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Humanitarian and Climate Action



Reach

1.4 M



48%



52%



Projects

12



Donors

DANIDA, USAID, MACP, ECHO, USAID,
WFP, UNICEF, BMZ, ECHO, CVF, FCDO

14

Districts

Bagerhat, Satkhira, Cox's Bazar, Bandarban, Patuakhali,
Gaibandha, Kurigram, Jamalpur, Bogura, Lalmonirhat,
Sunamganj, Sylhet, Netrokona, Moulvibazar



Program overview

The CARE Bangladesh Humanitarian and Climate Action Program contributes to the organisation's mandate to **deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance to the people affected by climatic, geophysical, and other disasters and build the resilience of individuals, communities and systems to deal with the impacts of climate change.** With innovation, market-based approach, and gender equality at its centre, the program follows a locally-led but globally-scaled model in its actions, including preparedness and early action, emergency response and recovery, mitigation and adaptation to climate change for sustainable and equitable development.

CARE Bangladesh's work for humanitarian and climate action program is rooted in the in the principles of (1) green innovation, (2) a market-based approach, (3) climate resilience and nature-positive livelihood practices and energy solutions, (4) needs and gap assessments, (5) sustainable, profitable, equitable and resilient (SuPER) agriculture (6) climate-resilient homes, infrastructure and WASH facilities, and (7) forecast-based early or anticipatory action.

Building on a foundation of prevention, preparedness, and adaptation, CARE Bangladesh continues to influence and implement international and national policies and commitments, including the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Agenda for Sustainable Development. Alignment with the Government of Bangladesh's Standing Orders on Disaster, its National Adaptation Plan, Nationally Determined Contribution, National Plan for Disaster Management, Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan and the Bangladesh Delta Plan ensures that CARE's work in Bangladesh is time and contextually appropriate.

2.5 million poor and marginalised people, particularly women and girls, affected by climate change and other crises, are protected through humanitarian assistance and supported to strengthen their resilience.

Thematic focus

- Promoting gender equity
- Initiating locally-led adaptation, nature-based solutions and green humanitarian assistance
- Advocating for loss and damage financing and climate justice
- Ensuring continuous governance and advocacy for emerging issues

From savings to income: Shah Alam's napier grass cultivation, reducing the fodder crisis

In north-western Bangladesh, where livestock rearing is crucial for household income, seasonal floods often disrupt grazing lands, forcing farmers like Md. Shah Alam of Sadi village to rely on expensive purchased fodder. Alam's struggle changed when he learned about silage preservation from Ballal Hossain of CARE's SUFAL project. Attending a training on Napier grass cultivation, Alam grasped techniques to overcome the challenges encountered in flood-prone areas.



Alam implemented his newfound knowledge, cultivating Napier grass on his land. The flood-resistant grass yielded multiple harvests, ensuring a consistent supply of green fodder for his cattle. By preparing silage in advance based on flood forecasts, Alam not only saved on fodder expenses but also generated additional income by selling excess grass and cuttings.

Alam's success story resonated with neighbouring farmers, prompting them to adopt similar practices. Through Alam's initiative, the community embraced forecast-based actions, enhancing resilience to flood-related challenges while creating alternative income opportunities. Alam's journey underscores the transformative impact of proactive agricultural practices and community-driven initiatives in building resilience and sustainability in flood-prone regions.

Major achievements



New disaster financing mechanisms include disaster risk financing, shock-responsive social protection, and climate and disaster risk finance and insurance. These support disaster-prone communities to be better prepared for natural disasters and equipped with resources to tackle them. With strong, established early warning systems initiated by CARE, these new mechanisms increase community resilience.

Rohingya Response



Reach

670,000+



52%



48%



Projects

20



Donors

UNICEF, DFAT, CARE USA, JICA, USAID, CARE Austria, IOM, WFP, CARE International (pooled fund), Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark



Program overview

CARE provides integrated humanitarian assistance to Rohingya refugees and neighbouring host communities while addressing gender-specific needs across different age groups.

Cox's Bazar district is home to the world's largest refugee settlement. By the end of 2023 nearly one million members of the Rohingya community were living in need of sanitation, access to adequate health services, education, and income-earning opportunities. Since the significant influx of Rohingya refugees began on August 25, 2017, CARE has been actively delivering integrated humanitarian aid, with a focus on tackling gender-specific needs.



Thematic focus

- Preventing and responding to gender-based violence
- Addressing sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Ensuring site management and development
- Enabling access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)

All programs promote livelihood, skills training, food security and nutrition status.

WASH sector leads plastic recycling plant

Each month more than 1,400 kg of polythene waste is generated in the Rohingya refugee camps, hazardous to health and with serious implications for landfill. To tackle this huge amount of waste, CARE has implemented a UNICEF-funded plastic recycling plant. This uses the recycled polythene to make spare parts for new-build or renovated latrines and bathing cubicles. On a daily basis, a total of around 80 kg of plastic waste is collected from at least two camps and recycled. This initiative benefits more than 16,000 refugee families and 5,700 members of the host community. The work generated by the recycling plant also provides earning opportunities for camp residents.

Rashida is from the refugee community and works in the recycling plant. She told us, *“Before this activity, my days were filled with uncertainty and I’d worry about the next meal – now I can plan. There’s a purpose to my work, with each day bringing a new ray of hope for my family and me. Joining this activity isn’t just a job for me – it’s my lifeline. Supporting the repair of WASH facilities and the use of recycled plastic products in the camps has transformed my struggles into opportunities and empowered me to dream again.”*



Polythene segregation unit for recycling

Site Management Support: the beginnings of inclusion for the third gender community

Five years after the Rohingya refugee influx, just one organisation was working for those identifying as third gender, and had very limited resources and reach. In association with IOM as donor, CARE began to support third gender individuals to participate in camp activities. This was not easy. Those identifying as third gender live with constant threat and rejection, and at first did not feel safe enough even to attend meetings. Change began after a few attempts by the Site Management Support agency (SMS), when some of the wider community started to acknowledge third gender camp residents.

Third gender camp members now take part in some activities as volunteers and as part of cash-for-work programs. This third gender involvement in CARE activities constitutes a success story for the SMS. One young third gender man expressed his thanks for the CARE site management team saying, *“They gave me the chance to contribute my opinion and supported me with issues like how to get hold of meat at Eid, hygiene kits, and other non-food items. There never used to be enough opportunities to acquire such things. It was also very helpful to us when we were excused from [the risks of] night duty – and we also have a space where we can share problems with the site management team.”*



Enabling a disabled generation

CARE has worked in the Rohingya camps to make them more accessible for everyone, including those with disabilities. Abul Hasan and Sakina Khatun are parents of four disabled children and struggled with inadequate WASH facilities. After CARE's upgrades and hygiene education, the family's well-being has improved, granting the children increased independence and the parents more time. This illustrates the positive impact of accessible latrines and CARE's dedication to enhancing the lives of people with disabilities in refugee camps.



Women and Youth Empowerment



Reach

24,000+



19%



81%



Projects

8



Donors

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation,
H&M Foundation, The Kendeda Fund,
UNFPA, USAID

13

Districts

Bagerhat, Barguna, Chattogram, Dhaka, Gaibandha,
Gazipur, Jamalpur, Khulna, Kurigram, Mymensingh,
Patuakhali, Rangpur, Sunamganj [Bijoyee project districts]



Program overview

Placing women and youth at the center of CARE's work is critical to tackle the root causes of poverty, inequity, rights violations and climate vulnerability impacting Bangladesh's rural and urban populations. The vision for CARE Bangladesh's Women and Youth Empowerment program is to ensure that **the most socially, economically and politically marginalised women and youth are empowered** – those who experience multiple denials of their rights. The aim is to build resilience of vulnerable communities to shocks and amplify their voices for influencing governance, public policy, and development practices. Serving the women and marginalised will not just transform their lives but will also unleash untapped potential.

CARE Bangladesh's approach for Women and Youth Empowerment program is rooted deeply in the past lessons of decades of work. This includes (1) challenging harmful social norms, (2) capacity enhancing of local governance to provide gender-sensitive services, (3) creating safe market accesses and linkages, (4) creating a bridge for digital literacy, and (5) engaging men and boys to contribute creating a safe space for women and girls to participate in different forums and activities.



Thematic focus

- Promoting women's economic empowerment
- Improving safety and dignity of women and girls by advocating for gender equality
- Raising awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Youth empowerment and skill development
- Ensuring each person's human rights are recognised from birth

Program goal

CARE's Women and Youth Empowerment program aims to empower the most socially, economically and politically marginalised women, girls and youth by addressing the underlying causes of their marginalisation. It does this by changing stereotypical gender norms, structures, and unequal power relations, and by ensuring access to and control over resources.

Major achievements

Trailblazing prevention of child, early and forced marriage

In 2003, girl-led programming **reduced child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) by 63% among girls** attending 36–40 weekly sessions. This magnitude of impact on child marriage has never before been seen, either in Bangladesh or elsewhere. At government level, CARE's engagement led to a breakthrough with the **Ministry of Women & Children Affairs, Department of Women Affairs**, and other relevant ministries, which acknowledged the social norms approach that CARE has adopted and began to mainstream it. **Capacity building** reached **30 community-based organisations** in six districts in Bangladesh, training 150 adolescent girls and 30 mentors to implement girl-led collective action to end child marriage.



Voices of our Participants on Activism for Equality: Advocating for Equal Rights

Scan the QR code to hear their opinions



Workplace empowerment

CARE facilitates the Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement (P.A.C.E.) program, involving 32 garments factories to provide training in professional and life skills for marginalised women migrant workers in the ready-made garments (RMG) sector. In FY2023, 6,000 women improved their functional communication in the workplace and gained the confidence they needed to assert their rights, and 62,000 were supported through a roundtable consultation that CARE facilitated.



CARE engaged different RMG factories for sensitisation on workplace culture

Scan the QR code to know more



Transforming Leadership through P.A.C.E Program- Story of Ayesha and Khadiza

Scan the QR code to hear their stories



SHOUHARDO III Plus



Reach

112,724



61%



39%



Donor

USAID

8

Districts

Kurigram, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj,
Sunamganj, Netrokona, Habiganj



Program overview

Bangladesh has made significant progress in terms of food production and agricultural systems, but ensuring nutrition and safe food for all and a resilient agriculture system remains a challenge for the country's massive population and subsequent climate vulnerability. A systems perspective is crucial to understanding how food and agriculture work together, and their significance to our lives and the environment. Agriculture is both an environmental system as well as a socio-economic system. It is also a form of ecosystem and there is a wide range of agro-ecosystems. On the other hand, a food system includes the production, processing, transport and consumption of food and food-related items, where the economics, sustainability and health aspects of food also need to be considered.

In this system CARE's approach includes supporting community uptake of SuPER (sustainable, productive, equitable and resilient) agriculture practices; empowerment of women, and social norms change to support equal control of resources and inclusive decision-making; women's access to assets and production services; promoting LSP's to provide services and technology; integrating market-based approaches and ecology-based adaptation and advocacy.

Thematic focus

- Encouraging the use of high yield, climate resilient crop varieties
- Promoting women and youth-led climate-resilient, nutrition-sensitive agriculture
- Advocating for crop diversity and integrated farming
- Facilitating market integration and fair price
- Improving services and accountability of service providers
- Creating financial access for smaller holder farmers

Integrated into these result areas are cross-cutting components of gender, governance, private sector, and environment.

This program works to economically empower women and thereby create a long-term impact on their food security status. Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities (SHOUHARDO III Plus/SHOU3+) delivers improved gender-equitable food and nutrition security and resilience to poor and extreme poor households in the *char* and *haor* regions of northern Bangladesh.

Achievements

-  **2,280** local service providers working in program areas
-  **1,888** active Village Savings and Loan Association groups with **36,497** members
-  **57,830** pregnant and lactating women, **104,483** children under the age of five, and
-  **42,877** adolescent girls reached

Village Savings and Loan Associations

Women's savings practice has been strengthened through local service providers known as "*Sanchay Sathis*", or savings companions. For a small fee, these savings agents provide technical support to women from poor households, enabling them to access savings and loan-related services. *Sanchay Sathis* were set up under CARE's Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) financial model, which is community-based, savings-led, and increases access to financial services for poor and extremely poor households. This one-of-a-kind approach is expected to sustain the intervention beyond the program's lifetime.



Jannatun Begum (35) is a *sanchay sathi* working in Bangladesh's Kurigram district and has formed 10 VSLA groups in just one year. She is a remarkable inspiration to the women in her community by promoting the practice of saving. She says, "*Beyond the monetary compensation and benefits of having another source of income, my work as a Sanchay Sathi brings me social recognition.*"

Health and Nutrition Program

 **Reach** **2.7+ M**  **71%**  **29%**

 **Projects** **10**

 **Donors** The Global Fund, USAID, EU, CISCO, TWILO

29 **Districts**

Barguna, Bhola, Chandpur, Chapainawabganj, Cumilla, Dhaka, Dinajpur, Faridpur, Gaibandha, Gazipur, Habiganj, Joypurhat, Kishoreganj, Khulna, Kurigram, Madaripur, Manikganj, Moulvibazar, Munshiganj, Mymensingh, Narayanganj, Netrokona, Nilphamari, Patuakhali, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Shariatpur, Satkhira and Sunamganj



Program overview

CARE considers that **health is a fundamental human right, and a critical factor for reducing poverty, gender inequality and marginalisation**. CARE promotes a unique approach to health system strengthening, which combines a social and gender lens with evidence-driven interventions on sexual, reproductive and maternal health and rights, nutrition and HIV. CARE Bangladesh's key drivers for its Health and Nutrition program are (1) innovation around health and nutrition, (2) a market-based approach to local health service provision, (3) inclusive, resilient and strengthened health systems, and (4) a multi-sectoral approach.

Guided by universal health coverage principles, CARE works closely with the Government of Bangladesh at the local and national levels to support policy implementation and ensure national and international commitments are met. These include SDG targets and the country's commitments to the global initiative, Nutrition for Growth.

Thematic focus

- Promoting governance and accountability
- Ensuring evidence-based advocacy
- Improving program quality and integration and digital solutions
- Creating an inclusive and resilient health system

Working to support people who inject drugs

Since 1995, CARE Bangladesh has been the flag bearer in implementing Bangladesh's harm reduction program for people who inject drugs (PWID). This supports current government strategy to increase coverage of its services, increase identification of people living with HIV, and prevent new HIV infections for PWID, in order to achieve national targets. The program also strengthens coordination mechanisms and management capacity at different levels to ensure an effective, national and multi-sectoral HIV and AIDS response.

From begging on the streets to selling fish

Piyar's 20 years of drug dependency trapped him in a downward spiral of dependency and destitution. He started using drugs early in life, dropping out of school to eventually leaving his family to live on the streets. He was trapped in a vicious cycle: dependent on drugs and begging for money to get hold of them. A road accident incapacitated him further – and when he was identified as HIV positive, his life collapsed. This could easily have been where the story ended.

Opioid substitution therapy (OST) is a clinical treatment, and for many a viable means to curbing HIV transmission. It works by providing intravenous drug users with methadone, a synthetic opioid taken orally as an alternative to injecting. Piyar is one of many cases who has turned their life around with the support of CARE's OST program.

CARE Bangladesh's drop-in centre is part of the PWID project in Narayanganj town, about 20 miles from Dhaka. Its outreach work is extensive, and when tested positive for HIV, Piyar came under the care of the centre's outreach workers. They encouraged him to take regular doses of ART and to join the icddr,b OST program.

Program staff in the district worked intensively to combat the widespread misconception that OST was poisonous and potentially fatal. They also supported Piyar to find ways to earn money. With no need to buy drugs, he soon got together a few days' savings and launched a business selling fish in the local market. Not long after that he secured rented accommodation – and never looked back.

The OST program has brought stability to Piyar's life. He is now in touch with his family, regularly sends them money, and can hold his head high in the community. He explains how CARE turned things around for him: *"If CARE hadn't been there for me, I'd have lost my life."*



MEDIA AND OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

Social media

	Platform	Posts	Reach
	Facebook	156	53.2M
	X	110	269,000+
	YouTube	17	40,500+ views
	Instagram	79	2.5M
	LinkedIn	109	275,000+

Mainstream media

Language	News Count
English	40+
Bangla	35+





ADVOCACY WINS

Banking the unbanked population in rural areas

Problem

The rural population, especially women and girls, have limited access to financial services due to lack of financial literacy and financial solutions right for their needs.

Solution

SHOU3+ has collaborated with the country's central bank, promoting the VSLA model to advocate for the rural poor's financial inclusion. As the VSLA groups are self-organised, disciplined, organised and credible, they fulfill Bangladesh Bank's criteria as a channel to provide multiple financial services. The program calls for the recognition of VSLAs within the Bank's National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFI-S) and products tailored to poor and extreme poor households.

This collaboration has had notable successes. CARE has facilitated the opening of bank accounts and adaptation of the financial products that commercial banks offer, making them appropriate for the needs of the targeted unbanked population. By September 2023, around 1500 bank accounts had been opened with a deposit fee as little as BDT 10, and women in rural Bangladesh can now access loans of BDT 40,000 to BDT 50,000 (~USD 360–450) at a competitive 4% interest rate over six months.

Multiplying impact

This win holds immense significance in the context of CARE's efforts. It empowers marginalised individuals, especially women, enabling them to access a diverse array of financial products. These offerings extend beyond mere transactions; they are catalysts for financial empowerment, enhanced livelihoods, and social upliftment. The newfound access to savings accounts and tailored microloans breaks the cycle of poverty, empowering beneficiaries to take control of their financial destinies and participate actively in the growth and development of their communities.



Tipping Point: addressing early marriage by changing social norms – facilitating a locally-led, girl-led movement

Problem

Early marriage of girls under the legal age of 18 is chronic in Bangladesh. The effects of this human rights issue overshadow many initiatives designed to empower girls, with the underlying issues often being overlooked.

Solution

The Tipping Point initiative is one of CARE's flagship approaches to addressing the root causes of child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). CEFM is a violation of human rights, and Tipping Point promotes adolescent girls' rights through community level activities and by testing new approaches and providing evidence of what works. Learnings from Bangladesh inspire advocacy, action and learning across the globe.

This unique approach builds on community unity and harnesses the innate willpower of adolescent girls. The program identifies early adopters, builds support groups, uses future-oriented positive messages, and creates open and safe spaces for dialogue so that girls and their families can prevent child marriage. An endline survey has shown that 63% of adolescent girls are able to negotiate with parents to prevent their own marriage.

Tipping Point works with all the social factors affecting a girl's life. A special focus is on changing the behaviours of male family members (including young boys), community heads and religious leaders. At the policy level, the program collaborates with government agencies and social activists to amplify the efforts of individual actors.

Multiplying impact

In 2023, CARE partner Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) established a connection with girls from Tipping Point to conduct joint campaigns to eliminate harmful social norms and sustainably combat CEFM.





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CARE wishes to extend its gratitude to all our donors, stakeholders and partners for their continuing support, collaboration and partnership. Without their continuing support, inspiration and collaboration, this work could not continue.

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Cooperation Agency

Current partners

1. Access Bangladesh Foundation (ABF)
2. Ashokta Punarbhashan Sangstha (APOSH)
3. Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS)
4. Bandhu Social Welfare Society
5. Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS)
6. Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre (BYLC)
7. Barguna Nari Jagaron Karmosuchi (JAGO-NARI)
8. Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)
9. Dhrubotara Youth Development Foundation (DYDF)
10. Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK)
11. Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO)
12. Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB)
13. Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK)
14. Gonoshasthya Kendra (GK)
15. GRAUS (Gram Unnayan Sangathan)
16. Institute of Development Affairs (IDEA)
17. JAAGO Foundation Trust
18. Jhpiego Bangladesh
19. Mahideb Jubo Somaj Kallayan Somity (MJSKS)
20. mPower Social Enterprises Ltd (mPower)
21. Mukti Cox's Bazar
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23. National Development Programme (NDP)
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26. Plan International
27. RUPANTAR
28. Safety and Rights Society (SRS)
29. Save the Children Federation Inc. (SCI)
30. SKS Foundation (SKS)
31. Society for Health Extension and Development (SHED)
32. Social and Economic Enhancement program - SEEP
33. Solidarity
34. TAHZINGDONG
35. The Department of Youth Development under the Ministry of Youth and Sports
36. The Earth
37. Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP)
38. Village Education and Resource Centre (VERC)
39. Visual Communication Ltd. (VISCOM)
40. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Bangladesh

Strategic partners

NGOs and I/NGOs

1. Ain o Salish Kendra
2. Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)
3. BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University
4. Breast Feeding Foundation (BBF)
5. German Red Cross
6. National Girl Child Advocacy Forum (NGCAF)
7. Social Marketing Company (SMC)
8. Unnayan Shamunnay

University and research organisations

1. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh
2. icddr,b, Bangladesh
3. International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh
4. University of Arizona, USA
5. University of Bath, UK
6. University of Westminster, UK

Private sector

1. Advanced Chemical Industries Limited (ACI)
2. Bangladesh Specialized Hospital Limited
3. Bank Asia Limited
4. Bengal Meat Processing Industries Limited
5. Coders Trust Bangladesh
6. Grameenphone
7. Marks and Spencer
8. Mayalogy Limited
9. Pragati Life Insurance Limited
10. RD Service Limited (PULSE Healthcare)
11. Robi Axiata Limited
12. Telenor Health

Media/campaigns

1. Right to Food
2. The Daily Star

Government organisations

1. ASPIRE
2. Bangladesh National Nutrition Council

Government ministries and departments

1. Fire Service and Civil Defence
2. Gazipur City Corporation
3. Ministry of Agriculture
4. Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief
5. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
6. Ministry of Finance
7. Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
8. Ministry of Food
9. Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
 - Maternal Neonatal Child and Adolescent Health
 - Community Based Health Care
10. Ministry of Labour and Employment
11. Ministry of Land
12. Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
13. Ministry of LGRD and Co-operatives
14. Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
15. Ministry of Social Welfare
16. Ministry of Water Resources
17. Ministry of Women and Child Affairs
18. Ministry of Youth and Sports
19. National Nutrition Services (NNS) and Revitalization of Community Health Care Initiatives in BD (RCHCIB)



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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	IOM	International Organization for Migration
BMP	Bangladesh Mahila Parishad	IPV	Inactivated polio vaccine
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development	Jhpiego	Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics
BYLC	Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center	JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
CEFM	Child, early, and forced marriage	NFI-S	National Financial Inclusion Strategy
CISCO	Computer Information Systems Company	OST	Opioid Substitution Therapy
CNHA	Community Nutrition and Health Activity	P.A.C.E. training	Personal Advancement & Career Enhancement Program
CVF	Climate Vulnerable Forum	PSKS	Palashipara Samaj Kallayan Samity
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency	PWID	People who inject drugs
DFAT	The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	RMG	Ready-made garments
DYDF	Dhrubotara Youth Development Foundation	SAINT	Shayestabad Altruism Institute of Nation-Wide Task
ECHO	Emergency Children's Help Organization	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ESDO	Environment and Social Development Organization	SMS	Site Management Support agency
EU	European Union	SMT	Senior Management Team
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office	SRS	Safety and Rights Society
FIVDB	Friends in Village Development Bangladesh	UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Project
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
H&M Foundation	Hennes & Mauritz Foundation	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
icddr,b	International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh	VISCOM	Visual Communication
		VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
		WFP	World Food Programme
		YLO	Youth-led organisations



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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