CARE-Cornell/Atkinson Center Partnership

Cornell University and CARE USA have established a strategic partnership to advance sustainable food systems that strengthen the resilience of chronically food insecure women and their families to fight hunger, grow food more sustainably, engage in new markets and adapt to climate change.

Key Joint Activities

IMPACT THROUGH INNOVATION FUND (IIF): Spearheaded by Cornell’s Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future, The Impact through Innovation Fund matches CARE staff with Cornell research teams to facilitate the development and deployment of cutting-edge science for best practice application at unprecedented scale, pace and quality to address development challenges. In the first year, the IIF is financing two projects.

- In Ethiopia we are increasing crop yields and fostering business opportunities for farmers – especially women – by promoting the production of indigenous bio-fertilizers as a cost-saving alternative to imported chemical fertilizers.
- In Mozambique, we are experimenting with performance-based incentives for frontline health providers to improve health care for HIV-infected women, who face greater hurdles to food security, and reduce mother-to-child virus transmission.

RESILIENCE to CLIMATE CHANGE: We are improving poor rural households’ resilience in the face of climate change in Ethiopia, with a 5-year grant from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

IMPROVED COOKSTOVES AND BIOCHAR: With support from the Nordic Climate Facility through the Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP), we are adapting pyrolytic cookstoves for the Mekong Region and developing biochars to address low soil fertility in Vietnam.

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY & LIVELIHOODS: The Forest 4 Life program in Sierra Leone aims to promote economic opportunity and the sustainable livelihoods of communities living adjacent to and in the buffer zones of Outamba/Kilimi National Park while sustainably conserving and managing the biodiversity and natural resources base of the area. The program is funded by USAID.

MICRONUTRIENTS AND INCOME THROUGH POULTRY: We partner to protect household poultry production against disease, introduce new markets, and pilot village egg-layer facilities that are providing critical sources of income and micronutrients for women and children in rural Zambia. The program has been funded by multiple sources, including USAID.

POLICY AND EDUCATION: Cornell researchers provide background research to inform CARE positions on policy issues related to international food assistance, especially around the Farm Bill reauthorization and food monetization policy.

See www.acsf.cornell.edu/CARE-CU for more details.
What is Distinctive about CARE-Cornell?

- Although universities and NGOs partner frequently, few have dedicated, central funding to develop a strategic agenda that proactively tackles entrenched barriers to food security and women’s empowerment.
- The partnership promotes close, real-time collaboration between Cornell researchers, CARE staff and communities to optimize innovation and jointly identify game-changing approaches for the entrenched problems faced by marginalized women and their families.
- The partnership creates the space for innovation by drawing on the strengths of CARE, Cornell, and the public and private sectors.
- The partnership is defining a shared learning agenda to identify the major tipping points to strengthen resilience of chronically food insecure women and their families.

CARE Brings:
- A global approach to food and nutrition security that brings together three core approaches – resilience, governance and women’s empowerment – to enable marginalized women and their families to graduate out of poverty
- A global focus on empowering women and girls to bring lasting change to their communities
- On-the-ground programming in 70 countries
- A long-term program approach in each country that 1) defines specific impact groups, 2) analyzes underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability, and 3) invests in innovation and evidence-generation to develop and scale proven approaches that lead to transformative change
- Private sector engagement, including partnerships with multinational corporations, a market engagement strategy targeting 10 million women and girls in agricultural value chains, and social enterprise development.

ACSF Brings:
- A track record of bringing together multidisciplinary teams of faculty and students to tackle global problems.
- A focus on research that addresses the three pillars of sustainability, economic development, energy and the environment for solutions that work.
- Internationally recognized depth in the fields of sustainable agriculture and food systems; science and engineering of materials; biogeochemistry, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem health; poverty, inequality malnutrition and food insecurity; renewable and efficient energy systems.
- A renewed commitment by Cornell University President to the land-grand ethic and tradition of impact-oriented international research and outreach.
- Partnerships with external organizations, private foundations and corporations that strengthen research capacity and maximize impact.

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