others exist (e.g. drylands and pastoral contexts; shock-prone regions) and represent the 'last mile' of sanitation, where many partners and communities struggle to find durable solutions. CARE and iDE recognize this challenge and have been deliberately investing in research and learning in these contexts--to better develop a toolkit of approaches and learnings. Right now, we have ongoing sanitation research and projects in Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, Vietnam, Ghana, Niger, and Northeast Kenya. Full learning reports from the CARE-iDE collaboration in Bangladesh are anticipated in 2022, with a vision to disseminate and workshop findings with a broader audience of implementers and government stakeholders from other last-mile sanitation contexts.

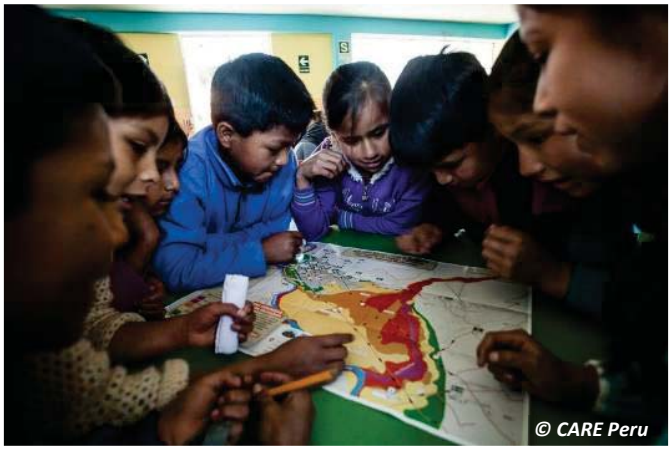
Water and Climate

Working Towards Climate Justice in Water+ Programming

The scale and the urgency of the global climate crisis demands an augmented effort to promote gender transformative climate action. Throughout 2020, the CARE Water+ Team has worked to integrate and prioritize climate justice throughout our programming and mandate and underline the importance of water resources management and protection as critical to climate justice within our 2030 Vision and Strategy for Food, Water, and Nutrition. We have placed particular emphasis on addressing the intersections of climate change, water resources management, and ecosystems. Climate change has already contributed to historic flooding, droughts, and declines in biodiversity and natural resources - impacts that disproportionately affect poor communities and the fragile ecosystems they depend on. Without decisive action, the situation will become more dire as water scarcity is expected to displace between 24 – 700 million people by 2030, and an additional 132 million people may be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030 due to climate change. In the face of this crisis, CARE's ongoing work to integrate WASH, water resources management, and climate adaptation becomes even more critical. Throughout the world, CARE works in freshwater landscapes, with coastal communities, and in highland ecosystems to strengthen the capacity of marginalized communities to adapt to the myriad threats posed by climate change. Here is a snapshot of some of those programs that provide invaluable lessons on how we can work towards climate justice through integrated approaches to watershed management, water resources protection, and climate adaptation:

Glaciares+ Peru

An estimated 53% of Peru's glaciers have melted, forming more than 200 new periglacial lagoons while creating water shortages in surrounding basins. The high risk of ice and rock landslides from glacier melt generate waves that form deadly flash floods, inundating populated centers and displacing communities, with women and children most disproportionately affected. To adapt to this phenomenon, CARE Peru



has led the implementation of the Glaciers+ project in partnership with the University of Zurich and financed by the Swiss Cooperation for Development. Glaciares+ used community-based adaptation to integrate community knowledge into risk and water resources management, while strengthening governance systems by building collective management between communities and public, private, and academic institutions. Glaciares+ impacted nearly 70,000 people through the establishment of the first early warning systems for glacier melt alluviums in Peru, strengthening local governance, and increasing funding in multipurpose public investment projects for water resources management.

Pedro Moncayo Water Fund, Ecuador

In 2016, CARE Ecuador and local governments of Pedro Moncayo cantón created a water fund as part of the broader ACCRE (Climate Change Adaptation of Andean Populations) project to protect the region's páramos, a fragile and critically important highland ecosystem. Through the Pedro Moncayo Water Fund, CARE Ecuador reduced the vulnerability of 200 families living in the páramos to the impacts of climate change and water scarcity on their livelihoods. The Pedro Moncayo Water Fund was created from a participatory process between local public sector actors, agricultural producers, community organizations, CARE Ecuador, and other local stakeholders. Techniques for restoring the ecosystem of the páramos such as agroforestry, silvopastoral and related forestry systems were financed through the Water Fund. CARE Ecuador's participation as a process facilitator was instrumental in enabling local governments and social organizations to engage in the design and implementation of the Water Fund, contributing to stronger political advocacy for water resource management and climate resilience, the participation of women and small-scale farmers, and financial sustainability.

Village and Land Use Planning, Tanzania

In Tanzania, water use and land use planning have long taken place separately, leading to inefficient and often destructive uses of water resources that are threatened by droughts. In the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), the CARE-WWF Alliance has spearheaded integrated land and water resource management at scale, bringing women and youth into the planning processes. These innovative Village Land Use Plans—which encompass multiple communities— provide a spatially explicit roadmap for the next decade of sustainable development, including zoning community areas for activities such as agriculture, grazing, social services, forest management and water protection, as well as no-use areas. By integrating water into this participatory land use planning process, 98% of 111 identified freshwater sources were subsequently protected via community-led initiatives (e.g., planting 12,000 trees).

What Did We Hear from Consultations?

In 2020, we reviewed CARE's experience in WASH, watershed management, and climate change to better capture and build on decades of programmatic experiences and lessons learned at the intersection of these areas. In addition, we interviewed staff across our CARE Country Offices and Country Member Partners as part of our 2030 strategy process and heard them consistently report water and climate as some of their greatest challenges and provided insights into how we can best support their work. Here are some of the most consistent themes and lessons that emerged:

Water scarcity, flooding, and rainfall variability are major threats: CARE staff throughout the world reported that recurrent droughts and unpredictable rainfall are some of the greatest challenges to implementing their programming over the next decade. Some examples include frequent droughts and depleted aquifers in Zimbabwe, significant reduction of water resources affecting food security and health in Mali, conflicts over diminished water resources across the Sahel region, increased water scarcity in urban areas in Ecuador, and historic flooding in Yemen.

Water needs to be recognized as a cross-cutting issue and integrated with ecosystem protection: Sectors working together on water resources management as a collaborative and cross-cutting issue was one of the most common ways that CARE staff identified for improving water programming over the next decade. This includes the integration of conservation and water resources management agendas and recognizing that protecting aquatic ecosystems is foundational for the livelihoods, health, and dignity of all people.

More toolkits and approaches for IWRM and climate resilience are needed: Many CARE staff noted that while WASH, water resources management, and climate adaptation were a part of their programming, there were rarely any attempts made at creating and using approaches to integrate water and climate with other CARE issue areas. For example, CARE Vietnam expressed a need for approaches that helped to understand and address the risks faced by women small-scale farmers who were dealing with severe losses in productivity from increased salinity due to coastal flooding in mangrove forests.

Conclusions

While CARE's Water+ programming has already pioneered innovative and integrated methods for improving water resources management and climate adaptation, there is still significant work to be done. Over the next several months, we will work with the broader CARE Food and Water Systems Team and the CARE Climate Change Resilience Platform to develop and disseminate toolkits, approaches, and frameworks for mainstreaming climate resilience, water resources management, ecosystems protection, and gender justice throughout CARE's programming.

We will also work with the CARE Climate Change Resilience Platform to develop a joint strategy on climate change, WASH, and integrated water resources management. This strategy will not only clarify our own goals for addressing water and climate challenges but serve to identify and advocate for joint programming around this intersection. We have the responsibility to face the climate crisis through holistic, equitable and community-driven climate action.