

## The Challenge

The actions of smallholder communities are essential to achieving the 2030 and 2050 climate goals. Five hundred million smallholder households support the livelihoods of more than two billion people, predominantly in low- and middle-income countries. We cannot afford to forgo the impact of two billion people working to mitigate climate change. We must catalyze and amplify the mitigation impacts of farming families and forest communities, and they must benefit from this work.

The CASH (Climate Action for Smallholders) Coalition is a group of organizations dedicated to addressing climate change and poverty and restoring ecosystems through partnerships with smallholder, indigenous, and local communities. These communities produce the majority of food in the Global South<sup>1</sup>, steward a quarter of global agricultural land<sup>2</sup>, and are uniquely positioned to advance solutions to address biodiversity loss, poverty, food security, and development.

The CASH Coalition comprises thirteen mission-driven organizations with trusted relationships in smallholder, indigenous, and agroforestry communities with a shared vision for regenerative- and climate-smart agriculture, inclusive climate finance, and sustainable land management.

We have a concrete goal and are aligning a plan of action to fulfill it: **To make regenerative agriculture and climate action profitable for smallholder farmers.**



<sup>1</sup> World Bank (2016) A Year in the Lives of Smallholder Farmers. February 25, 2016.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/02/25/a-year-in-the-lives-of-smallholder-farming-families>

<sup>2</sup> Smallholders with land  $\leq$  2ha Ricciardi, V., Ramankutty, N., Mehrabi, Z., Jarvis, L., & Chookolingo, B. (2018). How much of the world's food do smallholders produce? *Global Food Security*, 17, 64-72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gfs.2018.05.002>

## Why Regenerative Agriculture and Climate Action, and Why Smallholder Farmers?

By realizing and aligning rights, resources, and support for sustainable land- and forest-based livelihoods, communities can become transformative leaders for climate change mitigation and resilience. Smallholder farmers and local communities provide valuable ecosystem services such as water quality maintenance, soil carbon management, and biodiversity promotion, but they are rarely rewarded for these actions.

Carbon markets and payments for ecosystem services (PES) systems can be harnessed to benefit smallholders and their communities. We need a repository and system for sharing solutions among farmer-serving organizations and communities to maximize the potential of emerging financing vehicles.

## The Solution

Working together to dramatically scale socially-just climate action. The thirteen members of the CASH Coalition work directly with 9 million land managers in smallholder, indigenous, and local communities who steward 16 million hectares of land in the Global South.<sup>3</sup> We have a strong record of scaling innovations and promoting behavior change to increase agricultural productivity, leading to more resilient livelihoods. We are well-positioned to work with local partners to shape and deliver meaningful climate solutions for marginal and vulnerable communities.

## Specific Scope, Aspirations, and Priority Actions

Our scope is our goal: “Make regenerative agriculture and climate action profitable for smallholder farmers.”<sup>4</sup>

Our aspirations and priority actions for the first 27 months include:

1. Informing and influencing policymaking to affect fundamental change in carbon and PES markets. We will advocate for reforms to existing carbon markets and ensure that future markets work for smallholders, and promote nature-based solutions and innovations as high-integrity solutions in carbon markets. We will catalyze supply and demand to build a market for smallholder farmer climate mitigation, creating, on the supply side, a portfolio of carbon projects that exemplify smallholder climate mitigation and regenerative actions: ensuring quality and integrity and delivering multiple co-benefits. On the demand side, we will catalyze a coalition of buyers interested in high-integrity smallholder-farmer-produced carbon credits with co-benefits and lead the structuring of investment vehicles to finance activities on the ground.
2. Providing technical assistance, information, and education to enable our members and local partners to advance the ability of smallholders to participate in, and derive benefits from, carbon markets and other emerging markets and payments for ecosystem services.
3. Identifying and sharing knowledge and best practices regarding existing technologies, financing arrangements, incentive structures, behavior change and adoption, costs and benefits, and scaling strategies to improve regenerative agriculture-based livelihoods and economic empowerment for smallholders.
4. Serving as a catalyst for executing and developing primary research to fill gaps limiting the profitability and scalability of regenerative agriculture, agroforestry, and adjacent technologies.

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<sup>3</sup> Members are active in Eastern and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, Central and South America, The Caribbean, and South and South East Asia.

<sup>4</sup> Regenerative agriculture includes practices and technologies with the potential to contribute to climate resiliency, climate change mitigation, and improve smallholder farmer incomes and well-being. Smallholder farmers include family farms with fewer than 10 hectares of land, pastoralists, indigenous communities, and forest keepers.



These actions will recast land and forest-stewarding communities, transforming their roles from passive and increasingly impoverished victims of climate change to active mitigation partners exercising agency to realize opportunities.

## **CASH Principles, Membership, and Coalition Design**

CASH member organizations are committed to upholding the following set of principles:

WORKING INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, MEMBERS WILL:

- Positively impact the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and local communities;
- Have demonstrated ecosystems and climate benefits;
- Promote doable and achievable solutions for smallholder farmers;
- Have workable distribution models; and
- Increase the resilience of smallholder farmers and local communities to climate change.

WORKING WITH EACH OTHER AND EXTERNALLY:

- We are a team with a shared vision and goal and will proactively coordinate action;
- Coordination will be structured to maximize efficiency and efficacy, identify and proactively address organizational frictions, maximize our potential for success and advance the interests of the communities we serve;
- Our collaboration is focused on what can more effectively be achieved together;
- We are committed to being transparent about what, why, and how we operate; and
- Members will represent and act on behalf of the CASH Coalition at external events.

## **CASH Governance and Leadership**

The CASH Coalition’s leadership group consists of the senior leader of each core member organization and meets monthly. An Executive Committee (EC) meets weekly, comprising:

☒ **Chris Jochnick** - [Landesa](#)

☒ **Debbie Aung Din** - [Proximity Designs](#)

☒ **Jim Taylor** - [Proximity Designs](#)

☒ **Michael Jenkins** - [Forest Trends](#)

☒ **Willy Foote** - [Root Capital](#)

☒ **Heiner Baumann** - [CASH, Executive Director](#)

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