

## **Call for Applications: CARE-Cornell Collaboration Graduate Student Research Fellowship Program, Summer 2017**

### **The contribution of savings-led financial inclusion to food and nutrition security outcomes**

The CARE-Cornell Collaboration is excited to offer paid summer research fellowships for three Cornell graduate students to conduct research abroad for 7 weeks with CARE's Tanzania country office and then report on lessons learned for CARE USA headquarters in Atlanta, CA. The nonprofit organization CARE is a global leader within a worldwide movement dedicated to ending poverty. CARE works in 95 countries around the world to support more than 890 poverty-fighting development and humanitarian-aid projects. The three Cornell graduate student research fellows will contribute to finding solutions to today's urgent international development challenges while working with leadership at CARE, one of the nation's top results-oriented nonprofit organizations.

Specifically, the fellows will conduct field level research to better understand the contribution of savings-led financial inclusion to food and nutrition security outcomes. The fellowship terms of reference are provided on the next page. We seek a multi-disciplinary group of three fellows from different backgrounds and fields.

### **To apply, please submit the following documents in a single email by Feb 15, 2017:**

1. A 1-2 page application letter with the following information:
  - a. Full legal name
  - b. Degree in progress, focus areas of study, date degree will be granted, and an unofficial graduate transcript or list of graduate courses taken
  - c. An explanation of your reasons for applying and a discussion of relevant qualifications. Please include specific objectives and expected benefits of the research fellowship.
  - d. A statement that you agree to the CARE-Cornell Collaboration Research Fellowship Program Conditions on the last page of this document.
2. Your CV or resume
3. Two writing samples of any length that demonstrate your writing ability (not edited by others)
4. A note from a Cornell faculty member stating that he/she supports your application and is willing to mentor you during this research experience.

Submit your application (including all attachments) in one email to CARE-Cornell Collaboration Program Manager Nina Chaopricha at [ntc24@cornell.edu](mailto:ntc24@cornell.edu). Cornell will review the applications and forward top candidates to CARE.

## **CARE Cornell Collaboration Graduate Student Research Fellowship Program**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE - Summer 2017**

**Background:** Through the CARE-Cornell Collaboration, CARE seeks graduate student research fellows to conduct field-level research in support of CARE's learning objectives. In summer 2017, this research will focus on **the relationship between savings-led financial inclusion and food and nutrition security in Tanzania**. The research team will be composed of an interdisciplinary group of Cornell students who work together on the research project.

**Location:** Tanzania (7 weeks) and Atlanta, GA (2 days)

#### **Timeline:**

- Application Deadline: Feb 15, 2017. Decisions announced by March 10, 2017.
- March-June, 2017: Participate in a pre-departure meeting and research planning at Cornell. Collaborate with the two other fellows. Develop research methodology and interview questionnaires. Submit an IRB application and get Cornell authorization to conduct research and interviews abroad with human subjects.
- June 19-Aug 7, 2017: 7 weeks of field research with CARE Tanzania.
- August 7, 2017: Deliverables due electronically. Fly to Atlanta, arriving on August 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Aug 9-10, 2017: Two-day meeting with CARE Atlanta.
- August 18, 2017: Final updated versions of deliverables due electronically.

**Scope:** CARE is interested in utilizing the rigorous research capacity of Cornell to examine the contribution of savings-led financial inclusion to women's economic empowerment and improved food and nutrition security outcomes. Evidence from CARE's work shows that women who participate in Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are twice as likely to start and sustain a business as women who don't participate. There is also growing interest in CARE in exploring the contributions that savings-led financial inclusion through VSLAs can contribute to building the resilience of rural households to climate change and other external shocks and threats. The Specific Research Questions will be developed in Spring of 2017 to guide the Fellows on what specific questions CARE would like to better understand with regards to how VSLA membership contributes to measurable improvements in household food and nutrition security outcomes.

In collaboration with CARE's Access Africa program and a Cornell faculty mentor, the Cornell fellow will design a research plan to collect qualitative and/or quantitative information through such research methods as focus groups, individual interviews and analysis of evaluations and other reports. The student will design the survey for communities to be visited for data collection purposes. The student will be in charge of the data collection, compilation, transcription and analysis. As part of the country research work, described above, we expect the research fellows to work together to:

1. Generate research that evaluates the impact of VSLA participation on household and community level food and nutrition security. Research should go beyond the immediate determinants of what works at the household level to examine, for example, the incentives for the uptake of new practices, and the political accountability systems that make long term sustainability a reality.
2. Ensure that all work conforms to research standards for adequate sample sizes and rigor of quantitative and qualitative analysis.<sup>1</sup> We hope to use the data to form the foundations of publications, and, therefore, it must meet the standards that peer-reviewed publications would use for evidence-gathering and analysis.
3. Meet ethical standards for data collection and the use of images and stories.
4. Produce research products that discuss how sustainable change happens in a given country. While this effort broadly seeks to offer generalizable, rigorous evidence, we are not looking to establish international ‘best practices’ or discover one-size-fits-all-solutions.
5. Generate explanations for why CARE’s approaches succeed or fail in particular contexts, including providing some understanding of what has been done or could be done to improve outcomes. Given the different contexts in which CARE implements financial inclusion programs, the goal of this effort is to better understand how VSLA participation affects food and nutrition security outcomes in these contexts.
6. Develop practical recommendations on how to improve programming or advocacy work to have greater impact, or to scale up impact.

#### **Deliverables:**

1. Write an analytical report in a CARE-provided format answering each of the research questions and describing initial findings on key successful approaches, what impact CARE’s approach is having on communities, as well as what approaches are not working. The report should include recommendations for how the program can improve or scale up best practices.<sup>2</sup>
2. Provide the detailed methodology along with the full original dataset collected for use in further analysis/synthesis across CARE’s programs.<sup>3</sup>
3. Write a 1-paragraph overview of your research and findings.
4. Write a 2-page research brief of findings in a CARE-provided format.
5. Provide at least 3-5 high-quality photos from your fieldwork for use by CARE and Cornell for promoting the program, fundraising, and reporting results, etc.
6. Develop a Powerpoint presentation of your results in a CARE-provided format.

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<sup>1</sup> Sample sizes for quantitative studies must ensure statistical significance and be fully representative. For qualitative studies, research must include all key attributes/influencing factors in the selection of communities, households and individuals. Research protocol should be developed in consultation with Cornell faculty and CARE country office leads.

<sup>2</sup> The research fellows and Cornell may quote or reprint the report and associated data sets but must acknowledge the source (CARE - Cornell). If any reproductions or translations are generated or quoted from the document (electronic or printed), a copy of that document should be forwarded to CARE. Any photos taken of CARE program participants will need a consent form from the subject.

<sup>3</sup> The Cornell fellows must provide both raw and cleaned data sets, syntax files/tabulation plans, data dictionaries, audio records/VDO clips (if used) and other raw data from the research to CARE.

7. Give that presentation and participate in a 2-day CARE workshop in Atlanta on August 9-10, 2017 with the other Cornell fellows.
8. Present results as well back at Cornell in Fall 2017 at an ACSF-organized event.
9. Work with CARE's partnership manager to develop a consolidated overview report.

### Roles and Responsibilities

<b>Fellow</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a research plan this spring, pre-travel, in collaboration with the other two fellows, in response to the specific research questions identified by CARE including creating the survey/interview tools in coordination with a Cornell faculty supervisor, other relevant Cornell faculty and resources such as evaluation experts and statistical consultants, and CARE supervisor.</li> <li>2. Jointly conduct the research field work with research team.</li> <li>3. Analyze and write up results.</li> <li>4. Develop &amp; submit high-quality versions of the deliverables described above by August 7, 2017 before departing Tanzania.</li> <li>5. Participate in 2-day workshop with other fellows in Atlanta, GA from August 9-10, 2017.</li> <li>6. Submit final deliverable versions by August 18, 2017.</li> </ol>
<b>CARE Country Office Supervisor</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide oversight over the implementation of the project activity.</li> <li>2. Assist fellow in the drafting of project plan and write-up of findings.</li> <li>3. Coordinate logistics arrangements for the fellow while in country.</li> <li>4. Ensure the participation of the community, particularly women, always ensuring their concerns and interests are addressed.</li> </ol>
<b>CARE HQ</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide support and advice as needed. Comment on and edit narrative activity reports.</li> <li>2. Organize and hold the 2-day meeting and presentations for fellows in Atlanta, including booking hotels and providing meals in Atlanta.</li> <li>3. Assist in the preparation of the final multi-fellow consolidated report and WebEx or other format for sharing results from across programs.</li> </ol>
<b>Cornell's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future (ACSF)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assist fellow with administrative support prior to start of fellowship.</li> <li>2. Coordinate student fellowship payments.</li> </ol>

## **CARE-Cornell Collaboration Research Fellow Program Conditions**

**By applying, I agree that if I am offered and accept a fellowship, the following terms will apply.**

a) **Status:** I will be a continuing Cornell graduate student. I am eligible to—and plan to—enroll at Cornell in the term following the fellowship (Fall 2017). Although not considered a CARE staff member for the summer fellowship, I will be subject to the safety and security policies and general rules of conduct applied to all CARE staff.

b) **Financial Support:** Cornell University will provide a \$7000 research fellowship stipend, of which \$5000 will be paid pre-departure and \$2000 will be paid after fellowship completion, satisfactory on-time submission of all expected deliverables, and presentations of research in Atlanta. CARE will cover living accommodations and travel costs within the host country. CARE USA will pay for hotel and some meal expenses in Atlanta, Georgia. All other costs (including international airfare, any pre-departure vaccines, passport, and travel visa, and food expenses abroad) will be my responsibility.

c) **Insurance Coverage:** I agree to carry adequate regular medical insurance. CARE and Cornell will not pay for medical insurance costs or medical expenses. Cornell will provide emergency medical evacuation and repatriation insurance.

d) **Passports and Visas:** I am responsible for obtaining a passport and a visa if required. CARE will issue a letter stating acceptance of an individual as a research fellow and the conditions governing the research fellowship.

e) **Confidentiality:** As a research fellow, I will respect the confidentiality of information that I collect from CARE's beneficiaries and programs.

f) **Additional Agreements:** I agree to complete and sign additional paperwork such as the Standards of Conduct for Cornell Students Abroad form, a Cornell medical self-disclosure form, and a Cornell hold-harmless form. I will attend a CARE country office safety and security session at the beginning of my fellowship.