

# Livelihoods

## The Challenge

There are an estimated 192 million unemployed people around the world. This doesn't even count the number of people around the world who are underemployed — that is, working poor. In areas like sub-Saharan Africa, the underemployment rate can be as high as 38% of the population.

In order to break the cycle of poverty, we need to improve livelihoods, by both creating secure options for people without jobs, and finding ways of improving the outcomes for people who have jobs.

## Our Approach

Our Livelihoods programs have the sole focus of driving poverty reduction. We aim to increase people's control of their natural resources, build reliable and fair access to food, and empower the extreme poor through increasing the skills, knowledge and resources they need.

As with all of our programs, Concern's livelihoods work seeks to get at the root causes of poverty and global inequality. These have always included the lack of control over natural resources, and vulnerability to small and large-scale natural disasters. In recent years, as climate extremes exacerbate these problems, our focus turns more and more toward emphasizing management and ownership of natural resources while building resilience against the recurrent — and predictable — shocks that trigger a cycle of setbacks that drive people deeper into poverty.

### Livelihoods by the Numbers



Even with a job, **8% of the world's workers** and their families still live in extreme poverty



This number jumps up in areas like sub-Saharan Africa, where **38% of the population** are working poor



**783 million people** live below the international poverty line of \$1.90/day

Read more about our livelihoods work: [concernusa.org/livelihoods](https://concernusa.org/livelihoods)

# Our Programs

Livelihoods are a key focus of Concern's work across programs, including conservation agriculture and our Graduation program. Another example of our work in this field is Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRCiS).

BRCiS is designed to work alongside Somali communities, building the capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a number of shocks — including economic.



“As important as it is to give people what they need in the moment, we will only succeed in the fight against poverty if we ensure that we give people the tools to graduate into economic stability.”

— Colleen Kelly, CEO, Concern Worldwide U.S.

As part of this, we established self-help groups for Somali women in vulnerable communities. When women bring in income, they invest 90% of that income back into their family — compared to the 30-40% invested by men. Supported by cash grants from Concern, the women in these groups can begin to save money, pool their resources, and assist one another with loans to start small businesses.



Mika Abdu lives in the Tahoua region of Niger with his wife and 3 children. Rains and poor harvests used to mean that the family struggled to eat. With improved seeds and Conservation Agriculture training from Concern, the harvests have grown more abundant, meaning there is more surplus to sell at the market. “I’ve concentrated all my energy into what I’ve learned and been able to cultivate land that was once degraded,” he says. “What Concern has done for us is something good.”

# Our Impact



In 2018, Concern improved the livelihoods of nearly **4.5 million people**



We reached **2.3 million women** with our livelihoods programs



Supports UN Sustainable Development Goals including **No Poverty** and **Gender Equality**

*Concern Worldwide is a global community of humanitarian professionals, individual donors, corporate partners, and supporters, who share a common vision of a world where no one lives in poverty, fear, or oppression. We believe everyone has the right to a decent standard of living, should have access to the opportunities and choices essential to a long, healthy, and creative life, and be treated with dignity and respect.*

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