

# Building **Climate-Resilient** Communities and Health Systems through Integrated Population, Health, and Environment Programming in Tanzania

**THE BOMA IMARA PROJECT**



2021–2027

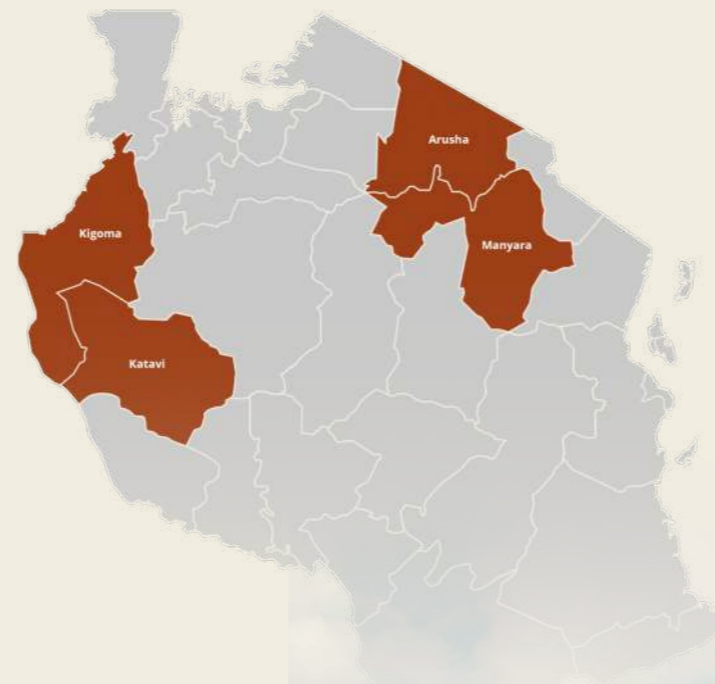
## The Boma Imara Project

With funding from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, Pathfinder International implements the Boma Imara project in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, local governments, and communities. The project deploys an integrated Population, Health, and Environment approach to address rural development challenges in Northern and Western Tanzania.

The first phase of the project (2021–2024) operated in Tanganyika district, **Katavi** region and Uvinza district, **Kigoma** region. The second, ongoing phase (2024–2027) expanded to Simanjiro and Kiteto districts, **Manyara** region and Monduli district, **Arusha** region.

The Boma Imara project strengthens the resilience of households, communities, and health systems to climate change by increasing the adoption of climate-smart practices at the community and health system levels, which fosters long-term environmental sustainability and livelihood security. Furthermore, the project works to improve health outcomes by expanding access to primary health care services, including sexual and reproductive health and immunization. To deliver on these goals, the Boma Imara project leverages the following interventions.

- **Climate Resilience School Clubs** support children and youth with practical skills and knowledge in environmental stewardship, health promotion, and entrepreneurship.
- **Adolescent Life Skills Development** reaches young people with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions, including age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and financial literacy.
- **Community Conservation Microfinance Groups** equip women and vulnerable households with the resources to invest in climate-smart, environmentally sustainable income-generating activities.
- **Model Boma / Model Households** demonstrate integrated behavior change across health, sanitation, livelihoods, conservation, and climate resilience at the household and community levels.
- **Community Outreach** provides sexual and reproductive health and rights services alongside routine immunization, ensuring access to integrated primary healthcare.
- **Green Health Facilities** strengthen climate-resilient health systems through renewable energy, sustainable water practices, safe waste management, and inclusive sexual and reproductive health service delivery.



### Note from the Project Director

Communities in these landscapes face interconnected challenges, including unsustainable natural resource use, food and nutrition insecurity, limited financial access for women and girls, and inadequate primary health care. Because these issues are closely linked, single-sector interventions often fail to deliver lasting solutions. We have learned that integrated approaches are more effective in addressing the complex realities of rural communities. Pathfinder responds by combining conservation, population, and health interventions to strengthen resilience and improve well-being.

We are grateful to Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies for supporting this life-changing work.



**DR. JOSEPH KOMWIHANGIRO**  
REGIONAL PORTFOLIO DIRECTOR,  
EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Mount Kitwai sits between Kitwai A and Loonderkes villages in Simanjiro District, where the project supports sustainable community development initiatives.



Students from Eng'e'no Secondary School's Climate Resilience School Club harvest fresh vegetables to sell to the community.



*Before I joined the club, I never knew that small things could bring big results. But slowly, I started to see the difference—even washing hands properly or planting a tree near the school helps protect school environment. I never thought I could be someone others listen to. But now I am the one leading my fellow students in planting trees and taking care of our school.*

**DEBORA**  
ENG'E'NO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT

## Empowering Young Learners through School Clubs

Through Climate Resilience School Clubs, the Boma Imara project empowers children and youth aged 8–18 with knowledge, life skills, and practical experiences for healthy and sustainable development. Through participatory, hands-on learning, these clubs address environmental conservation, sexual and reproductive health and rights, hygiene, HIV/STI prevention, child protection, and gender equality while cultivating leadership, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and responsible use of information and communication technology.

The Boma Imara project supports **74 climate resilience school clubs**, including 44 in the Greater Mahale Ecosystem, 18 in the Northern Tanzania Rangelands, and 12 in the Ruaha-Rungwa Ecosystem.

The clubs have a total membership of **2,279 students**, including 1,117 boys (49%) and 1,162 girls (51%).

**148 trained school matrons and patrons** lead these school clubs.



*This club has changed something in our school. Students are more aware now—about health, the environment, how they treat the things around them. And it does not stop at the club. They go home, they talk to their families, they do things in the community. When I see a student take the lead in cleaning, I feel proud. We are raising children who will not wait for someone else to make things better.*

**PATRON**  
ENG'E'NO SECONDARY SCHOOL



Enge'no Secondary climate resilience school Club students participate in a group discussion in the school garden, surrounded by trees planted through project support.

*This club has changed something in our school. Students are more aware now—about their health, about the environment, about how they treat the things around them. And it does not stop at the club. These students go home, they talk to their families, they do things in the community. When I see a student take the lead in cleaning, or remind others to wash hands, I feel proud. We are raising children who will not wait for someone else to make things better.*

**PATRON**  
TERRAT SECONDARY SCHOOL



Students from the Climate Resilience School Club at Igalula Primary School participate in a question-and-answer session on menstrual hygiene during their weekly club meeting.



Climate Resilience School Club members and their mentors at Loltepes Primary School, Simanjiro District.

## Developing Climate-Smart Alternative Livelihoods through Community Conservation Microfinance Groups

Community Conservation Microfinance Groups enable community members to build sustainable, climate-smart livelihoods. Members are supported with the skills, knowledge, and means to invest in environmentally friendly income-generating activities like beekeeping, poultry keeping, livestock raising, kitchen gardening, small businesses, and more. Through this approach, Community Conservation Microfinance Groups enhance household resilience, reduce poverty, and support sustainable community development.

The Boma Imara project supports **227 Community Conservation Microfinance Groups**, including 84 in the Greater Mahale Ecosystem, 104 in the Northern Tanzania Rangelands, and 39 in the Ruaha-Rungwa Ecosystem.

The groups have a combined total of **5,309 members**, including 4,143 women (78%) and 1,166 men (22%).

Community members have mobilized a cumulative **TZS 2.27 billion (USD 837,711)** in shares and savings, and members have borrowed to establish small businesses to support their livelihoods.

Community members in Terati Village, Simanjiro District, receive training on Mobile Money Services (M-Koba), Universal Health Coverage, and Community Conservation Microfinance Group registration.



*As a Maasai woman, in our culture, women stay home. That is how I grew up. But when I joined the group, something changed. I got a loan and opened a small shop at Terrat village center. My own shop. The money I earn is mine. My husband sees me differently. I see myself differently. I want other Maasai women to see that you do not have to leave your culture to have your own life. You can do both.*

**CLARA**  
COMMUNITY CONSERVATION  
MICROFINANCE GROUP MEMBER



*Before, we were just farming to survive. When we joined the group, things started to change. We got a loan, and for the first time, my wife and I sat down together and planned what to do with this loan and how can we grow. We expanded our farm, started a small business, bought animals to raise for sale. We even bought a tractor. Last year, we built a permanent house for our family. Our children are now in school, we have food, and we are saving. I never thought we would be here.*

**LEONARD**  
COMMUNITY CONSERVATION  
MICROFINANCE GROUP MEMBER



## Promoting Climate-Smart Behavior at the Household Level

The Boma Imara project promotes Model Households (called Model Boma in Maasai community) as practical demonstrations of climate-smart, healthy, and environmentally sustainable living at community level. Through integrated Population, Health, and Environment approaches, the project promotes adoption of context-specific behaviors like improved sanitation and hygiene practices, family planning, kitchen gardening, tree planting, sustainable livestock management, use of energy-saving technologies, and environmentally friendly income-generating activities. Households that adopt 75% of these behaviors qualify as Model Boma.

Model Boma also promote positive health-seeking behavior, safe water use, nutrition, women's participation in decision-making, and climate resilience practices that improve family wellbeing while reducing pressure on natural resources.

These Model Boma serve as learning centers where neighboring families can observe and replicate sustainable practices that strengthen resilience, livelihoods, and environmental conservation.

The Boma Imara project supports **24,861 Model Boma** and **162 climate resilience champions**.

*We used to have a lot of sickness here. It was something we lived with. But we were taught simple things—wash your hands with soap, keep your compound clean, treat your drinking water, use an energy-saving stove. Things that sound small. We did them, and slowly the sickness went down. Now we can go a whole year without a single cholera case in this village. A whole year.*

*We did not need anything complicated. We just needed to know.*

**LEONARD**  
MODEL BOMA MEMBER  
TERRAT VILLAGE, SIMANJIRO DISTRICT

Leonard's Model Boma in Terrat Village demonstrates improved household practices, including the separation of livestock from human living areas and the use of animal manure (samadi) for agriculture.



*I used to think that taking children to the clinic was the mother's job. But when I started going to Kibaya Hospital with my wife, I began to understand—these are my children too. Now I am the one who takes them for check-ups. I sit there with the other mothers and I am not ashamed. I want to tell other men, do not leave this to your wife. These are your children. Show up.*

**GREGORY**  
CLIENT, KIBAYA HOSPITAL

## Engaging Men and Leaders for Community Change

The Boma Imara project promotes the active engagement of men, community leaders, and influential groups as key drivers of sustainable behavior change and improved health outcomes. The strategy focuses on involving men in reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health, family planning, and household decision-making to foster shared responsibility within families.

Through health facilities, community outreach, Model Boma / Model Households, Community Conservation Microfinance Groups, and Climate Resilience School Clubs, men are encouraged to support timely health service utilization, positive parenting, and equitable distribution of household roles. Community and traditional leaders are equally engaged as champions of change to reinforce positive social norms, promote uptake of health services, and prevent harmful practices.





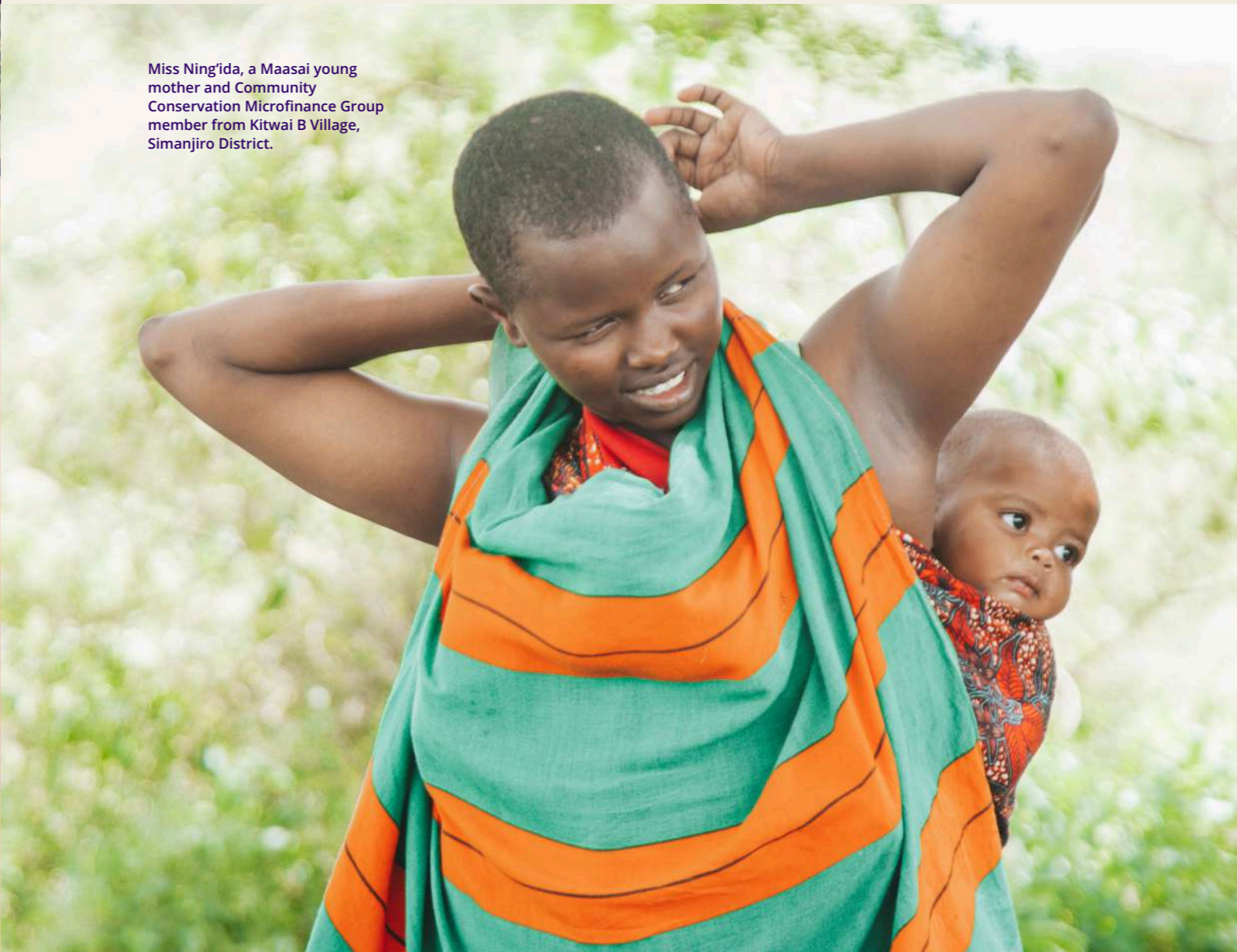
## Integrated Health and Family Planning Services

Through health facilities and mobile outreach services, the Boma Imara project delivers integrated health and family planning services that combine reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health at a single service point. During facility visits and at outreach clinics, clients receive family planning counseling and methods alongside immunization, antenatal care, postnatal care, nutrition services, and health education. This integrated, outreach-supported approach increases service coverage, reduces missed opportunities, promotes healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies, and strengthens maternal and child health outcomes at the community level.

The Boma Imara project has averted **32,236 unsafe abortions** and **201 maternal deaths**.

The project has provided family planning services to **507,501 clients** (64% women, 36% men). Of these clients, **139,458 were young people** aged 10–24 years (66% girls and young women, 34% boys and young men).

Miss Ning'ida, a Maasai young mother and Community Conservation Microfinance Group member from Kitwai B Village, Simanjiro District.



*The birth of our twins was a joyful blessing, but it also brought new responsibilities and challenges for our family. During that important time, the care and support we received at Kibaya Hospital gave us confidence and peace of mind. The health workers created a welcoming environment where we felt comfortable asking questions and learning together. Through counseling sessions, we came to understand the importance of discussing family planning and child health as a couple. We learned that making decisions together helps us better plan for our children's future, manage our household resources, and support one another as parents. Today, we communicate more openly, share responsibilities more equally, and make important family decisions together. This experience has strengthened our relationship and improved the wellbeing of our entire family.*

**JAMES**  
CLIENT, KIBAYA HOSPITAL

# Advancing Climate-Resilient Care through Green Health Facilities

To strengthen climate resilience at the health facility level, the Boma Imara project applies a "Green Clinics" approach. This approach integrates renewable energy usage, rainwater harvesting, green waste disposal, water conservation, and environmental conservation efforts like tree planting while ensuring continuity of inclusive sexual and reproductive health services during climate shocks.

Key activities include facility readiness assessments, physical infrastructure upgrades, healthcare provider training on climate-responsive care, and improved accessibility for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities. This community-clinic connectivity reinforces gender-transformative behavior change and promotes women's leadership in local adaptation planning.

*Before, we struggled. There were days the water was not there, days the power went off right when we needed it most—in the maternity ward, in the theatre. You can imagine what that means for a mother who is delivering, or a patient on the table. It was not good. But today things are different. We have solar power that does not fail us, clean water, proper waste disposal. Mothers come here now, and they deliver in a clean, safe place. Our staff can do their work without worrying about the lights going off. The community trusts us more.*

**MEDICAL OFFICER IN-CHARGE  
KIBAYA HOSPITAL**

Solar panels provide Kibaya District Hospital with reliable electricity for critical health services, ensuring continuous delivery of care during power outages and strengthening resilience to climate-related disruptions.

This rainwater harvesting and storage system at Kibaya District Hospital provides a sustainable water supply for daily hygiene practices, infection prevention, and safe delivery of health services.



Medical waste management system at Kibaya District Hospital, containing a placenta pit, electric incinerator, and ash pit. This ensures safe disposal of biomedical waste, which prevents infection and protects the environment.



Electric incinerator

Placenta pit





For nearly 70 years, Pathfinder International has been a catalyst for systems transformation, inclusive growth, and resilient communities in over 120 countries across the world. With a global footprint spanning Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East, we invest in women, girls, and communities by expanding access to essential health products and services while advancing health systems, unlocking leadership pathways, and strengthening economic and climate resilience. Through strategic partnerships with civil society, governments, and the private sector, we scale innovations and data-driven models that deliver measurable impact. We advance this work alongside men and communities, co-creating and building environments and systems to ensure every woman has the agency to shape her future and lead a healthy, fulfilling life.

**[pathfinder.org](https://pathfinder.org)**

Front cover: The household of Mr. Mgema Kushoto in Monduli District, Tanzania. The Boma Imara project works with households like Mr. Mgema Kushoto's to promote climate-smart practices at the community level.