



Yemen. © CARE/Thana Farooq

CARE 2020 PROGRAM STRATEGY: Humanitarian Response



CARE International is one of the world's largest humanitarian organizations fighting global poverty. In fiscal year 2015, CARE worked in 95 countries. Our emergency response and recovery projects reached over nine million people in 46 countries. CARE takes a comprehensive approach to emergency response: first by working with communities to prepare for and mitigate the impact of disasters; then by partnering with local groups to provide immediate assistance when an emergency hits; and finally by working with affected communities to help them recover after the crisis has passed.



Why does humanitarian action matter?

By the year 2020, the world's population will approach eight billion people. Disasters, exacerbated by climate change, will be more frequent, more numerous, and have a more devastating impact on communities. The world is currently witnessing the highest level of human suffering since the Second World War and an unprecedented global refugee crisis, driven in large part by major chronic conflicts. It is estimated that the proportion of the world's poor who live in fragile states will increase by 20 percent to over 60 percent in total.

The role of aid groups in helping people prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters is more important than ever. Emergency response has always been central to CARE's work. We know that we can't help communities fight poverty if disasters destroy hard-won development gains.

Women and girls are often disproportionately affected by emergencies. In times of crisis, women and girls are often the last to eat when their families run short of food. This clear focus on supporting women and girls is CARE's niche role and sets us apart from other agencies.

What CARE has committed to for humanitarian response

CARE is committed to meeting international standards of quality and accountability when we respond to emergencies, and to making sure communities have a say in planning, implementing and evaluating our response. While each

response is tailored to the needs of affected people, CARE's four main focus areas in emergencies are: sexual and reproductive health; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); shelter; and food security, all supported by a strong logistics capacity.

 **We commit to provide 20 million people affected by natural disasters and conflicts with life-saving assistance by the year 2020.**

Our goal for the year 2020 is to continue to strengthen our humanitarian work to have a lasting impact for people affected by humanitarian crises, **with a special focus on women and girls**, who are disproportionately affected by disasters. We know from our experience that by empowering women and girls we can reduce the vulnerability of families and entire communities and help them escape poverty.

Where will we achieve impact?

We do work in some of the poorest countries in the world, often in hard to reach areas. However, reaching women and girls during disasters can be extremely challenging and sensitive as they are often the most marginalized and vulnerable members of the community. A disaster will frequently exacerbate the constrained resources and opportunities for women and further limit their ability to seek safety and opportunity. Given CARE's presence in 95 countries around the world and our strong networks with local partners, we have the ability to react quickly when an emergency strikes.

What we do

BEFORE EMERGENCIES STRIKE

Good planning and preparedness can save lives, reduce the impact of disasters and help people recover more quickly. By incorporating methods for disaster risk reduction and plans for emergency preparedness into our long-term development programming, CARE helps communities strengthen their resilience, and prepare for and respond to disasters – be it cyclones and floods in Asia or drought and food shortages in Africa.



DURING EMERGENCIES

Dedicated resources for emergency response allow us to provide fast, effective relief. With programs in many of the world's most disaster-prone countries, CARE has emergency response experts in all continents – 96 percent of them citizens of the countries where we work – and additional emergency specialists ready to deploy immediately. When disaster strikes, CARE provides emergency food, relief supplies, water, sanitation and shelter to survivors. CARE places special emphasis on empowering women and girls, recognizing that they are disproportionately affected by disasters. A robust gender analysis and informed gender sensitive approaches are not only vital to assist women and girls but are inseparable from our humanitarian mandate. An analysis of CARE's responses to major disasters, ranging from the Nepal earthquakes of April 2015 to the Typhoon Haiyan emergency response in 2013, demonstrates the significant impact of CARE's gender in emergencies work in bringing positive changes for women and girls during and after crises.

AFTER AN EMERGENCY

After the emergency phase has passed, CARE works with communities to recover. Our goal is to transition as quickly as possible from an emergency response to rehabilitation, and then to sustained development. We help people help themselves and each other, for example through small business assistance and agricultural rehabilitation, thereby reducing their vulnerability to future emergencies. We provide psychosocial support to help people recover from trauma and promote better coping mechanisms through community activities.

COORDINATION

During an emergency, CARE coordinates with the local government and participates in the United Nations cluster system. This coordinated approach aims to ensure that humanitarian actors work together, reducing duplication of efforts and ensuring all people in need receive aid. At the global level, CARE is active in UN clusters for our emergency focus areas, and we have staff seconded to the WASH and logistics clusters.

Investment required

For CARE to reach its targets for humanitarian response and recovery, we require an investment of USD 250 million in 2016 and 2017. CARE needs resources, first and foremost, **to support humanitarian action and to deliver assistance in communities affected by disasters and protracted crises around the world.** In order for us to reach those most impacted by emergencies, particularly women and girls, we must increase our ability to pre-position life-saving emergency materials; to support preparedness and early action in high risk contexts; to significantly grow CARE's Emergency Response Fund enabling us to invest in our ability to respond at scale; to expand training and investment in developing CARE and partner capacities in humanitarian action; to grow the team of high quality deployable technical capacity in our core sectors, gender and program support; to document our evidence for CARE and for the wider humanitarian community to be used to improve program quality and to advocate effectively for the needs of affected populations; and to continue to build and innovate technology, tools and systems that support timely, quality response and CARE's accountability to affected populations, our donors and the wider community.



Examples of our successful programs

Philippines: Empowering women. Gender equality in humanitarian programming is best achieved, and often only achieved, if women actively participate and are empowered to decide how best to address their most urgent and future needs. This was clearly evident following Typhoon Haiyan, which in November 2013 struck the Philippines. Supporting nearly 17,000 households, CARE's shelter recovery programme empowered women to take decisions about their homes in what would traditionally be the domain of men. Many local women reported feeling especially empowered by the build-back-safer tips on how to make their homes safer in the future, which they used to direct the carpenters.



Chad. © CARE/Brendan Bannon

Sahel: Increasing local resilience. Repeated droughts over the past ten years in the Sahel region has resulted in nearly 20 million people being highly vulnerable and facing chronic and at times severe food and nutrition insecurity. Throughout the Sahel women are more vulnerable and negatively impacted, due not only to the crisis itself, but to social-cultural practices and traditions that deny them control and rights over productive assets, restrict opportunities for generating income, and limit access to information and education. Established in the early 1990s in Niger, CARE's Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) programme has played a critical role in strengthening the resilience of the predominantly female group members. CARE's work on empowering women and building their resilience and that of their communities played a significant role in mitigating the impact of the 2011–2012 Sahel drought. In Niger, the VSLA groups established by CARE formed part of an early warning system, which gathered relevant information that CARE and the groups used to strengthen preparedness for the impending drought.

Pakistan: Working with partners to ensure women participate and benefit from our assistance. Building strong and diverse partnerships is a key component of CARE's overall program and humanitarian strategies. In Pakistan, partnerships with local civil society have been instrumental supporting our assistance to people affected by the annual monsoon floods. In 2010, the country experienced one of its most destructive floods, affecting 18 million people and damaging or destroying 12 million homes. Socio-cultural dynamics led to challenges in reaching women and girls. CARE partnered with 18 local NGOs, who helped women overcome the proof of identity barrier, which prevented them from accessing humanitarian assistance. Many affected women did not possess national identity cards as they had not been permitted to individually register (typically being included on their husbands' or fathers' cards). For many women this was the first time they had an officially recognized independent proof of identity.



Bangladesh. © CARE/Viivi Erkkila

For any further information please refer to the CARE Humanitarian and Emergency Strategy or contact Philippe Guiton guiton@careinternational.org, Sally Austin austin@careinternational.org or Heather Van Sice vansice@careinternational.org