



# CARE 2030 VISION:

**Harnessing collective power to fight poverty, and achieve social justice**

## Introduction

Since the 1980's, when just over 40% of the world's population lived in extreme poverty, global societies have made **tremendous efforts to tackle poverty**, bringing that statistic down to just over 9% today. This positive trajectory sadly stands at a dangerous precipice as the combined impacts of an escalating climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic all threaten to send millions back into extreme poverty, while the inequality gap continues to widen.

Poverty is no monolithic entity; it is multidimensional and complex. Lack of good food and water, entrenched unemployment, conflict, poor education, the impact of extreme weather events, weak infrastructure all make up just some of the far-reaching and often interconnected tentacles of poverty. These impacts stem from deeply entrenched colonial and patriarchal power systems; in which, it is important to acknowledge, the aid and development and donor system operates within.

Current **data and future projections** are deeply troubling. Close to a quarter of the world's population lives on less than \$3.20 a day, and a record **235 million people** around the world were predicted (as of December 2020) to need emergency humanitarian assistance in 2021. At time of writing, more than **142 million people are living in 'hunger hotspots'** classified as IPC 3 (crisis) or higher, while the numbers of those at risk of catastrophic famine conditions escalate daily.

The COVID-19 pandemic has precipitated a global economic crisis without precedent since World War II with an additional **150 million people** being driven below the extreme poverty line, while **114 million** have lost their jobs as a consequence of restrictions on movements and lockdowns. Although income levels do not directly correlate with conflict, violence is more likely during periods of economic volatility and incidents of **gender-based violence (GBV)** have also been increasing, affecting women and girls in the overwhelming majority.

The disproportionate impacts of these crises on women and girls further underlines that we cannot eradicate poverty or achieve social justice without gender equality and inclusion. Recent history tells us how our collective front line—the first responders, providers, caretakers, activists and leaders—are predominantly women. When women have had the opportunity to lead, they have achieved great things. However, more often than not, their voices have been absent from decision-making.

### **That is where CARE focusses its efforts.**

CARE International's dedicated teams of staff and wide network of partners provide world-class expertise in gender equitable poverty reduction gained from 75 years of experience of working side-by-side with communities to understand the root causes of poverty, and work together to find and scale innovative, locally-led solutions.

Cover photo: Jeanne Sekondo from Ivory Coast is the president of the farmers Union, "UCOVISA: Grande Productrice de Mais", which roughly translates as 'great female producers of corn'. As a mother of seven children, she leads 18,000 female members in the union with authority, precision and a clear idea of what is required. Jeanne joined CARE to act as a role model for women participating in our Women in Enterprise programme, supported by H&M Foundation. She travels throughout the northern region of Ivory Coast sharing, inspiring and supporting other aspiring women entrepreneurs.

The CARE International network embraces collective learning and has built a leading position on impact measurement in the sector. We used our evidence-base from the last strategic period, as well as external trends analysis and dialogue with a range of expert groups to guide our 2030 Vision, focusing specifically on how we can better contribute to sustainable, systemic change at scale, while ensuring we have the operating model and structures in place to achieve that.

This includes acknowledging that the impact we want to achieve will only be possible if we continue to transform how we organize ourselves and our ways of working, in recognition that to be anti-poverty and to effectively fight for gender equality and social justice, it is also necessarily to be actively anti-racist.

Gender equality and partnership are central to our vision and mission; the CARE global network thrives on collaboration to make lasting change at scale. As we look to the future, we will continue to transform ourselves, reshape power dynamics and foster greater interconnectedness both within CARE, and across the wider aid and development system.

All of us in the CARE International network are driven by a firm belief that poverty is unjust, that poverty is solvable, and that together we have the power to end it.



Ganga Devi, a Community Health Worker, demonstrates how to measure a new born baby to a group of women at a maternal health meeting that is held monthly in a village near Dhangadhi, Nepal.

## Who is CARE?

CARE International is a global network of independent national organizations, which include CARE members, candidates and affiliates, social enterprises, and thousands of community-based partner organizations working together across more than 100 countries to save lives, end poverty and fight social injustice.

**Our Vision**  
We seek a world of hope, inclusion and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and all people live in dignity and security.

**Our Mission**  
Save lives, defeat poverty, and achieve social justice.

In 2020, CARE and our partners worked in 104 countries around the world, implementing 1,349 poverty-fighting development and humanitarian aid projects and initiatives to reach 92.3 million people directly, 73% of whom were women. CARE reached a further 433.4 million people through advocacy and scaling up of successful programs and community-led innovations.

With global expertise in scale and replication, a catalogue of resources, tools and best practice approaches, access to channels of influence both locally and globally, CARE International is a highly respected and active voice in shaping global development agendas and policies; guided by both our principles and evidence-base of practical, innovative and sustainable solutions to poverty.

### Our Program Principles

**Promote empowerment.** We stand in solidarity with people living in poverty and support their efforts to take control of their own lives and fulfil their rights, responsibilities and aspirations. We ensure that participants and organizations representing people living in poverty, especially women and girls, are partners at all stages in our programs.

**Work with partners.** We work with others to maximize the impact of our programs, building alliances and partnerships with those who offer complementary approaches, are able to scale up effective solutions, and/or have responsibility to fulfil rights and reduce poverty through policy change and implementation. We commit to working in ways that support and reinforce, not replace, existing capacities.

**Ensure accountability and promote responsibility.** We seek ways to be held accountable by the people we serve and partners we work with. We identify individuals and institutions with an obligation toward poor and marginalized people, and support and encourage their efforts to fulfil their responsibilities.

**Address discrimination.** In our programs and in everything we do we address discrimination and the denial of rights based on gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, class, religion, age, physical ability, caste, opinion or sexual orientation.

**Seek sustainable results.** As we address underlying causes of poverty and rights denial, we develop and use approaches that result in lasting and fundamental improvements in the lives of the people we serve, particularly women and girls. We work to influence changes that are environmentally, socially and institutionally sustainable.

**Do no harm.** We analyze the intended and unintended impacts of our programs, encourage honest learning, and take action to prevent and respond to any unintended harms. We place special focus on preventing and addressing gender-based violence in all of our programs.

*We hold ourselves accountable for enacting behaviors consistent with these principles, and ask others to help us do so, not only in our programs, but in all that we do.*



LGBTQ+ people often face challenges accessing work and livelihood opportunities, making them more likely to be unemployed and to live in poverty than the general population. CARE supported Andy (right) a trans man living with his partner Alexandra (left), to set up a small business when they were struggling to find work due to COVID-19 in Ecuador.

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## How CARE tackles poverty and injustice

### Focus on gender equality and the specific rights of women & girls

CARE's expertise lies in our holistic and inclusive approach to tackling poverty and injustice. We are a global connector of communities living in poverty to those holding power. We elevate the voice of the vulnerable and leverage our organizational diversity and learning to tackle inequalities and bring about lasting impact.

While CARE International works alongside people of all ages, backgrounds and genders, some 70% of the world's poorest people are women. Women and girls experience poverty, hardship, climate, conflict and health emergencies very differently to men, and require specialized approaches that do not universally exist.

While gender inequality is a key driver of poverty as well as one of the most widespread forms of injustice, when women are empowered, our evidence tells us that they bring their whole communities with them. True gender equality encompasses intersectional issues such as race or disability that can further disadvantage certain groups of women, yet once achieved also leads to more scalable and sustainable prosperity and has wider reaching impact.

CARE places the specific needs and rights of women and girls at the heart of all we do: it is reflective of both CARE's practical approach to solving poverty, the specific technical expertise we have gained as a diverse global network and also plays a critical part of our identity as an organization grounded in gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Address three dimensions of change

At CARE, we believe that to make meaningful and lasting impact at scale, we must tackle underlying causes of poverty and injustice, of which gender inequality is the one of the most pervasive. Based on a decade of experience using this framework to advance gender equality, this can only be done through working at three levels: Agency, Relations and Structures: ►



A group of men from Kyenjojo District, Uganda, participate in CARE's "Men in the Kitchen" programme aimed at breaking the norm that "men don't cook," and lightening the domestic burden for women by encouraging shared responsibility as well as good nutritional practices.

## ● Build agency:

CARE works with individuals to raise consciousness, self-esteem, confidence, and aspirations to change their world, and provides the knowledge, skills, and capabilities to do so.

## ● Change relations:

Change is more likely to stick if the people around us support it. CARE works to address inequality that persists in intimate relations, family, social and political networks, marketplaces, and community or citizen groups.

## ● Transform structures:

Discrimination and exclusion are often perpetuated through laws and policies as well as social norms and customs. These can affect how people of different genders are expected to behave and participate in social, economic and political spheres. CARE advocates against discriminatory laws and for new laws and policies to reduce discrimination and works with communities and power holders to critically reflect on and transform the norms and practices that perpetuate injustice.

Without all three dimensions of change, the injustice of poverty and gender inequality persists and the vulnerability to crisis worsens.

### Scale and sustain what works

CARE seeks to influence change beyond the communities where we work directly. Based on our evidence-based learning of effective [strategies for impact at scale](#), the following are central to where we will place emphasis in the coming decade

- **Scaling up and adapting proven models**, both directly through CARE and our partners, and indirectly with governments or other allies. Examples of proven models include CARE's Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), Community Score Cards, Rapid Gender Analysis, and Social Analysis and Action.
- **Addressing harmful norms** in the economic, social and political spheres, through community dialogue and other norms-shifting interventions, including media campaigns.
- **Advocacy to influence** changes to the policies, programs and budgets of governments and other power holders, and how those are implemented.
- **Systems strengthening and social accountability** to institutions with an obligation to fulfil the rights of the poor and marginalized.
- **Supporting social movements**, organizations and other **representatives of excluded groups** as conveners, allies, resource partners and amplifiers.
- **Inclusive market-based approaches** that are economically and environmentally sustainable, uphold labor rights, are inclusive of the poor and marginalized.

## Who we work with

CARE works in poverty-affected environments, fragile and conflict-affected contexts, and in rapid onset emergencies where our humanitarian action is guided by principles that ensure we reach those most in need.

CARE and our partners work with people in vulnerable situations such as migrants, refugees, internally displaced people, informal workers and with people who are experiencing the most profound impacts of climate change, such as small-scale farmers and agriculturalists. With gender equality at the heart of all we do, our programs support those who are marginalized due to their ethnicity, race, disability, health status, caste, religion, age, class, occupation, history, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

In the decade ahead, in addition to climate change, there are two key trends that will impact needs.

Firstly, there are more young people in the world than ever before, with about **1.8 billion people between the ages of 10 and 24**. The youth population is projected to grow further in low-income countries. Secondly, we are also experiencing continued global urbanization. By 2050, it is estimated that more than **two-thirds (68%) of the world's population will live in urban areas**. Just under 1-in-3 urban dwellers live in slum households.

Over the next decade, CARE will seek ways to develop and deepen our work with both youth and the urban poor to achieve our 2030 aspirations and meet the changing needs of an evolving global population.



As part of the WhyStop short film competition, CARE in Cambodia went on a nationwide roadshow to talk to 50 schools, universities and youth groups about sexual harassment. 1,000 young people got involved in making their own films about why sexual harassment should stop. The WhyStop films are now being shown in more schools with a full package for teachers to talk about this to students and this has been included in the national syllabus by the Ministry of Education.

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## Our 2030 ambition: A world of hope, inclusion and social justice

CARE contributes to lasting impact at scale in poverty eradication and social justice, in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While all that we do is to support the achievement of ending poverty (SDG 1), gender equality (SDG 5) sits at the heart of our programmatic ambitions and radiates throughout our work.

CARE's six impact areas drive progress towards our overall goal to end poverty. We focus on these specific impact areas for two reasons. Firstly, because they are critical barriers to poverty reduction, and secondly, because they are areas where CARE has developed world class expertise at all levels of our global network.

### SDG 1 – OVERCOMING POVERTY

#### Our 2030 overall contribution

CARE and our partners commit to supporting **200 million people** from the most vulnerable and excluded communities to overcome poverty and social injustice.

#### SDG 4 & 5 GENDER EQUALITY

We cannot eradicate poverty and achieve social justice while gender inequality persists. Discrimination against women has wider reaching negative implications including on global security and development, as well as economic performance, health, governance and stability.

**Our 2030 Goal:** **50 million women and girls** experience greater gender equality, with a specific focus on eliminating GBV, and increasing women and girls' voice, leadership and education.

#### SDG 1, 5 & 11 CRISIS RESPONSE

CARE plays a leading role in transforming the humanitarian sector by putting gender at the center of our responses. We use specific approaches that protect people's dignity, and build resilience and social cohesion in communities before, during, and after an emergency. Our core humanitarian sectors – shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); food; and sexual and reproductive health and rights – will always seek to contribute to both gender equality and life-saving assistance in tandem.

**Our 2030 Goal:** Working with local partners, CARE provides quality and gender-focused humanitarian assistance to **10%** of those affected by major crises, reaching at least **50 million people** by 2030.

SDG 2, 5 & 6  
**FOOD AND WATER**

The world produces enough food for everyone to eat, yet still many go hungry. At CARE, we know that women small-scale farmers are critical to global food production, but lack access to the same resources as their male counterparts. We focus on supporting women farmers so that they can feed the world.

**Our 2030 Goal:** **75 million** people can better exercise their right to adequate food, water and nutrition.

SDG 5 & 8  
**ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

We believe everyone has the right to economic resources and the power to make decisions that benefit themselves, their families and their communities. CARE recognizes that this requires women to have equal access to, and control over, economic resources, assets and opportunities; it also requires long-term changes in social norms and economic structures.

**Our 2030 Goal:** **50 million women** have more equitable access to, and control over, economic resources and opportunities.



Samah, 40, was displaced from her hometown in Northwest Syria. She works as an incubator nurse at the Neonatal Unit in Al-Amal hospital, run by Violet, one of CARE's Syrian partner organizations in Northwest Syria.

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## SDG 3 & 5 HEALTH

We believe that everyone has both a right health, and reproductive self-determination. CARE's multi-dimensional health programs address barriers at the individual, social and structural level, and includes scaling up our existing expertise on epidemics and diseases to meet the ongoing challenges posed by COVID-19.

**Our 2030 Goal:** 50 million people can exercise their right to health, including 30 million women their right to sexual and reproductive health.

## SDG 5, 7 & 13 CLIMATE JUSTICE

We believe that everyone has the right to live on a healthy planet. Climate change exacerbates existing inequalities; it is estimated that climate change may push an additional 132 million people into poverty by 2030. By working for inclusive, just and gender-transformative climate policies and actions, CARE aims to strengthen the resilience of the poorest and most marginalized people on the front-lines of the climate emergency, particularly women and girls.

**Our 2030 Goal:** 25 million poor and marginalized people, particularly women and girls, have strengthened their resilience and adaptive capacities to the effects of climate change.

**We will not achieve these goals alone. In this strategic period, CARE is deepening its existing approach to partnerships for sustainable development and humanitarian assistance with an emphasis on amplifying local women leaders and movements (SDG 17).**

### Definition of partnership at CARE International

At the heart of all partnerships for CARE International is our goal of addressing poverty and social injustice (particularly gender inequality and unequal power dynamics). Partnerships are purposeful relationships based on mutual trust, equality and learning, with an agreed vision, clear accountability for all parties, and which engage the complementary strengths of the actors involved to collaborate on specific objectives, challenges or opportunities in ways that achieve greater impact than they could achieve alone.

## CARE in 2030: Evolving our network in a changing landscape

In the last **few decades**, civil society has evolved significantly as compared to 75 years ago when CARE was first established. The rise of digital technology as well as geopolitical and economic shifts have created both opportunities and pressures.

On the one side, such trends have spurred the creation of millions of civil society organizations around the world, creating a vibrant global community of locally driven activism and implementation. On the other, space for **civil society** is contracting with reports of increased regulation and reporting requirements, alongside harassment of staff and threats of violence. As a well-established and highly connected international network, CARE plays a crucial role in this complex new world that all civil society actors now navigate, but we recognize that our role must change. It is critical that civil society, large and small, stand united and on an equal footing if we are to achieve our collective goals.

At CARE, this means we will invest in civil society strengthening in more significant and supportive ways; for example, by acting as a convener, ally, amplifier, and resource partner. We have a key role to play as a bridge-builder; connecting “new power” movements to “old power” in ways that influence, transform, and accelerate change.

To do this effectively, we will adapt our internal systems and ways of working. Recognizing that international and largely northern funded NGOs such as CARE sit within wider colonial and patriarchal systems, we will continue to reflect on our status and power. We will identify tensions and intentionally cultivate dialogue around them, including by openly and continuously seeking to understand and address unequal power dynamics both within CARE and in our interactions with others.

As a learning organization, data at CARE informs our strategies, decisions and our behaviors. We will build on our position of being one of the few multi-mandate INGOs able to measure and monitor our **global contributions to the SDGs** and derive learning from our data to inform our programs and advocacy. We will focus in the future on innovation and agility, transparency and learning, as well as seeking solutions that will support us to become a more climate responsible organization.