



Together on the path to 50 million!
GENDER EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT
2025

Foreword

I'm proud to share CARE's 2025 Gender Equality Annual Report — a testament to the dedication of our staff, partners, and stakeholders in advancing gender equality worldwide. Together, we've worked to empower women and girls, engage men and boys to challenge harmful norms, and expand access to education, health, and economic opportunities to communities around the globe.

Yet 2025 has been a sobering year. Hard-won gains are under attack: governments are restricting family planning and equality language, targeting feminist movements, and sidelining women and girls in humanitarian responses. Conflicts from Gaza to Sudan to Ukraine have deepened these inequities, while funding for gender equality initiatives stagnates. The backlash is out pacing the response.

Now more than ever, gender equality is not optional — it saves lives, drives change, and is essential to ending poverty. As we reach the midpoint of CARE'S Vision 2030, we must reflect, adapt, and scale what works. We remain steadfast in our support for Country Offices and CARE Member Partners as we work together to drive meaningful progress toward ending gender-based violence, increasing women's and girls' voice and leadership, increasing equitable and inclusive access to education and skills, and embedding equality across all our work.

The path ahead is complex, but our resolve is clear: we will do all we can, wherever we can, with whatever resources we have, to build a more just and equal world.

Thank you for standing with us.

In solidarity and hope,

Esther Watts,
Senior Director, Women and Girls Program Team, CARE

CARE supported me to discover the power of beauty: my journey in rural Georgia

I am **Teona Mamadashvili**, a mother of three from the rural village of Pichkhovani in Kakheti, Georgia. For years, my family lived with financial uncertainty. My husband's income as a truck driver was irregular, and there were times when even basic needs felt out of reach. The constant worry about our children's future caused tension at home and left me anxious and unsure of my worth.

To support our household, I took on odd jobs, but balancing work with childcare and housework affected my health. I always loved hairdressing and makeup, but without training, equipment, or space, I felt trapped and dependent.

Everything changed when I joined the Argokhi Women's Club through **CARE Caucasus's Her Power, Her Future** that started in 2022. Nervously, I shared my idea of opening a small beauty salon. Instead of dismissing me, they applauded me for being courageous enough to dream. CARE provided professional training, mentorship, and a grant of 3,300 GEL (about USD 1,220); I used it to rent a modest space and purchase basic equipment.

There were a few other salons in the area and I knew I needed to build a niche brand. So, with CARE's guidance, I started to build a strong social media presence. And before a year passed, my income increased by 500%! For the first time, I could actively plan my children's education, manage household expenses, save, and reinvest. My relationship with my husband also improved as he now saw me as an equal partner.

CARE transformed my confidence. I speak openly in meetings, and feel heard, and respected. I am determined to pass on this opportunity to other women - train more women, mentor them and support them to become independent. Just as CARE did for me.

Teona Mamadashvili.



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Abbreviations

AIIR	Advocacy Impact and Influencing Reporting
CEFMU	Child Early Forced Marriage and Unions
CVA	Cash Voucher Assistance
CWEEE	The Coalition for Women’s Economic Empowerment and Equality
EMB	Engaging Men and Boys
ESPP	Environmental and Social Policy and Procedures
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FLN	Foundational Literacy & Numeracy
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBViE	Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies
GEF	Gender Equality Framework
GEQ	Gender Equality (Indicator(s))
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
PIIRS	Project & Program Information and Impact Reporting System
PSEA-CA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse - Child Abuse
RGA	Rapid Gender Analysis
SAA	Social Analysis and Action
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WGPT	Women and Girls Programs Team
WGSS	Women and Girls Safe Spaces
WGVL	Women’s and Girls’ Voice and Leadership
WLiE	Women Lead in Emergencies
WRO/ WLO	Women’s Rights Organizations / Women Led Organizations
WVL	Women's Voice and Leadership

Gender Equality at CARE

Gender equality is at the core of who we are and all we do. A focus on gender equality and the specific rights of women and girls is central to achieving our Vision 2030 goals and is inextricably linked to CARE’s mission of ending poverty and inequality. Our decades of experience and evidence show that empowering women and girls means brighter futures for them, their families, communities, and societies. CARE’s ambition to put women and girls at the center of our work means we, together with our partners, promote gender equality as a fundamental goal and as a pathway to achieving progress across all sectors and in all countries where we operate. We work across the entire continuum of contexts, from humanitarian and conflict-affected locations to fragile and fluid ‘nexus’ situations to stable development contexts.

Together, we are driving meaningful, community-led, and sustainable change. By collaborating with partners and allies across geographies and sectors, we harness shared strengths, deepen impact, and expand our reach. Looking ahead, we will strengthen partnerships with women- and girl-led organizations to advance gender equality.

Five things we are excited about heading into 2026

- 1. Expanding our engagement with WROs/WLOs to drive progress on gender equality
- 2. Expanded and updated tools to support social norms changes in this more challenging context (Engaging Men and Boys (EMB), Social Analysis and Action (SAA))
- 3. Further integrating advocacy and capturing its impact
- 4. New opportunities to work together across sectors (e.g. Child Marriage, Digital, Care Economy)
- 5. Deepening partnerships with governments and the private sector to scale solutions that strengthen systems for women and girls



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About this report

This report highlights CARE’s progress toward our goal of 50 million people experiencing greater equality — 25 million from standalone and 25 million from integrated programming — as part of Vision 2030. It highlights our impact, reach, achievements, and challenges, as well as opportunities for growth moving forward, across all of CARE’s women and girls’ equality-related programming.

Data are drawn from CARE’s Project and Program Information and Impact Reporting System (PIIRS) and other program/project briefs and reports. Data related to contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals takes the 2015-2030 period as reference (in line with the timeline of the SDGs). Data related to CARE’s progress towards our Vision 2030 goals, take the 2020-2030 period as reference. And data related to participants reached over the past year, take the fiscal year 2025 (FY25, from July 2024 through June 2025) as reference.

The Global Context

As the global community approaches the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality (SDG 5) remains one of the most pressing commitments. Chronic underfunding continues to stall progress, the pace of which falls far short of what is needed to reach SDG 5. Focus 20301 and other advocates highlight that without increased investment, structural barriers will remain in place, limiting leadership, education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for women and girls especially. A significant realignment of funding priorities is urgently needed to dismantle these barriers.

Globally, this year has also seen some important gains. Legislative reforms aimed at closing the gender gap have been enacted in many countries, particularly in areas such as workplace rights, parental leave, and protections against violence and harassment of women and girls. The global push for representation and participation is influencing public discourse and shaping stronger, more fair policies.

A just, equal, and sustainable future depends on bold and holistic approaches that go beyond surface-level fixes to address the root causes of gender inequality. With only five years left to meet the SDGs, the time for incremental change has passed. Gender equality must be embedded across all sectors and backed by sustained investment and political will. Continued and deepened investment into the following is critical to accelerate impact:

- Elevating women’s leadership and ensuring their voices shape policies and solutions
- Closing the gender gap between women and men in economic opportunity and digital access
- Dismantling harmful gender and social norms and ending gender-based violence (GBV)
- Expanding equitable and inclusive access to education and healthcare for all
- Strengthening resilience to climate change through gender responsive action
- Investing in data, accountability, and partnerships to track progress and drive innovation

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



CARE with our partners have advanced gender equality by empowering **23.6 million** women and girls since 2015 and 11.8M since 2020 (SDG 5).

Gender Inequality in Numbers

1 in every 10 women in the world lives in extreme poverty

1 in every 3 women face violence in her lifetime

Nearly 64 million more women are food insecure than men

1 in 8 women globally aged 15-49 – or 12.5 percent – experienced sexual and/or physical violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous year

Just 63 countries have rape laws that base the legal definition of rape on the lack of freely given consent

Women account for less than 40% of agricultural landowners or rights holders in 32 out of 49 countries with available data.

39% of young women fail to complete upper secondary school and women account for only 35% of all science, technology, engineering and math graduates worldwide

235 million fewer women than men use mobile internet in low- and middle-income countries

Our progress on the path to 50 million

We continue to make significant strides on our path to 50 million people experiencing greater gender equality. Since implementation of the Vision 2030 strategy began in 2020, **18.8 million** people have been impacted by programs focused on gender equality, with **895** projects in **79** countries reporting positive impact. This represents **37.6%** of the target of 50 million people.

| A note on our impact data:

CARE prioritizes rigorous reporting to capture measurable changes in people’s lives, not just counts of those trained or reached by campaigns. These figures represent individuals whose lives have demonstrably improved the actions of a project or initiative implemented by CARE and our partners, and verified through evaluation. While many more likely benefit, we only report impact supported by solid evidence.

Our progress - CARES Impact by Numbers



18.8 million people have experienced greater equality. Of this:



2.9 million people positively impacted by programming focused on ending GBV



10.3 million people positively impacted by programming focused on ensuring equitable and inclusive access to quality education and skills



3.05 million women and girls positively impacted by programming focused on advancing women’s and girls’ voices and leadership.



5.1 million people positively impacted by standalone programming



13.7 million people positively impacted through integrated programming

**Sourced from: PIIRs FY25 data*

In FY25 CARE reached 26.7 million people in 95 countries, the majority of whom (59%) were women and girls – an increase from 53% in FY24

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)
0.2 M

Western Africa
5.2 M

Southern Africa
1.2 M

Middle East/North Africa (MENA)
2.2 M

East & Central Africa
3.7 M

Asia Pacific
6.1 M

Top 6 countries by Impact
India - 4.0 M
Egypt - 1.8 M
Niger 1.8 M
Mali - 1.7 M
Rwanda - 0.8 M
Bangladesh -0.8 M

Measuring impact - CARE's Gender Equality Framework

CARE’s Gender Equality Framework (GEF) guides our work to advance gender equality. Working together with local partners and communities, CARE drives change in three interconnected domains – agency, structure, and relations – across our programs and projects.

CARE’s impact across the Gender Equality Framework

AGENCY: 14.1 million people were positively impacted by projects which built women and girls’ agency at all stages of life. People gained confidence, knowledge, and power to make their own choices and take charge of their lives.

RELATIONS: 1.8 million people were positively impacted by projects which changed relations (formal and informal) through which women and girls negotiate their paths. People felt more support, respected, and included in their families and communities because of stronger and more equal relationships.

STRUCTURE: 7.6 million people were positively impacted by projects which transformed the structures that surround and shape women and girls’ choices and opportunities. People experienced fairer laws and policies that made it easier for them to access opportunities and live with dignity.

How do we measure impact across CARE's Gender Equality Framework?

Impact indicators reported in CARE's PIIRS system are categorized based on their contribution to fostering positive change in each domain of the GEF, allowing us to measure our collective impact on the lives of women and girls around the world and track progress towards greater equality for all people. Agency-related interventions seem to be yielding high impact as compared to Structures; however, we anticipate the Structures numbers to increase as a result of greater documentation.

Learn more about [CARE's Gender Equality Framework](#).



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Our Gender Equality Program Impact

CARE is committed to advancing gender equality and specifically the rights of women, girls, and other diverse marginalized groups. We do this in two ways: 1) through standalone programs which have a dedicated focus on gender equality and 2) through the integration of gender equality across our sectoral programming.

Standalone programming: Gender equality focus areas

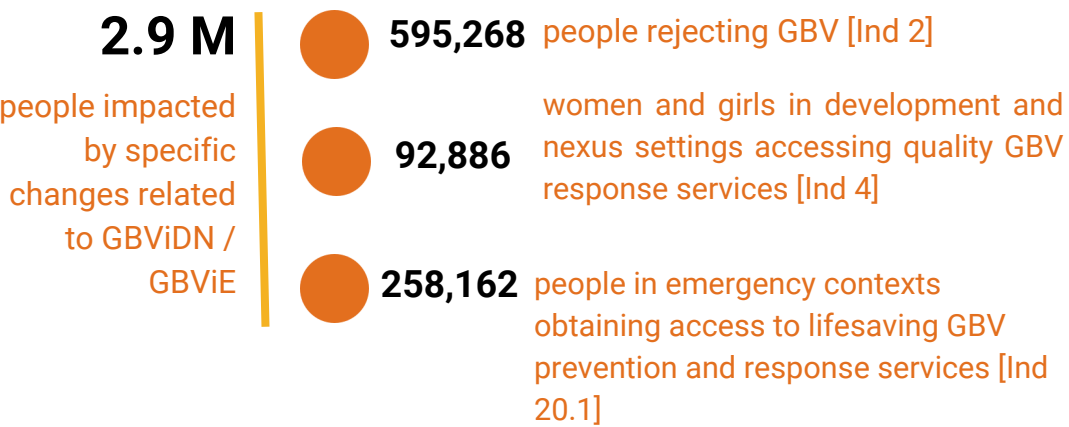
CARE focuses on advancing gender equality through three priority focus areas considered critical to achieving greater gender equality: Ending GBV, increasing women’s and girls’ voice and leadership, and increasing equitable and inclusive access to education and skills.

ENDING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

CARE is committed to ensuring that everyone has the right to live free from all forms of violence. We focus on challenging and dismantling the systems and behaviors that perpetuate GBV. Our efforts encompass economic empowerment, shifting harmful social norms, and delivering accessible, high-quality responses to GBV in all settings. This is particularly important in emergencies, where access to lifesaving care and support is unpredictable, vulnerability to violence is higher, and the systems that protect women and girls are often weakened or broken down. Learn more about our approaches to [ending VAWG](#).

Progress on GBV towards Vision 2030

Cumulatively since 2021, CARE’s GBV in development and nexus (GBViDN) and GBV in emergency programs (GBViE) have impacted 2.9 million people through 83 projects in 43 countries. This represents **42%** of the impact target of 7 million people by 2030.



In FY25, 476 projects addressed GBViDN and/or GBViE in 78 countries, reaching over 3.7 million people.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS – GBViE

Through the **USG-funded XB Program**, CARE Türkiye received targeted GBViE technical support (Oct 2024–Jan 2025) to strengthen staff and partner capacity in GBV case management and integrating Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA) in Northwest Syria. Support included developing supervision protocols, coaching, and training on documentation, reporting, supervision, and integrating Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) into GBV response to enhance survivor recovery. Reflection sessions were introduced to embed learning into daily practice.

Training on CVA focused on linking financial assistance with protection outcomes, covering Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for CVA, eligibility criteria, and risk mitigation. Scenario-based exercises reinforced a survivor-centred approach, emphasizing safety, confidentiality, dignity, and informed decision-making helping participants apply CVA in ways that uphold protection and empowerment for survivors. The initiative improved supervision structures and boosted case workers confidence and skills in applying GBV case management and CVA principles. Despite these gains, challenges persisted—heavy caseloads, inconsistent tool use, and delays in mobile Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) rollout. Unfortunately, a stop-work order and funding cuts and in early 2025 ended the project prematurely.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS – GBViDN

The Martawa Zuromaye (Dignity and Security) Project (2020–2025), funded by the U.S. Department of State, was implemented by CARE Nigeria and two local Women Led Organizations (WLO) in northeast Nigeria to reduce violence against women and girls, particularly child, early and forced marriage/unions (CEFMU) and female genital mutilation (FGM). Using social norms approaches including Social Analysis and Action (SAA) and Engaging Men and Boys (EMB), the project engaged communities, religious leaders, and local authorities to shift attitudes, raise awareness, and build consensus. Advocacy efforts led to the state’s adoption of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, criminalizing GBV and supporting survivors. Project Endline findings found that:

- Awareness improved significantly:
 - Domestic violence recognition rose to 68% of women (32% men) from 38% (36%) in 2020.
 - 76% of women acknowledged CEFMU exists vs. 24% of men.
 - Understanding of FGM motives increased: 78% of women (27% men) cited “control of women’s sexuality,” up from <1% at baseline.
- Self-reported intimate partner violence (IPV) dropped sharply:
 - Beatings from spouses/husbands fell from 71% to 6%; slapping from 52% to 11%.
- Harmful attitude scores improved: women from 4.0 to 6.7; men from 4.3 to 7.1.

“Our teacher says girls have the right to say no. In the past, we didn’t think girls had any choice, especially in regards to marriage” - 16 YO girl.

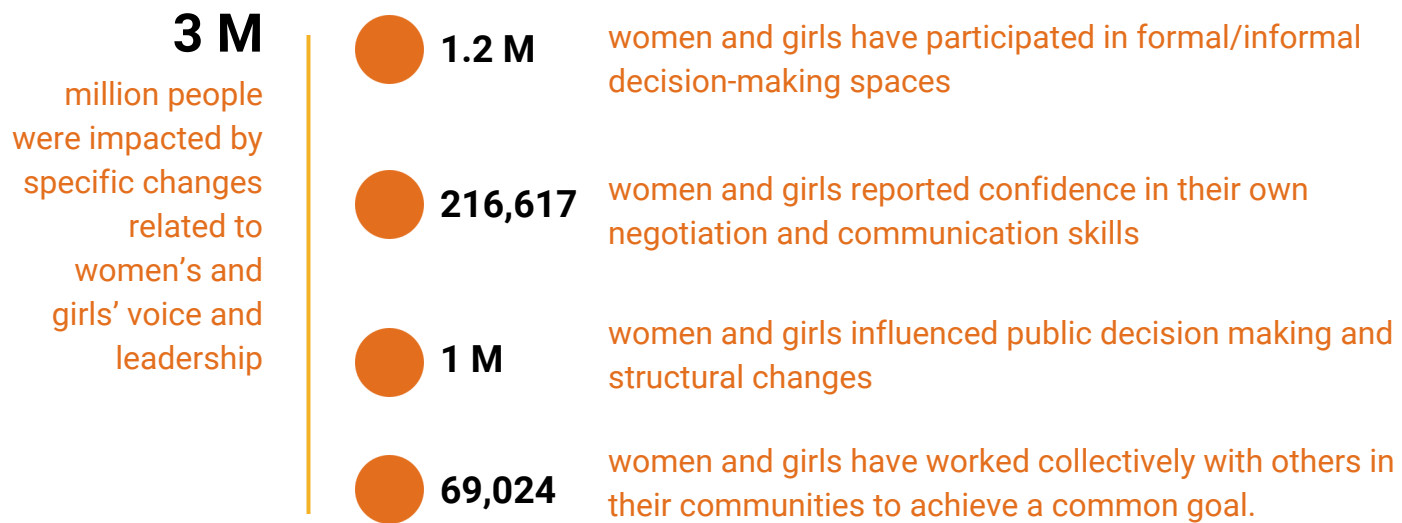


Increasing women’s and girls’ voices and leadership

Achieving greater gender equality requires that women and girls have a significant role in shaping the decisions that impact their lives. Around the world, the autonomy of women and girls is often undermined, with those in power restricting opportunities for their leadership and engagement in decision-making processes and institutions. Urgent and meaningful social and structural changes – driven by women and girls – are needed to remove the barriers to women’s and girls’ leadership and ensure their voices are heard. We continue to strengthen our commitment to advancing women’s leadership in collaboration with WLO and WRO, nurturing girl-led movements, and engaging with women who are spearheading new models of social change. Discover more about our approach to promoting women’s and girls’ voices & leadership ([WVL](#)).

Progress on WGVL towards Vision 2030

Cumulatively since 2021, CARE WGVL programs impacted 3.05 million women and girls through 110 projects in 41 countries. This represents **27.7% of the impact target** of 11 million people by 2030.



In FY25, 400 projects address WGVL in 81 countries, **reaching over 4.7 million people**. 43% of projects focused on gender equality programming worked in partnership with WROs and/or WLOs.



Program Highlights: WGVL

The AFD-funded regional Women, Dignity and Work (MDT) Phase II project (2022–2024) in Latin America positioned paid domestic workers as leaders, organizers, and entrepreneurs. By strengthening women’s collectives and amplifying their voices in national and regional agendas, the project advanced public policies, expanded social security and labor protections, and promoted women’s economic autonomy and social recognition. Domestic workers—key to the care economy—remain among the most invisible and vulnerable. Across the region, most lack formal contracts and social security, earn below minimum wage, and face intersecting discrimination and violence. In Colombia, 700,000 workers are employed in domestic work, but only 10 percent have contracts and 81 percent lack social security. In Ecuador, 57 percent earn below minimum wage and 9 percent live in extreme poverty. In Honduras, 94 percent earn below minimum wage in a context where ILO Convention 189 is not ratified. In Mexico, 2.3 million people—95 percent of them women—work as paid domestic workers, yet less than 2 percent are enrolled in social security despite recent reforms. The program strengthened organizational capacity at national and regional levels to improve working conditions, defend human and labour rights, and build economic autonomy.



Program Highlights: WGVL (Results)



Decent Work Agendas: Domestic workers’ organizations in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, and regionally via CONLACTRAHO developed advocacy agendas that influenced government dialogue and advanced ILO Conventions 189 and 190. In Ecuador, the agenda aligns with feminist and labor justice policies. These agendas, co-created by domestic workers, connect to reforms in care policy, labor rights, social security, and anti-violence laws.



Capacity Building: About 33% of surveyed domestic workers (~825 women) received training in rights, digital tools, and organizational skills, boosting confidence, contract negotiation, ability to seek support in cases of violence, and leadership participation (now 37% engaged in decision-making spaces).



Economic Empowerment: Social and cooperative enterprises in Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico (e.g., IMALIMPPIA, Mujeres Sostenibles) promote fair employment, better pay, formalization, and access to benefits, offering alternatives to informality.



Evidence & Alliances: Research on violence, discrimination, and racism strengthened advocacy, while partnerships with institutions and media amplified impact. Quality of life improved significantly, with 63–98% of surveyed women reporting better living conditions.

Key Strategies

- 1. Organizational strengthening of CONLACTRAHO to influence union and grassroots leadership to dismantle structural inequalities.
- 2. Engaged stakeholders to shape public policy and foster dialogue with regional and global actors.
- 3. Training strategy built women’s skills in human and labour rights, advocacy, professional skills (care, domestic services, admin, finance, marketing), and digital tools.
- 4. Enterprise development strategy supported social enterprise development in Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico through cross-country approaches for sustainable economic inclusion.
- 5. Built strategic alliances with state institutions, private sector, social movements, academia, civil society, and media.

Country snapshots – Mexico and Colombia

In **Mexico**, years of organizing led to major legal reforms: ratification of ILO Convention 190, reforms to the Social Security Law, mandatory social security for all domestic workers (May 2023), and a housing subsidy (Nov 2023). The program also trained workers on rights and professionalization and supported the Mujeres Sostenibles cooperative, legally registered in Feb 2024, which has piloted placements for 33 workers under improved conditions.

In **Colombia**, where around 700,000 women work in paid domestic work but most lack contracts and social security, the project advanced a national Decent Work Agenda through 14 policy dialogues and produced practical tools (inspection guide, model contract, formalization guide) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and ILO. Women’s skills and leadership were strengthened through training in rights, professional skills and digital tools, and supported the IMALIMPPIA social enterprise creating 34 jobs, serving 96 clients, and supported 250 women by mid-2024.

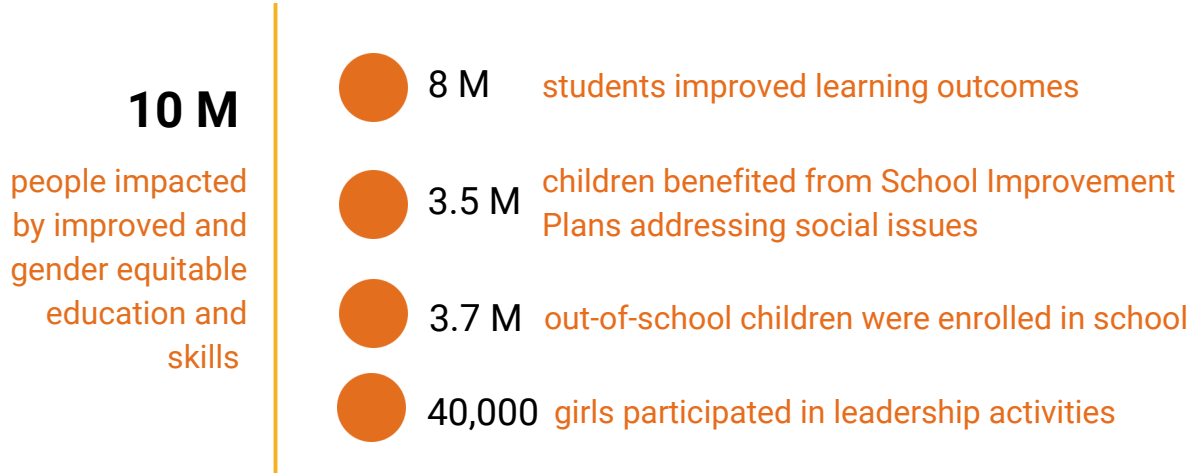
Overall, these results show that domestic workers are moving from informality and invisibility toward organization, recognition, and greater control over the rules that govern their work.

Increasing equitable and inclusive access to education and skills

Education is a fundamental human right and a crucial tool for eradicating poverty. However, girls encounter significant structural and disproportionate barriers that hinder their access to education, particularly in conflict-affected areas and at the secondary level and above. The absence of educational opportunities limits their development of essential life skills, leadership abilities, and personal agency. Evidence shows that education improves lifetime income, health, and resilience while reducing early marriage rates. This is why 65% of CARE’s global projects focus on adolescent children and youth as a primary target group. We also collaborate with various governance structures to promote fair and accessible education systems and advocate that quality education is a right for every child—and a government responsibility. Learn more about our approach to [education & skills](#).

Progress on education and skills towards Vision 2030

Cumulatively since 2021, CARE’s Education and Skills programs have impacted 10.3 million people through 109 projects implemented across 42 countries, exceeding the Vision 2030 impact target of 7 million by 47% from education and skills programming. This reflects significant programmatic growth and sustained commitment, contributing to improved learning outcomes, school governance, foundational literacy and numeracy, and acquisition of skills for work.



In FY25, CARE **reached 14.3 million people** through education and skills programming through 197 projects implemented in 62 countries. Overall, 30% of those projects were implemented in partnership with WROs or WLOs.



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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS - Education and Skills

Enhanced foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) for young children. CARE’s USAID-funded India Partnership for Early Learning (IPEL) drove a surge in education impact, reaching over 11 million students and improving outcomes for 5.7 million through CARE’s other large system-strengthening projects. In India, 21% of children struggle with reading fluency. To address this, the government launched a national initiative on acquiring foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) by grade 2. IPEL supported state governments in Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh in implementing this mandate. Among IPEL’s key successes:

- Teachers using improved foundational practices rose from 29% to 93%, boosting grade 2 reading proficiency from 39% to 92%.
- The share of learners unable to read dropped from 37% to 1% (–36 ppt).
- The share of learners unable to solve single-digit additions fell from 25% to 2% (–23 ppt).

Program Highlights: Education & Skills

Improved government capacity to deliver quality education while meeting critical child nutrition needs. CARE’s education programs support Ministries of Education to respond to the needs of vulnerable children in rural and remote areas, strengthening resilience and addressing safeguarding issues.

CARE’s USDA-funded HATUTAN II program strengthened government efforts to deliver education and nutrition through the national school feeding program in 378 remote schools, reaching 100,820 people (87,902 students) from 2022–2025. Improved public funding and efficient transfers raised the share of schools serving meals in the first term from 1% (2023) to 76% (2025). Access to nutritious meals correlated with a 10-point gain in reading comprehension, increasing girls’ comprehension from 22% to 36% and boys’ from 15% to 28%.

The Lafaek program supports the Ministry of Education in developing learning materials for all pre-primary and primary students (243,395 in 2024) and distributes educational magazines to 100,000 rural households three times a year. Students using Lafaek materials improved reading comprehension by 5.3 percentage points, compared to 0.2 points for non-users. Parents who received Lafaek magazines were 8 percentage points more likely to report child abuse cases than those who did not.



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Increased access to second chance education globally. CARE’s education and skills programs expand access and improve outcomes for vulnerable learners—especially older girls at risk of early marriage—through formal and non-formal education pathways. To date, 4 million adolescents have been reached via SOAR (accelerated learning and life skills development programming) across 9 countries (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, India, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zambia). The program has been integrated into and/or developed with public education plans of Malawi, Nepal, India, and Zambia.

In Somalia, CARE’s Adolescent Girls’ Education in Somalia (AGES) and Girls’ Education Accelerator (GEA) supported the Ministry of Education to develop a non-formal curriculum currently being scaled and an Education Safeguarding Policy (approved 2024). AGES enabled 90,968 ultra-marginalized girls and young women aged 10-25 to access education opportunities, with an 83% completion rate and improved girls’ average literacy scores from 17% to 45%. It equipped 8,490 girls to become peer mentors in their communities, leading actions against early marriage and other forms of GBV and linking out-of-school girls to education and skills development opportunities through joint action with the Ministry of Youth. Employment among AGES-supported young women rose from 30.7% to 55.3%, with monthly income increasing from \$15.7 to \$40.



In Nepal, 88% of girls transitioned from accelerated education courses to formal schools.



In Ethiopia, 75% of students who transitioned to formal schools were still enrolled six months later.

Realizing gender equality in humanitarian contexts

Conflict and crises worsen inequalities for women and girls, heightening risks of violence and harm. Humanitarian aid is most effective when it addresses their specific needs and upholds their right to make decisions about their lives and communities. Emergency responses can either reinforce or challenge these inequalities, making it essential to prioritize the unique needs of women and girls in every intervention.

CARE’s humanitarian work mirrors its development programming by focusing on Gender-based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE), Women’s and Girls’ Voice and Leadership (WGVLE), education, and integrating gender equality approaches across all sectors, while also addressing women and girls’ broader protection concerns. CARE situates our work on a non-linear, ever-evolving continuum that **ensures women and girls are safe from violence** in order to be safe to meet basic needs. For GBViE, CARE prioritizes both survivor response and service delivery, as well as risk mitigation through safe programming.

CARE’s GBViE work prioritizes safe digital access for women and girls. As technology use in programming surged post-COVID, CARE, with USAID BHA support, led efforts to shape global inter-agency minimum standards for safety and survivor-centered design. Though the project ended in Feb 2025, CARE and UNICEF conducted extensive consultations with women and girls in diverse humanitarian contexts, capturing real risks, barriers, and safeguards. This foundational work ensures future standards prioritize the voices and protection of women and girls.

CARE’s Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) ensures humanitarian response and recovery meet the needs of the most vulnerable. As a result, 68% of responses addressed migrant, refugee, or IDP populations; 71% targeted people with disabilities; and 69% improved conditions for pregnant and lactating women. The RGA Adolescent Toolkit, launched with PLAN, expanded analysis to youth, focusing on girls’ safety. Consistent RGA use strengthens decision-making and reinforces CARE’s technical leadership, seen in its nomination to lead four global RGAs in major emergencies, shaping gender action plans.

Program Highlights: Gender Equality in Humanitarian Contexts

In Northeast Nigeria, the insurgency which started in 2015 has led to the displacement of more than two million people, with women and girls subjected to physical, mental and sexual assault as well as early and forced marriage. Approximately 1.4 million people need GBV assistance in Nigeria but GBV prevention and response mechanisms are limited. As part of the STESERN project in Northeast Nigeria, CARE and partners Ekklesiyar Yan’Uwa A Nigeria (EYN), the NEEM Foundation, and the Nigerian INGO Forum (NIF) in Northeast Nigeria, are using the Women Lead in Emergencies (WLIE) approach with 10 community-based women’s groups to strengthen women’s leadership and the delivery of services. As a result, members of the women’s groups reported that they now have channels to speak directly with religious leaders and local authorities about issues that affect them, particularly GBV, and that they now can support women in their communities to report cases of GBV and, for survivors of sexual violence, to access treatment within 72 hours. (Source: WLIE Learning Brief, Nigeria project video).



Program Highlights: Gender Equality in Humanitarian Contexts

A multicountry program on gender equality and women empowerment - GEWEP (phase III) - focuses on five specific areas: women's economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, engaging men and boys, civil society strengthening, and building resilience. In FY25 the Myanmar component of GEWEP-III reached 6,025 participants. Over the lifecycle of the project, it provided services to close to 18,000 women and girls. Services included case management, psychosocial support, and legal aid. Four safe houses, 25 static and 6 mobile Women's & Girls' Friendly Spaces, and 1 drop-in center were established. In the final year of operations, all spaces were handed over to the community. A GBV risk mitigation approach ensured that 44% of women indirectly benefitted from safer community level facilities such as solar lights and room partitions.



Integrated gender equality programming

Our integrated programming tackles root causes of gender inequality within broader efforts on health, digital access, climate resilience, food and water security, economic growth, and safety. We focus on **shifting harmful gender and social norms, challenging power imbalances, ending GBV, and engaging men and boys**. By addressing systemic issues, these changes are more sustainable and resilient to future shocks.

Overall, high impact is reported for projects focusing on strengthening formal structures (i.e., policies, laws, budgets etc) across all impact areas, with lower impact realized through informal structures. This could be due to reporting, as use of the primary indicators measuring changes in these areas, Indicators 13 and 16*, remain low. We will continue to socialize these two indicators across impact areas. There is also a need for more focused discussion on the linkage between social norms and sector programming.

*Indicator 13 is % of people supported through/by CARE with attitudes that support equal advancement of women and men. Indicator 16 is # and description of positive shifts in informal structures (social norms, culture, beliefs, etc.), influenced by CARE and partners.

How do we embed gender equality into all of our programming?

We continue to enhance our internal support for teams working across all sectors to deepen their impact on gender equality. This includes through the provision of specific gender equality trainings, through tailored technical assistance, and updates to CARE’s signature tools like Social Analysis and Action, and comprehensive guidance for Engaging Men and Boys.



Progress on integrated programming toward Vision 2030

The impact achieved across Vision 2030’s priority areas—such as greater food security and improved access to economic resources—advances gender equality when it demonstrably contributes to outcomes within the Gender Equality Framework, as outlined here:



Gender equality through health

AGENCY: 3.5 million positively impacted by projects which built women and girls’ individual and collective agency in regard to making informed health decisions, accessing sexual and reproductive health services, and exercising autonomy over their bodies and wellbeing.

RELATIONS: About 690,000 people positively impacted by projects which transformed relations through which women and girls negotiate their health choices, strengthen equitable dynamics within families and communities, and build supportive networks that enable joint decision-making and shared responsibility for health needs.

STRUCTURE: 1.7 million people positively impacted by social norms that surround and shape women and girls’ health choices and opportunities, and by laws/policies/formal structures that ensure rights-based, gender-responsive health systems, equitable access to essential services, and accountability for quality care.



Integrated gender equality programming



Greater gender equality through food, water and nutrition

AGENCY: 2.8 million positively impacted by projects which built women and girls' agency to make informed decisions about food, water, and nutrition; accessing resources and services; and exercising control over their own and their families' nutritional wellbeing.

RELATIONS: More than 350,000 people positively impacted by projects which transformed relations through which women and girls negotiate their roles in household food and water management, share responsibilities equitably, and participate in decision-making processes that affect nutrition, food security and resource allocation.

STRUCTURE: 2.2 million people positively impacted by social norms that surround and shape women and girls' food, water, and nutrition choices and opportunities, and by laws/policies/formal structures that ensure equitable access to safe water, nutritious food, and essential services, while promoting accountability for women's and girls' rights.



Greater gender equality through climate justice

AGENCY: 2 million positively impacted by projects which strengthened women and girls' agency to build adaptive capacities, access resources and information to cope with shocks and stresses, and exercise leadership in climate resilience and disaster preparedness.

RELATIONS: More than 127,000 people positively impacted by projects which transformed relations through which women and girls negotiate their roles in household and community resilience planning, share responsibilities equitably, and participate in collective decision-making processes that strengthen preparedness and recovery.

STRUCTURE: 1.7 million people positively impacted by social norms that surround and shape women and girls' choices and opportunities and by laws/policies/formal structures that institutionalize gender-responsive climate action, disaster risk reduction, and equitable access to resources and services for resilience.

Integrated gender equality programming



Greater gender equality through economic justice

AGENCY: 8.1 million positively impacted by projects which built women and girls' agency in regard to earning income, managing financial resources, building skills for entrepreneurship and employment, and exercising control over economic decisions that shape their futures.

RELATIONS: 1.4 million people positively impacted by projects which transformed relations through which women and girls negotiate their roles in household and community economic activities, share responsibilities equitably, and participate in decision-making processes that influence resource allocation and financial planning.

STRUCTURE: 3.92 million people positively impacted by social norms that surround and shape women and girls' economic choices and opportunities and by laws/policies/formal structures that facilitate women's equitable access to and control over economic resources, markets, and financial services, while promoting gender-responsive policies and protections.



Greater gender equality through humanitarian action

AGENCY: 1.2 million positively impacted by projects which helped strengthen women and girls' agency in regard to humanitarian action. People gained confidence, knowledge, and power to make informed decisions during crises, access life-saving services, and lead efforts to protect their rights and wellbeing in emergency contexts.

RELATIONS: More than 330,000 people positively impacted by projects which transformed relations through which women and girls negotiate their roles in household and community crisis response, share responsibilities equitably, and participate in collective decision-making processes that influence humanitarian planning and recovery.

STRUCTURE: More than 480,000 people positively impacted by social norms that surround and shape women and girls' choices and opportunities and laws/policies/formal structures that uphold protection rights, ensure gender-responsive humanitarian assistance, and guarantee equitable access to resources and services for people affected by crisis.



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Greater gender equality through voice and leadership

18 Women Lead in Emergencies (WLIE) projects in 12 countries active in FY25: Bangladesh, Colombia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Türkiye, and Ukraine. Ten of these projects were implemented by or with WLO partners.

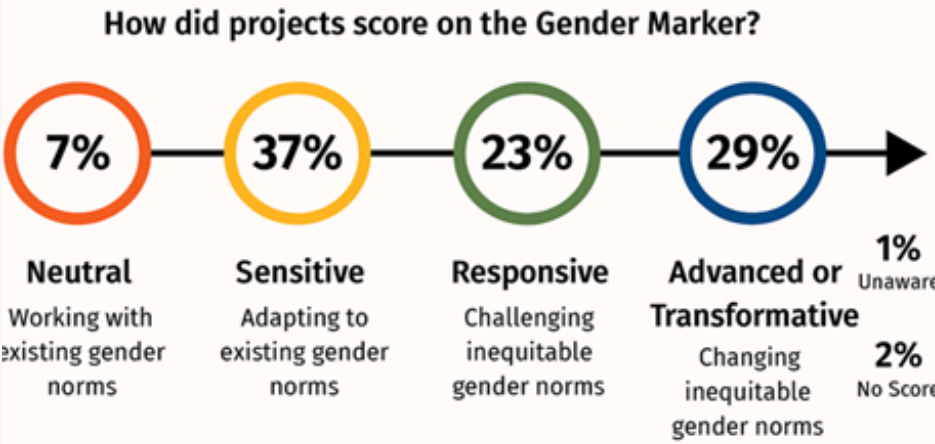
In total, these projects have supported **218 women's groups** (3,775 women total) to organise and lead activities to help women and their communities to prepare for and respond to crisis.

Program Impact: Tracking our Progress

To ensure continual improvement, CARE tracks program quality by measuring how well projects are integrating gender at every stage of their work and how they are incorporating core approaches to driving gender equality, enabling CARE to improve on and support more effective and integrated programming.

The Gender Marker

CARE’s Gender Marker is a self-assessment tool that helps track how well we integrate gender in all aspects of programming, including analysis, activities, participation, and monitoring and evaluation. It measures gender integration along the CARE Gender Continuum - from gender *unaware* to gender *transformative*. CARE uses this information to identify where we’re having the most impact on gender equality and identify opportunities for continual improvement.



For 2025, 343 programs/projects (23%) are categorized as Gender Responsive, meaning they are challenging inequitable gender norms, while 431 projects (29%) are categorized as Gender Transformative, meaning they are changing inequitable gender norms and relations to promote equality.

Core approaches to driving gender equality

Through PIIRs, we also monitor the extent to which our projects – across all sectors – are incorporating core approaches which address the root causes of gender inequality and drive lasting improvements in people’s lives.

 **53% fully or partially addressed GVB.** Ending GBV is critical, as equality and justice are not possible where women and girls are subject to violence. In FY25, roughly 1 in 10 CARE projects across all sectors fully focused on addressing GBV, while 4 in 10 integrated GBV considerations across their projects.

 **84% fully or partially engaged men and boys-** Engaging men and boys to challenge harmful beliefs, behaviors, and practices, and unequal power dynamics which serve as barriers to greater gender equality is integral to CARE’s goals. In FY25, 1 in 3 of CARE’s projects across all sectors fully engaged men and boys, while half of projects partially engaged them.

 **55% worked on social norms-** Challenging harmful social norms which create barriers to gender equality is a key pathway for achieving lasting changes. In FY25, nearly 1 in 2 of CARE’s projects across all sectors had an explicit focus on social norms, an a cumulative impact of 1.5 million people. This is a significant increase over previous years (35K) which can be attributed to data validation, socialization of key indicators (#13 and #16), and the Go Deeper initiative which led to countries and projects adopting the indicators.



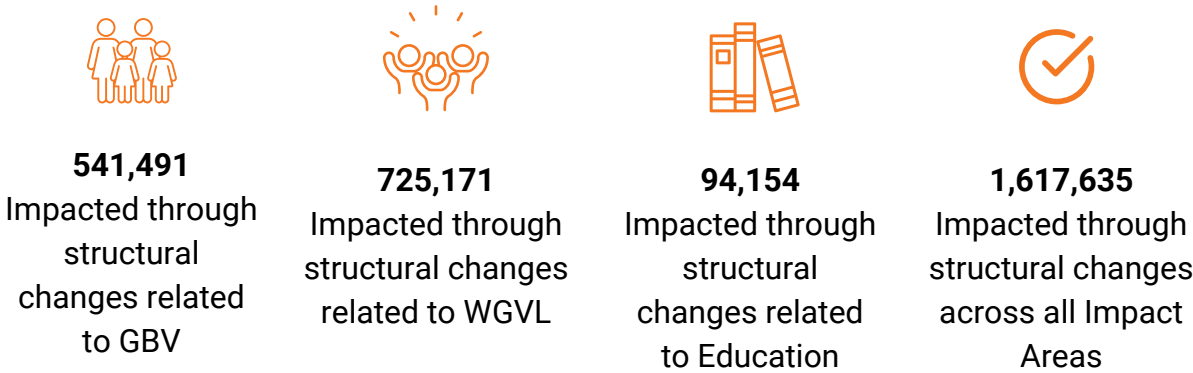
Advocacy towards gender equality

Advocacy is an important pathway for achieving our goals around gender equality, as it multiplies the impact of our work. We work in solidarity with WROs and social movements, engaging governments and the private sector, to ensure that policies, laws, and regulations center gender equality and are influenced by women and girls especially.

How Advocacy Impact is Measured

CARE seeks to quantify the number of lives improved, saved, or impacted because of *advocacy wins* to showcase the importance of investing in addressing root causes of gender equality at all levels. Advocacy wins include qualitative or quantitative impact in terms of changes in policies, laws, and regulations that lead to a positive impact on people’s lives and greater gender equality.

Below is a total number of people impacted through our advocacy work as documented by the Advocacy and Influencing Impact Reporting (AIIR Tool).



The AIIR Tool gathers information and evidence on formal structural changes – *advocacy wins* – influenced by CARE and our partners through advocacy and/or influencing. This tool captures the significance of the advocacy win, the level of contribution of CARE and our partners, the impact (who stands to benefit from the change), and the evidence to support these claims. The AIIR tool is linked to [Indicator 17](#) (#of new, amended, or better-implemented policies, legislation, multilateral agreements, programs, and/or budgets influenced by the voices of, or actions taken by women and girls).

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Program Highlights: Advocacy

Influenced the development of US legislation aimed at combating GBV, December 2024. CARE influenced U.S. legislation to combat GBV in the Western Hemisphere, ensuring Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) initiatives like VSLAs are linked to prevention efforts and USAID expands savings groups. CARE also secured \$250M for international GBV and \$200M for WEE programs in FY25, despite budget cuts, with Senate language emphasizing VSLAs’ role in tackling financial barriers and empowering women.

Shaping a restructured humanitarian system, February 2025. As a core member of the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), CARE has been instrumental in shaping humanitarian reforms that prioritize the rights, safety, and dignity of women and girls. CARE advocates for a humanitarian reset grounded in principles such as Do No Harm, Centrality of Protection, Accountability to Affected People, and collective responsibility for preventing and responding to GBV, sexual exploitation and abuse, and child abuse (PSEA-CA). CARE also co-leads the GBV AoR Technology and Innovation Reference Group with UNICEF—167 members from 35 organizations—setting global standards on technology and GBV in emergencies.

CARE leads the global GBV Guidelines Reference Group (RG), the main body for GBV risk mitigation in humanitarian response. In 2025, the RG convened a stocktaking workshop with nearly all global clusters, shaping a new five-year strategy endorsed in December. In 2025, amid funding cuts and the humanitarian reset, the RG introduced inter-agency “Core GBV Risk Mitigation Principles and Commitments,” now a key advocacy tool to keep GBV risk mitigation and safe programming prioritized despite global pushback on GBV in emergencies.

Shaping the United States Development Finance Corporation's (DFC) updated Environmental and Social Policy and Procedures (ESPP) October 2022 to June 2024. As leader of the Coalition for Women’s Economic Empowerment and Equality (CWEEE), As CWEEE leader, CARE shaped major revisions to DFC’s Environmental and Social Policy and Procedures (ESPP), adding six references to violence and harassment—up from zero in 2020—and stronger equality language. The policy now requires DFC projects to assess, mitigate, and monitor risks of sex-based discrimination and GBV, a significant step toward embedding women’s rights in DFC’s social responsibility framework.



Global Women and Girls Technical Support Cohort

The Global Women and Girls Technical Support Cohort (the Cohort) continues to play a critical role in CARE’s efforts to advance gender equality, through the provision of technical assistance and training to CARE programs, teams, and partners. Within the context of shrinking budgets and less staff, this continued support will be essential to reaching CARE’s gender equality goals. Learn more about the [Cohort](#).

Key Cohort accomplishments in FY25 include:

Advanced-level Social Analysis and Action (SAA) Trainings | July 2024 – April 2025. In partnership with Horizont3000, the Cohort delivered advanced Social Analysis and Action (SAA) trainings across Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Senegal as part of an initiative promoting gender equality for sustainable development. These trainings strengthened the capacity of Horizont3000 staff and partners to identify and challenge harmful social norms, while emphasizing personal reflection, critical analysis, and the integration of gender equality strategies into program planning and delivery.

In-depth Gender Analysis | November 2024 – January 2025. The Cohort conducted a comprehensive needs assessment and gender analysis to support CARE COs in Rwanda, Tanzania, and Jordan. This included the design and application of context-specific tools for data collection and analysis, with an emphasis on identifying barriers and opportunities for women and girls. The analysis explored how social norms and power dynamics influenced access to resources and opportunities — particularly in the areas of livelihoods, agriculture, and resilience to environmental change.



Author: Jane Iredale

Design: Iffat Khan & Mmabatho Motsamai

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For more information, contact:

Esther Watts | Senior Director, Women and Girls Programs Team, CARE
email: esther.watts@care.org