By building the capacities and improving opportunities for marginalized groups, CARE aims at promoting their socio-economic inclusion and access to rights and opportunities. At the same time we also address structural conditions and barriers that maintain people in a state of poverty and vulnerability.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, CARE works to advance the idea of cooperative entrepreneurship and runs programs for the development of women’s agricultural cooperatives. In Macedonia we strengthen agricultural cooperatives by supporting the establishment of business plans and criteria for women’s inclusion. We also provide technical support to relevant ministries to increase opportunities for quality marketing and productivity for vulnerable farmers. In Kosovo, while working on regional agricultural development, we support the mainstreaming and development of female-led agribusinesses by cooperating with all relevant stakeholders to create functioning markets and value chains.

CARE is supporting Roma women leaders and activists in policy dialogues, accessing and defending their rights, and in the implementation of projects that address vulnerabilities of Roma and other marginalized women. Our added value is to foster a joint regional response to issues that are common across all Balkan countries and to replicate best practice models that lead to improvements in policy frameworks that discriminate against Roma people, and particularly Roma women and women of other minorities. We also encourage networking and exchange between local NGOs and European networks and policy makers.
To prevent Gender-Based Violence, CARE engages men and boys in dialogues to deconstruct social and cultural norms around harmful practices of masculinity.

Through our Young Men Initiative (YMI) for example, we reached over 30,000 young men since 2006 through an education program that promotes gender equality and the prevention of violence. Our curriculum became mandatory in high school education in a few districts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is also accredited in Croatia, Serbia, and Kosovo. The YMI includes community outreach in form of theatres, TV shows and radio programs.

Further, CARE Balkans was part of the “Global Fatherhood Campaign—MenCare” which promotes men’s involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being and gender equality.

Through our Women Economic Empowerment program, we target women who are deprived of the right to employment because of their social or ethnic background as well as women who had survived or are vulnerable to violence. At the same time we assist and build the capacities of local civil society organisations that are lead by women for women.

In 2017, CARE provided humanitarian assistance to 17,000 refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and other places who reached the Balkans.

In the aftermath of natural disasters, we provide support for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructure and houses, and the restoration of livelihoods.

Since 2005, over 90,000 women, men, boys and girls benefitted from CARE’s gender equality and economic empowerment initiatives.