

CARE's Education Strategy 2020: Addressing inequities; Empowering learners



CARE's Commitment to Education

Realizing the critical and life-changing power of education in life, CARE's work in education strives to increase educational attainment, improve educational quality, further gender equity, and promote empowerment of marginalized children, and especially girls. Since 1945, CARE has been working around the world defending dignity, fighting social injustice and making

a lasting impact on poverty reduction. CARE has long focused its attention on the most marginalized, and attends to the disproportionate disadvantage that girls often face as one of the most marginalized groups in many societies. We seek to address barriers to girls' development, and foster community support to create an environment conducive for them to learn and thrive. We seek to provide opportunities for girls to apply their education to improve their situation and that of their communities.

CARE's Education Program Priorities

1. Strengthen gender-transformative adolescent empowerment programming
2. Enhance learning outcomes by improving the quality of education and promoting access and retention.
3. Partner with CARE members and Country Offices to facilitate cross-learning and knowledge generation, strengthening capabilities to design and implement sustainable quality education programs

CARE's Education Operational Priorities

1. Generate and manage knowledge
2. Tell the story
3. Lead collaborative partnerships
4. Efficient and effective management systems



CARE recognizes that gender norms and practices play a pivotal role in defining if and how girls access their rights and participate fully in their communities. As such, CARE's work in and through education seeks to influence the underlying social issues and norms that govern community structures, perceptions and practices to promote gender equity.

With a focus on reaching the hardest to reach, and harnessing the power of education, CARE's work in education has become known for its focus on quality, and innovatively breaking down the barriers that keep girls and boys out of school. In identifying the ways in which CARE will continue to significantly contribute to the conversation regarding girls' education and empowerment, a new 2015-2020 strategy has been developed to guide our work.

A Transformative Vision

CARE's education effort pursues a world in which the most marginalized children and youth, especially girls, have expanded life choices through access to quality learning. We will collaborate with strategic stakeholders to scale-up sustainable strategies to build environments in which lifelong learning is cultivated, so that all young people successfully acquire and use knowledge and are active participants in their society.

This will be achieved by designing and scaling-up strategic, collaborative programs that promote innovation, actively engage participants in program design, and support transitions to secondary school and work. At every stage, CARE will foster diversity and strengthen gender equity. Our goal is to support systems that converge to erase barriers and ensure that girls and boys worldwide receive high-quality education from childhood throughout their adolescent years.

2015-2020 Goal

To meet its vision, CARE's education team will build on its core strengths in education and empowerment, as well as pushing further with its commitment to education quality and attention to whether and what students are learning. These will remain critical parts of establishing greater access to effective education for the most marginalized both in schools that are within public education systems and in alternative, non-formal, and other educational opportunities. CARE's education team commits to supporting educational development with a focus on learning and empowerment for all children and adolescents, especially girls.

Priorities

CARE's Education Sector Strategy (2015-2020) leverages existing strengths and expertise while adapting models for transfer to additional contexts and/or scale-up in their current local/national context. It also reflects a shift toward an emphasis on quality of learning over access to learning. This strategy includes a focus on empowering and educating adolescents, especially girls.

Basic education remains a critical focus, but attention to the needs of adolescents and the barriers to continuing school into early and later secondary school must be addressed.

Additionally, there is a focus on building its operational strengths to support these program priorities more effectively. Areas of particular focus for this time period include developing a strong knowledge management program, strengthening communications and advocacy, and leading collaborative partnerships within and external to CARE.

CARE's Education Niche

Through an explicit focus on the empowering effect of education, and attention to fostering innovation for children and adolescents (particularly girls), CARE is a recognized leader in the field of education for marginalized populations, and in developing girls' leadership. CARE's model illustrates that girls' educational gains can be sustained and yield even greater returns when combined with explicit efforts to challenge and reshape the sociocultural forces that limit girls' lives.

CARE has invested significantly in the development and testing of specific tools that go beyond measuring parity in education or attainment, seeking to measure changes in gender equitable attitudes; youth perceptions of leadership capabilities; and teacher, student and community perceptions of equitable classrooms.

CARE recognizes the interaction between programming, research and advocacy and works to generate and capture compelling evidence to support policy advocacy agendas at the local, regional, and global levels – ensuring that these agendas include a focus on not only policy enactment, but also its implementation.

It's not just about access to education, but rather responding to "learning for what?"



Moving ahead, the 2015-2020 strategy accents and enhances CARE's current work on girls' empowerment in the context of basic education, and includes:

- A targeted focus on facilitating the transition to and completion of secondary school or engagement in alternative educational opportunities. This includes ensuring that adolescents have the skills and knowledge they need to navigate their ever-changing environments.
- A recognition of a nuanced shift within girls' education work to gender-transformative leadership and empowerment efforts that include boys and engage the relational piece of the empowerment framework.
- An emphasis on learning and the quality of schooling, particularly whether and what children and adolescents are learning both in schools and through other learning opportunities.
- An exploration on the use of innovative strategies and technologies that both challenge conventional systems that historically marginalize many students, and that define what transformative education in the 21st century looks like.

Over the next five years, CARE commits to making this strategy a reality for the millions of girls and boys we work with across the globe. By realizing the exponential power that exists when working with and through strategic partners, challenging traditional assumptions about education, and piloting new innovations, the futures of today's children and adolescents will become brighter.

Founded in 1945 with the creation of the CARE Package, CARE is a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. CARE places special focus on working alongside poor girls and women because, equipped with the proper resources, they have the power to lift whole families and entire communities out of poverty.

Our six decades of experience show that when you empower a girl or woman, she becomes a catalyst, creating ripples of positive change that lift up everyone around her. That's why girls and women are at the heart of CARE's community-based efforts to improve education, health and economic opportunity for everyone. We also work with girls and women to promote social justice, respond to emergencies and confront hunger and climate change. Last year CARE worked in 87 countries and reached 82 million people around the world.



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Defending dignity.
Fighting poverty.

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