



CARE Ethiopia

A Decade of Program Learning Series Gender in Emergencies

In Ethiopia, CARE's humanitarian efforts started in 1984 in response to severe drought and famine that devastated the population and claimed the lives of nearly one million people. Since then, CARE Ethiopia's activities have expanded to address the root causes of poverty and vulnerability and gender inequality more specifically. The mission works across the humanitarian and development nexus; with its humanitarian efforts focused on WASH, Food and Nutrition security.

CARE Ethiopia knows that the impact of crises on people's lives, experiences and material conditions differ based on their gender and sexuality and in many cases gender inequality is an underlying cause of vulnerabilities. Activities during a humanitarian response can increase and reinforce, or reduce, existing inequalities. Integrating gender into every stage of a response is therefore a core part of CARE Ethiopia achieving its humanitarian mandate.

How we have been applying GiE

Integrating gender transformative approaches. In 2016, CARE Ethiopia took deliberate steps to integrated gender transformative approaches in its humanitarian work, based on its deep understanding from long-term development around social norm change. For example, findings from CARE's Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) highlighted there were opportunities to disrupt the status quo and challenge the deeply held social norms around pastoralist women's position and circumstances

during the drought emergency. Women were participating more in income generating activities as men alone were unable to support their families' basic needs during such a crisis, and women (especially those internally displaced) were participating more in decision-making on urgent household matters. To build on these shifts in and opportunities around gender roles, CARE Ethiopia integrated the CARE's Social Analysis and Action (SAA) methodology along with its Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) approach to promote higher standards of gender equality in economic life with great success in a one-year food crisis recovery project. The fact that the project duration was longer than many of CARE's initiatives allowed the team to implement more gender transformative activities and processes.

Gender analysis for influence and impact. CARE Ethiopia has been a lead agency on driving gender assessments for both drought and conflict IDP response. Results from our Rapid Gender Analyses have provided understanding and practical recommendations on gender issues for both the mission and in Ethiopia's humanitarian response more broadly. An example is the incorporation of gender-based violence (GBV) response activities including 'establishment of women and children friendly spaces' for women and girls affected by crisis into more recently designed projects. The key objectives of a safe space are to provide an area where women and girls can: socialize and re-build their social networks, receive social support, acquire contextually relevant skills, access safe and non-stigmatizing multi-sectorial GBV response services, (psychosocial, legal,

Promising Practice

Time was carved out for reflection on how CARE Ethiopia's humanitarian projects could be more strategic and integrate activities that could contribute to social change. This led to the decision to integrate CARE's Social and Analysis and Action (SAA) methodology and CARE's Village Savings and Loan Approach (VSLA) to promote higher standards of gender equality in economic life with great success in a one-year food crisis recovery project. The SAA approach was adapted to address the social, economic and cultural factors that influence food security and livelihoods. This was the first time this was done in CARE and results showed that the SAA component of the project contributed to social change.

CARE's humanitarian mandate is to meet immediate needs of women, men, girls and boys affected by natural disasters and humanitarian conflicts in a way that also addresses the underlying causes of people's vulnerability, especially as a result and cause of gender inequality.

medical) and receive information on issues relating to women's rights, health, and services. RGA findings indicated that GBV was occurring-even increasing-and there were no proper GBV reporting mechanisms or referral pathways for women and girls. The creation of 'Safe Spaces' provided both a place to receive social support and access GBV response services.

Sharing critical RGA findings and raising key issues with the Ethiopian Humanitarian Country Team (EHCT) and donors has been a consistent effort on the part of CARE – especially in challenging existing superficial gender analysis that reinforces persistent beliefs around what is considered 'best' for women and girls affected by crisis.

Applying the CARE Markers. CARE Ethiopia uses simple, easy to use 'Markers' to help grade (on a 0-4 scale (Harmful, Neutral, Sensitive, Responsive, Transformative) whether our humanitarian and development work is prepared for, designed, and implemented in a way that ensures women, men, boys and girls benefit equally. The markers also show if our work will contribute to increasing gender equality, along with assessing the degree to which inclusive governance and resilience is integrated. Applying CARE's Gender Marker to specifically measure the integration of gender into programming along the CARE Gender Continuum enables us to improve on and support more effective gender programming. Recently our Emergency Team applied CARE's Gender Marker to its projects to see where they fall along the continuum, with the majority (90%) falling within the Gender Sensitive realm. Given their largely life saving objectives and short duration (3-6 months), this was not a surprising finding and certainly not negative. Gender transformative work requires time, and CARE's emergency projects work with vulnerable populations that are not always part of its longer-term development programming (i.e. PSNP beneficiaries) which would allow for the application of more 'integrated approaches'. This is both a challenge and an opportunity - multi-year funding streams are critical for implementing meaningful gender transformative (and even responsive) activities and donors still for the most part fund shorter duration emergency projects. The mission has more recently secured longer term funding for its humanitarian program going forward drawing from its earlier success and has incorporated social norms approaches with gender transformation in mind.





Integrated learning, planning and implementation – working across the Nexus. CARE Ethiopia has prioritized participation and input into humanitarian action from its different sector leads and gender experts across its humanitarian and development programs, allowing for a more integrated learning and planning approach. As a result its humanitarian programming has been able to learn from and leverage on (where possible) existing gender and social norms approaches and activities from its longer-term development work and improve its gender in emergency work.

Women's leadership in humanitarian response. More recently CARE Ethiopia has made efforts to be more deliberate in ensuring women's voice and leadership around its humanitarian response, for example working with and through women led VSLA and SAA groups, where possible, to ensure those most affected are reached and local women leaders are both part of and recognized for their valuable contribution. CARE Ethiopia has been taking concrete steps in supporting the Localization Agenda in exploring and fostering partnerships with local women led organisations, with a key focus on building and expanding gender capacity.

Gender analysis in emergencies helps to understand social and gender norms.

Results and recommendations from very basic gender analysis are persistent in what is presented as 'the best way' to protect women and girls during crisis. For example, the recommendations that water points need to be closer to communities so women and girls aren't so vulnerable while collecting water. CARE Ethiopia has challenged this on many occasions – we should be challenging WHY it is only women and girls that collect water and WHY they are vulnerable to violence. Gender norms that condone violence toward women and girls absolutely need to be unpacked and addressed, even during crisis interventions.

CARE Ethiopia, Country Director

The Spotlight: What we have learned

Rapid Gender Analyses for the drought response in Ethiopia have been instrumental for the CARE Ethiopia team to learn, explore and better understand gender dynamics within the populations facing emergency context of El Niño and drought. Analysis was critical for identifying both vulnerabilities and opportunities for women and girls during crisis and in designing interventions that both address and move forward gender transformation (mitigating gendered risks, increasing equitable access to and benefits from services and interventions, and supporting strategic opportunities to promote gender equality given the changing gender norms and relations during the drought crisis in particular).

Sharing findings from RGAs and raising key issues in national level forums such as the EHCT and with international donors has contributed to raising the profile of gender in emergencies and challenge commonly held beliefs about 'what is best' for women and girls in crisis.

When the context allows, humanitarian projects can successfully contribute to social change. Coordination is essential, though, and ideally, the concrete linkages between

specific humanitarian and development projects should be clear from the very beginning (for example, humanitarian project X builds on development project Y and will be "picked up" by development project Z when it ends).

CARE Ethiopia's years of long term development experience and expertise in gender programming has contributed to improving its gender in emergencies work. Exposing and involving staff in both humanitarian and development initiatives enabled cross-learning, new ideas and leveraging successful approaches. The shifting of "humanitarian" and "development" mindsets to work more hand in hand toward a common goal and under a single framework will contribute to improved and more impactful programming.



Want more information?

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To learn more about CARE's Gender in Emergencies (GiE) work visit: <https://www.care.org/our-impact/gender-in-practice/priority-areas/gender-in-emergencies>

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