



Photo Credit: Larry Costa Alvarez/CARE

# CARE in CUBA



Photo: Ictiandro Castillo Morejon/CARE

## Country Snapshot

<b>Population:</b>	11,075,244
<b>Life expectancy at birth:</b>	77.87 years
<b>Adult literacy rate:</b>	99.8%
<b>Access to improved water source:</b>	94%*
<b>GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,600</b>	US\$9,900
<b>Infant mortality rate:</b>	4.83 per 1,000 live births
<b>Maternal mortality rate:</b>	73 per 100,000 live births
<b>HIV prevalence:</b>	0.1%

Sources: CIA World Fact Book  
\* UNICEF (2008) Monitoring and Statistics

**Program Overview** CARE began operating in Cuba in 1995 at invitation from the Cuban government to provide support to the population through the economic instability of the Special Period. CARE's programming in Cuba began with a food security focus and has since expanded to include interventions in the water and sanitation sector, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian response, the promotion of gender equality, and the development of youth programs. CARE's continued development-focused presence in Cuba is supportive of the country's core principles of social equality, universal access to social services and working in partnership with local organizations. With decades of experience in Cuba, CARE continues to contribute to the development of vulnerable sectors and its Cuban partnerships, with a specific focus on working with women and youth.

## Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods

In Cuba, food insecurity is the result of the overall low productivity of agricultural lands, much of which was under intensive sugar cane production for years, later abandoned and left to fallow. Increasing production, reducing food imports and ensuring food security has become a national priority. Sharing this goal, CARE Cuba works to build the capacity of vulnerable communities, farmers and farming cooperatives to attain sustainable, resilient livelihoods by improving food security. To achieve this, CARE promotes an integrated value chain approach. Firstly, CARE seeks to work with farmers and farming cooperatives to improve agricultural production practices to boost productivity and improve the quality of agricultural outputs. Secondly, CARE supports the production of value-added products, by establishing food processing initiatives at the local level and diversifying the number of products available locally. Lastly, a link is made between farming cooperatives and national industries for improved efficiency and price received per product. Other aspects of CARE's agricultural programming include linking rural farmers with Cuban and international research facilities, thus increasing access to innovative technologies and practices. Current programs include: *Co-Innovacion* project and Strengthening the Dairy Value Chain project (FOCAL).

With a focus on promoting sustainable farming and land management techniques, CARE also ensures climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction are incorporated into local development programs. This is particularly emphasized in Central and Eastern Cuba, areas that have been experiencing prolonged periods of drought.

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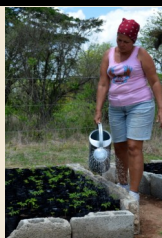


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## Disaster risk reduction and emergency response

The Caribbean region, including Cuba, is at high risk for multiple natural disasters. The hurricane season lasts six months and the country is prone to floods, prolonged droughts and earthquakes. CARE's approach to emergencies in Cuba involves response, rehabilitation and capacity building for humanitarian emergencies and slow-onset disasters. Although Cuba has one of the best disaster preparedness systems in the region, devastating hurricane seasons – such as those of 2008 and 2012 – often leave widespread damage. In support of the immediate response, and in coordination with the Cuban partners, CARE implements distribution of non-food items, sanitation and shelter solutions. CARE's work in post-emergency rehabilitation focuses on agricultural recovery and the recuperation of damaged agricultural infrastructure.

CARE Cuba is also building a disaster risk reduction (DRR) program, while working to build DRR into other ongoing development programs. With an emphasis on projects in the agricultural sector, CARE builds the capacity of farmers to minimize the risk of future disasters through various interventions involving land management techniques, income diversification and the development of risk reduction plans at the farm and cooperative level. CARE also works with Cuban partners such as the Meteorological Society, to support farmers in adapting to changing conditions and prolonged droughts. These interventions include introducing more resilient crop varieties, diversifying the household economy and facilitating access to climate information. Current projects include: climate change adaptation in the livestock sector in Camaguey; emergency response post hurricane Sandy in Holguin and Santiago, 2013.

## Youth

CARE Cuba aims to improve the livelihoods of Cuban youth by strengthening its networks and partnerships with youth-sensitive civil society organizations and facilitating equal access to social programs for urban and rural youth. CARE recognizes the potential of youth as a means to influence behaviors and works with them to introduce important themes such as gender equality, diversity and social responsibility. Special emphasis is placed on rural

youth, who often leave their communities for urban areas. CARE aims to create opportunities for rural youth by promoting access to culture and strengthening services to be more responsive to the youth's needs and interests. Current programs include: vocational training for urban and sub-urban youth and engaging youth through culture via the Hermanos Saiz Association.

## Learning partnerships

All of CARE's projects in Cuba (whether development or emergency response) are implemented in conjunction with local Cuban partners. This allows CARE to maintain a very small footprint in-country and to accompany local processes while investing in long-term, lasting partnerships. Inherent to this model is CARE's contribution to building the capacity of local organizations, facilitating knowledge exchange, bringing international experiences to Cuba and sharing the Cuban experience externally. As such, an important aspect of CARE Cuba's work is capacity building and partner strengthening.

## Major Donors

**CARE Cuba's partners and donors include, among others:**

**Local:** Asociación Cubana de Técnicos Agrícolas y Forestales (ACTAF); Asociación Cubana de Producción Animal (ACPA); Sociedad Meteorológica de Cuba (SOMETCUBA); Estación Experimental de Pastos y Forrajes "Indio Hatuey" and the Universidad Central "Martha Abreu" en Villa Clara.



**Major donors among others:** the European Commission (EC), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Swiss Development Agency (COSUDE), the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of France, the PDHL program of UNDP, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the government of Canada and the Japanese Embassy in Cuba.

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## CARE Country Name

*Christina Polzot, Country Representative, [Christina.polzot@care.ca](mailto:Christina.polzot@care.ca)*  
*Guadalupe Gonzalez, Director of Programs, [lupe.carecuba@gmail.com](mailto:lupe.carecuba@gmail.com)*  
**T: +53-7-204-9275**  
**F: +0000000000** <http://www.care.ca/cuba>

## Regional Office

### Location

Calle 12 no. 105 entre 1era y  
 3ra, Miramar, La Habana, Cuba  
**T: +53-7-204-9257**



[www.care-international.org](http://www.care-international.org)