

CARE's Gender Marker

Measuring our progress towards achieving gender equality

CARE's Gender Marker helps the organization monitor the impact of our work, continuously improve our programming and remain accountable to our commitment to achieving gender equality.

WHAT is the Gender Marker?

CARE's **Gender Marker** is a self-assessment program quality and learning tool which enables us to track, improve on, and support more effective, gender integrated programming.

It assesses the level of integration of gender into CARE's work at all stages—looking at **analysis, activities, participation** in project processes, and **monitoring** systems—and places projects along the CARE Gender Continuum from gender unaware to gender transformative. CARE's Gender Marker is widely acknowledged as one of the most comprehensive Gender Markers in terms of scale and scope.

-0- GENDER UNAWARE	-1- GENDER NEUTRAL	-2- GENDER SENSITIVE	-3- GENDER RESPONSIVE	-4- GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE
Programming that ignores or is completely unaware of gender norms.	Programming that works with gender norms, which may reinforce these.	Programming that adapts to gender norms.	Programming that challenges inequitable gender norms.	Policies and programs that change inequitable gender norms and relations to promote equality.

WHEN is the Gender Marker used?

All CARE projects review their Gender Marker score each year as part of CARE's annual project reporting process, as well as at key points throughout the project cycle.

This data is used by teams at all levels to **learn** and **improve programming**—from adjustments within individual projects to reviews of global strategic priorities.

The annual reporting process for CARE's Project & Program Information and Impact Reporting System (PIIRS) requires all projects to review and report on their Gender Marker score. This means CARE can analyze global data on how well we are operationalizing our commitments to gender equality.



DEVELOPMENT OF CARE'S GENDER MARKER

CARE began to pilot the Gender Marker in 2014 in Syria, West Africa, and the Philippines.

Following the [pilot phase](#), this was redesigned for both development and humanitarian programming. The Gender Marker was integrated into CARE's program systems and further updated after a 2020 review.

In 2023, reporting against the CARE's Gender Marker is mandatory for all projects as part of the annual reporting process for CARE's Project & Program Information and Impact Reporting System (PIIRS).

As a result, CARE can access annual, global data on how well we are achieving our strategic goals.

CARE'S GENDER MARKER IN PRACTICE

The CARE Gender Marker is compatible with other gender markers in the sector, including those used by the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the European Commission on Humanitarian Aid (ECHO).

CARE has supported other actors to develop their own gender markers. For example, CARE Ethiopia adapted the Gender Marker tool for use by the Government of Ethiopia's Ministry of Women and Social Affairs to ensure accountability from other ministries regarding gender mainstreaming. In 2022 CARE was consulted to inform the development of USAID's proposed gender marker.

WHY do we need a Gender Marker?

If projects on focus on gender integration within activities alone, it will not lead to gender transformative impact.



Go beyond intentions

CARE's Gender Marker goes beyond simply grading proposals to grading the entire cycle of a humanitarian and development project.



Establish minimum standards

By establishing a standard criteria we ensure that minimum standards of gender equality are met by CARE's humanitarian and development programming.



Measure transformative change

By using a five-point scale CARE is able to differentiate between gender-sensitive programming and gender-transformative programming.



Increase accountability

The CARE Gender Marker makes CARE accountable to meeting its strategic goals on gender equality - both internally and externally.



Improve programming

Using grades makes it easier to identify weaknesses and encourages the organization to continually strive for improvement.

HOW are teams supported?

Extensive **guidance** is available in four languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic) to support program staff, MEAL advisors, proposal teams and others to correctly apply the Gender Marker criteria to their project. This includes Mini-Guides for the four key areas—analysis, activities, participation and MEL—with practical examples of what high scoring projects look like in practice.

Internal and external **training** sessions are available to support teams with scoring projects effectively and reporting this in CARE's Project & Program Information and Impact Reporting System (PIIRS).

Analysis and **sensemaking** sessions at country, region and global level support management to understand what the numbers mean and how to use Gender Marker data to inform strategic decisions.

For more information contact

Sarah Eckhoff | Director, Gender Program Quality & Impact, Gender Justice, CARE USA
e-mail: sarah.eckhoff@care.org

Claire Mathonsi | Associate Vice President, Gender Justice, CARE USA
e-mail: claire.mathonsi@care.org

