

# CARE ON CAPITOL HILL



## Protect U.S. International Aid So Women, Girls, and Communities Can Thrive

*CARE advocates call on Congress to support women and their families around the world by passing an FY27 appropriations bill that includes at least \$52.5 billion for U.S. international assistance.*

**Women are often the backbone of societies everywhere** – they put food on the table, care for sick family members, get kids to school, own their own businesses, and so much more. At the same time, women eat last and least at home, have a harder time getting a job, are more at risk of sexual violence, and often don't have a seat at decision-making tables.

As we celebrate **International Women's Day on March 8**, CARE recognizes that supporting women and girls leads to proven returns through **healthier families, communities, stronger economies, and less dependency on U.S. aid in the future.** Stable communities abroad mean fewer costly crises — like conflict, famine, or displacement — that require significant

U.S. intervention down the line. **International assistance is cost-effective and strategic support** that brings safety and stability to communities around the world and here at home.

In its **80-year history**, CARE has seen firsthand how U.S. support for self-sufficient farming, basic healthcare for moms and babies, and income-earning opportunities for women has resulted in more secure supplies of food to the U.S., protection from deadly diseases, and less need for taxpayer-funded aid later.

**CARE's evidence-based programs ensure every U.S. dollar delivers maximum impact and long-term stability. These programs strengthen emerging markets that become long-term trading partners for U.S. farmers and businesses.**

Time and time again, women around the world have told CARE **that support for economic recovery, like income and business opportunities, is their biggest request** so that they can lead their families out of poverty without relying on others. In many cases, it only takes a small amount to improve millions of lives and create huge savings for the U.S. down the road. These targeted investments reduce the long-term need for emergency spending — **saving U.S. taxpayers money by preventing crises rather than paying for them after they escalate**, which is far more expensive for the U.S. government.

For example, in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region, conflict starting in 2020 left **millions of people in need of emergency food, shelter, and clean water** to survive. But some rural households were already prepared to

cope thanks to **Livelihoods for Resilience**, a U.S. Government-funded project. The project set up community savings groups for people, especially women, to come together, save money, and learn skills like how to grow food on their own.

As a result, the project led **more than 300,000 people to stop relying on U.S.-funded food aid** for six months thanks to their own food production. Confidence in their ability to recover from shocks grew by 58% — **for women-headed households, confidence in their resilience went up by 88%**.

Supporting women and families leads to stronger economic growth, better governance, and greater access to food around the world and here at home. CARE calls on U.S. leadership to meet the moment and support robust international assistance.

## ***How U.S. International Aid Supports Women and Girls***



### **Women's Economic Opportunity & Participation**

We encourage Congress to **pass at least \$200 million in the FY27 appropriations bill for women's economic empowerment programming** to help expand women's opportunities to learn skills, access income, and participate fully in local economies.

CARE knows that when women can work, make financial decisions, and support their families, communities are more stable and prosperous.



### **Safety, Support, and Services for Women and Girls Facing Violence**

We encourage Congress to **pass at least \$250 million in the FY27 appropriations bill for stopping gender-based violence**.

One in three women worldwide will experience some form of violence in her lifetime. Those at risk of violence need essential, lifesaving services like shelters, emergency healthcare, legal support, crisis counseling, and protection to live with dignity and return to school, work, family care, and community life.