



CARE International Gender Network Conference on Gender Equality & Women's Voice

Dubai, April 2016



1 A Tidal Wave for Gender Equality

This year CARE held its first conference on gender equality and women's voice. This was a two-and-a-half day festival of learning, sharing and struggling to celebrate CARE's gender successes and learn from the strengths of each region. Energized and inspired by our collective experience, over 70 participants made 150 commitments to apply conference learning in their own work on project teams, in human resource units, at global or regional hubs or as CARE Member Partners.

This report provides a summary of the meeting in eight sections.

Section 1: This introduction

Section 2: A description of CIGN's new, diverse membership

CIGN 2016 Co-Chairs

[Diana Wu](#) (CARE USA),
[Sue Finucane](#) (CARE Australia), and
[Vindhya Fernando](#) (CARE Sri Lanka)

CIGN 2016 Working Groups

Gender Equality & Women's Voice
Life Free from Violence/GBV
Organizational Dimensions
Knowledge Management & Learning
Monitoring & Impact
the Gender Marker

Section 3: CARE's 20 year history of gender work

Section 4: Opportunities and challenges, perspectives from leadership, perspectives from membership.

Section 5: CARE's innovative gender equality programming in six key areas

Section 6: What the gender justice movement has to say to CARE

Section 7: Strengthening the organizational side of our gender work

Section 8: Conclusion and commitments

There's such a wealth of good programming and practice across the CARE world. We encourage you to read on and see if your activities are reflected in this report.

2 Strength in Diversity

This first-ever CARE-wide gender conference drew over 70 participants from more than 40 countries. Participants came from a wide variety of functions across CARE, including programming, safety and security, human resources, advocacy and fundraising. Various levels of authority were present, including regional and national directors, program directors, HR coordinators, program managers, program strategy leads and technical advisors. This is tangible evidence of the change in CIGN membership criteria. Now, anyone who has approval of their line manager to spend 10% of their time on CIGN work can be a member on a first come, first served basis, with a cap at 60 members.

There is a huge desire to engage on gender issues throughout CARE. That this conference was **oversubscribed** shows our commitment to exchange, dialogue and contribute to deeper gender equality impact.

3 Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

Conference participants were proud to see such incredible growth and progress in CARE's commitment to gender equality over the past 20 years, as pictured in the timeline below. Significant gains have been made after the investment in a global Head of Gender Equality.

- A gender transformative approach to development is centrally located in the CARE 2020 program strategy.
- The seminal [Gender Equality and Women's Voice guidance document](#) updates CARE's Women's Empowerment Framework within the context of the program strategy. Related impact measurement indicators will soon be launched and incorporated into CARE's Project Information & Impact Reporting System (PIIRS).
- The new [CARE strategy for a Life Free From Violence](#) (LFFV) is resulting in regional and sub-regional strategies that mainstream the prevention of GBV in new ways.
- After a [pilot in Humanitarian contexts](#), CARE is adapting and testing a gender marker to hold the organization accountable to good gender programming at all stages of the project cycle.
- Regions and sub-regions are developing gender equality impact strategies.

Timeline of Progress on GEWV in CARE

1993	'98-'03	'05-'09	2007	2008	2009	2010	2014	2015	2016	
First Gender Policy developed	Gender Equity & Diversity training Rights Based Approaches	Strategic Impact Inquiry Women's Empowerment Framework "I am powerful" campaign	CIGN formed	Program Approach Sr. Gender in Emergencies (GiE) specialist recruited	CI Gender Policy GiE Strategy developed "A powerful voice" documentary	PSEA Policy Humanitarian strategy puts gender equality at centre Learning on Engaging Men & Boys GED Strategy – 2010-5	CARE 2020 Program Strategy	Global GBV Strategy CI Head of Gender Equality recruited	GEWV Guidance Note Strong gender focus within regional strategies & Impact Growth Strategies	All our work going forwards!

4 Leadership, Opportunities and Challenges

4.1 Leadership, Opportunities

Wolfgang Jamann (CI Secretary-General & CEO) and Sofia Sprechmann (CI Program Director) showed passion and commitment to gender equality in their dialogues through Skype. They noted that CARE is recognized as a leading organization working for gender equality amongst global actors. It has the ability to support and channel credible voices into global policy processes, such as the Commission on the Status of Women or the global climate change negotiations. Our innovative work in programs provides inspiration to our leaders and important sources of evidence to feed into global advocacy and partnerships. Both Wolfgang and Sofia recognized the importance of working on gender equality in organizational policies, structures and teams. This has the potential to contribute to the changes we are seeking as part of CARE 2020. Across the organization, we need to be accountable for the changes we seek amongst our impact populations as well as within our own structures. Opening ourselves up more deliberately to partnerships with the women's rights and gender justice movement is a key step in CARE's own transformation because it allows other organizations to critically review and challenge our work and push us to be better. Wolfgang and Sofia both committed to continuing communications about our gender equality work, advocating internally and externally for resources, and supporting the outcomes from the Conference.

The more we connect with progressive organizations, the more will be transformed. The minute we connect more with progressive forces, it takes on the life on its own.... The more program[ing] that connect[s] to these voices and the more we open up... the better will be [sic]. In connecting to them, better to run with it and let them transform us." - S. Sprechmann

4.2 Challenges

After reviewing CARE's gender history and current status, the group explored current challenges. Resources to carry out gender work and keep key staff in place are insufficient, leadership commitments and accountability are not consistent throughout the organization, and gender champions and programs can often feel like "isolated islands". While we have some proven models, much greater and deliberate efforts need to be put into scaling these up, with effective knowledge management and learning, and technical support, systems across the organization to support this, and capture our new innovations. We need to work much better beyond the country level (at regional and global levels), to amplify the voices and evidence from our program

work. While we have some strong partnerships with progressive organizations in the gender justice movement, overall, CARE has much work to do to be a fit “partner of choice” to these organizations. Organizational communications sometimes still emphasize an instrumentalist approach to gender equality (“empower women so they can help their communities out of poverty”), rather than seeing this as a critical element of programming for social justice, in its own right. Recommendations and actions to address these challenges were developed over the conference, and in the CIGN planning meeting that followed.

5 Learning from CARE’s Innovative Gender Equality Programming

Representatives from across CARE shared their innovative gender equality work in 20 presentations under six categories. Some of this programming, such as the Young Men’s Initiative in the Balkans or the community scorecard in Malawi and Rwanda, is internationally recognised for achieving high impact and is being owned and replicated by other organizations. The presentations provided participants with time for sharing what works for gender transformation and creating recommendations to strengthen programming. Full presentations are available on the [conference page of the CARE Gender Wiki](#). Highlights from each category of presentation are given below.

Life Free from Violence (LFFV)

Sri Lanka: 10 years of research, policy and programming on GBV

Democratic Republic of Congo: A resilience approach to empowering women in Eastern DRC

Egypt: Moving beyond traditional gender equality awareness-raising approaches

Ecuador: Refuge from violence and women’s voice

Good Practices: Work across multiple levels (community, local, national, regional and global), on both government accountability and awareness of rights in communities. Combine implementation, policy articulation and advocacy. Use complementary approaches such as women’s economic empowerment and engaging men and boys. Use creative approaches such as art therapy and drama to tackle deep social norms.

The wife of one of the Tuk-Tuk drivers called us to thank us for what we did with her husband. *“He used to be angry every night and beat me, but this time he came with sweets and [dealt] with me very happily, and [talked] about his feelings and thoughts”* (Egypt)

Further Challenges: Learn from partners and allies in the women’s and gender justice movement, as they often have significantly more experience than ourselves. Document, document, document, especially learning on our GBV work. Integrate GBV work across all programming.

Food & Nutrition Security and Climate Change Resilience (FNS & CCR)

Guatemala: Nourishing the Future: a rural value chain economic women’s empowerment experience

Kenya: Gender in community based adaptation planning processes

US: Measuring intimacy and respect in relationships as an important category of behaviour change.

Good Practices: Expand the range of project indicators to include indigenous definitions of empowerment and measures of household harmony and women's skill. Use strong qualitative methods for measurement such as outcome mapping. Document, document, document change and process. Involve youth and adolescents in climate change work and in project measurement.

"Same sky, different impacts" (Kenya, understanding the impacts of climate change on different social groups)

"Now we're sleeping with the lights on and the clothes off" (Malawi, a new indicator)

Future Challenges Agree on a CARE toolkit for participatory gender analysis and on different gender domains in FNS and CCR programming. Involve FNS or CCR technical experts and gender experts in multi-disciplinary teams.

Humanitarian Assistance (HA):

Chad: Using human stories to raise up issues of early marriage, FGM and sexual violence in refugee camps

Jordan: Practices and innovations for social justice and gender equality in the Urban Refugee Protection Program

Syria: *Women War and Work:* Women's changing roles in the Syrian conflict

Good Practices: Use the disruption of gender roles that often occurs in humanitarian crisis as an opportunity to build better resilience. Base humanitarian programming on a gender analysis. Use evidence based programming when working with stakeholders towards mutual or project objectives.

"We use human stories to give them a voice, and now they speak out, now they are more powerful" (Chad)

"Women are represented; their voices are there." (Jordan)

"We challenged the myth that women in the Syrian crisis are only victims, rather than activists, leaders and agents of change" (Syria)

Future Challenges: Take greater advantage of the power of testimony in policy and advocacy work, especially related to more risky or political issues, such as humanitarian access.

Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE):

Latin America: Women, Dignity and Work: strengthening the personal, organizational and technical skills of paid female domestic workers

Tanzania: Engaging duty bearers to address gender inequalities: a case study of working with religious leaders in Zanzibar – including [this video](#)

"Now I am confident to work anywhere and with anyone. I have won the respect of my community and the respect of my family. We are no longer seen as inferior, and our roles in society are no longer seen in a restricted way" (Tea plantation worker in Sri Lanka)

UK: What counts as successful women's economic empowerment programming

Good Practices Carry out a gendered market analysis using appropriate expertise and tools. Analyse gender roles and expectations in public and private spheres. Investment is a risky business, so include a risk analysis in each project and closely monitor for risks (such as GBV or loss of control over capital). Provide guidance to staff on how to do gendered market assessments, risk assessments and related studies. Include issues related to the sexual division of labour in all WEE programming.

Future Challenges Unpack the concept of "resilient markets" and document lessons on what transformative WEE work looks like. Integrate learning and advice from other GEWV programming to work inside families, communities and society to support WEE.

Engaging Men and Boys (EMMB):

Burundi (Intergenerational work in engaging men
Balkans (School Based Innovations for Gender Equality and GBV Prevention) and
DRC (Gender advocacy messengers: Young Men engaging against GBV in DRC).

Good Practices: Take advantage of any ways in which systems of violence, conflict and exploitation can provide opportunities for constructing new models of masculinity. Create space for individual reflection and relationship building, and for peer solidarity and support. Include mixed spaces with girls and women in order to dialogue and build relationships as well as networks of change agents who can use their personal stories of change to promote wider social change.

Future Challenges: Increase our work with youth as change agents to shift social norms. Continue to work with schools and education line agents to scale up activities that are working. Link up with the women's movement and continue to support women's leadership. This helps to build alliances of trust between men's and women's movements.

Tools and Approaches

MENA: Why did CARE MENA develop another gender framework?

Ghana: Community gender dialogues

Rwanda: Applying the community scorecard to different women's empowerment settings

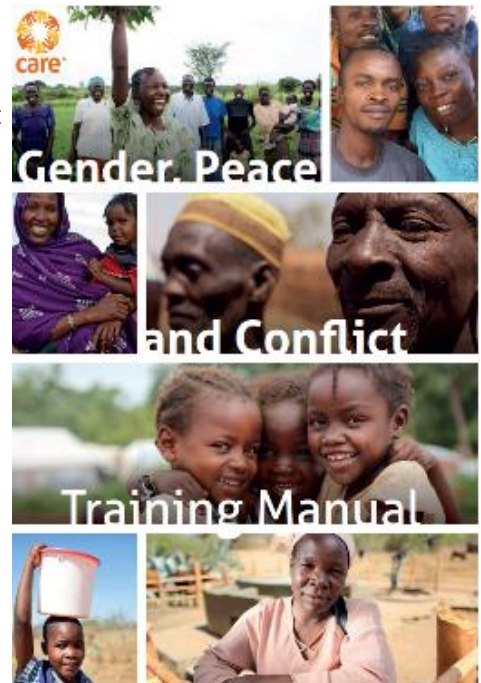
Netherlands: Introducing [CARE's gender, peace and conflict manual](#)

Future Challenges: Strategically sharing tools, approaches and models (such as those on the [gender wiki](#) and [governance](#)

"The shoulder can grow but it cannot be bigger than the neck" (How youth who change behaviour can be stigmatized by others)

"Working with youth is an opportunity to promote positive change, develop activists" (Burundi & Balkans)

"We cannot achieve the impact on women and girls without working with men and boys at different levels" (gender synchronization)



[wiki](#)) in ways that are accessible to everyone, especially those designed by the teams leading program strategy.). Establish a coherent knowledge management and learning strategy with multiple linkages across CARE International. The governance and gender equality teams should collaborate on a comparative analysis of Community Score Cards and social audits (from a gender and governance lens).

6 Partnerships and Programming with Women's Rights Allies

A panel with...

Amel Fahmy is Director of Tadwein Gender Research Center and co-founder of [HarrassMap](#) in Egypt. **Noha El-Mikawy** is the MENA Regional Representative for the Ford Foundation and based in Egypt. **Sandra Bitar** represented Emissa, a Syrian humanitarian organisation and CARE partner based in Turkey and working inside Syria, and **Soraida Hussein** leads Women Affairs Technical Committee in Palestine.

These four activists and allies from the Middle East gender justice movement formed a panel to discuss opportunities and challenges in gender transformative programming and partnerships. Their main messages are listed below.

- International organizations such as CARE are important in supporting local partners to develop and apply gender-sensitive human resource policies as part of their organizational development. International organizations have an important role in ensuring that donors resource such initiatives and provide core funding. This is essential to supporting, training and retaining key staff.
- CARE should support the amplifying of truly representative voices in regional or global dialogues. It should enable this by providing translation or holding meetings in places without significant visa-restrictions.
- We need to work to strengthen the “ecosystem of civil society” around specific gender justice issues, including women’s movements, NGOs, individual activists, artists, journalists and planners. This also includes working with other INGOs around the issue of space for local and international civil society actors.
- The lack of ethics amongst people working for “development” is one of the biggest challenges we face. There is a critical need for organizations to work on values and attitudes within their own structures.
- Information and communications technology represents an underutilized opportunity for working on sensitive issues of behaviour and norm change such as GBV and sexuality. This is particularly the case amongst youth. It can also help promote greater coordination, as Amel demonstrated with a [mapping of GBV projects in Egypt](#).

7 Getting Gender Equality Under Our Organizational Skin

Working on gender equality and women’s voice requires significant change within CARE. On the second day of the conference, participants had a chance to share good practice and discuss issues related to strengthening

CARE's organizational culture, accountability and political will. Again, this took place over a series of seven parallel sessions. The lessons and recommendations from these breakout sessions will be taken forward by the CIGN Co-Chairs and working groups.

Gender Equity and Diversity (GED)

Ethiopia: The female internship program

Ecuador: Talent management from a gender perspective

US: GED training of trainers

Sri Lanka: Creating a conducive environment

Recommendations: Make GED training mandatory for all staff, with a priority on human resource staff. Ensure GED training is done regularly and scaled out to strategic partners. Reinstate the global GED director position and the related working group and listserv. Fund GED work at all levels, and integrate it into funding asks. Launch a GED competition with stories from the field and a prize. Conduct a gender audit regularly in every CO. Foster an organizational culture that supports gender equality.

Preventing Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (PSEA)

Laura Taylor led a discussion on plans to establish a task force to review and update the 2009 PSEA policy.

Nepal and **Bangladesh** presented learning and good practices from recent initiatives.

Recommendations: Train RED roster staff in PSEA and include related questions in interviews. Include PSEA in key emergency training workshops such as CHEOPS, HEAT and ELMP. Explore the possibility of online training. Do a desk study of the reputational and financial risks of PSEA to present to national directors. Resource a dedicated global technical advisor on PSEA. Incorporate learning from CO experience to guide how emergency response and other structures are formed. Enact training in COs.

Gender Audits

Zimbabwe: *A cross-functional team approach to developing a Gender Audit and Gender Action Plan*

Canada: *Gender audits and other tools to bring the minimum standards in the GEWV guidance document to life*

Recommendations: Provide better documentation of current gender audit activities so that all CAREs can learn from good practice. Ensure there is both a focal point and a broader team comprised of a variety of staff to work on the audit. Train this team in advance. Raise awareness widely about the process and its aims. Make reporting mandatory and create systems for regular follow up on action plans. Make gender audits mandatory for all CARE units.

Putting Gender Equality at the Heart of Our Strategies

Vietnam: Practices and lessons learnt from applying the Women Empowerment Framework in two programs

LAC: Gender equity in the centre of the LAC strategy

Recommendations: Translate material, tools and guidelines into the local language. Gather leadership political will to integrate gender equality into regional strategies. Review structures,

approaches and resources for effective gender integration. Create the space for staff reflection and attitude change.

Resources for Gender Equality

Kassie McIlvaine presented a new CARE US gender equality social enterprise business model called GED Solutions. There are a number of tensions to be addressed as this initiative goes forward. There is a balance between building and retaining internal capacity and making a profit. Client selection and reputational risk will be issues. We will need to retain staff and include incentives that encourage this. There is a need for a clear case for how CARE benefits from this service.

Strategic Partnerships for GEVV

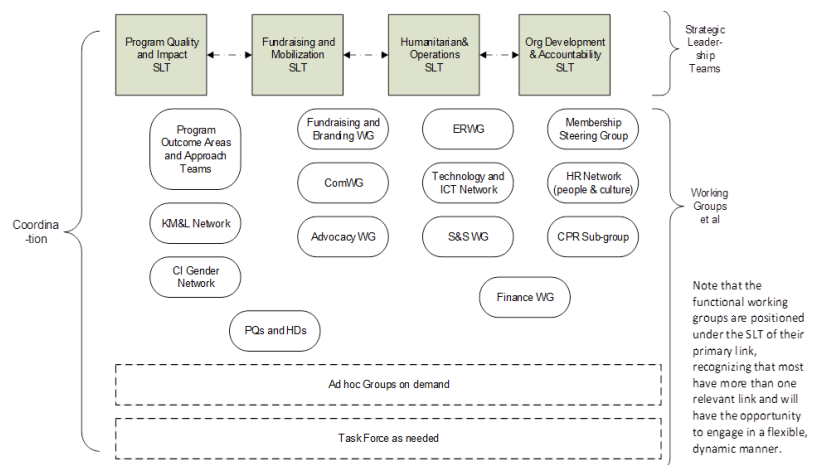
Norway presented the new CARE International [Civil Society Resource](#). **LAC** discussed good practices in partnering with domestic workers' organizations. The **Balkans** shared experience with the Men Engage alliance and Burundi described working with the Social Impact Incubator. Myanmar discussed ways to focus on technical assistance in partnerships. Further practical tools and resources are also on the [civil society space on Minerva](#).

Recommendations: CIGN produce a toolkit and resources on strengthening partnerships with progressive organizations, including criteria for partner selection and how to apply the six minimum standards for partnership. Teams working on GEVV and LFFV develop partnerships and alliances with gender justice movements, governments and IGOs such as UN Women at global and regional levels.

Organizational Changes in CARE International

In a Skype presentation, Abby Maxman (CI Deputy Secretary General) described changes to the CI level organizational structure. Participants made a number of recommendations to incorporate gender equality more fully into these changes.

- Include gender expertise in all four of the Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs)
- Move the Head of Gender to report to the Deputy Secretary General and make this a director level position.
- Clarify what we can currently deliver around GEVV and LFFV based on current resourcing. Significantly increase funding to be commensurate with our ambitions
- Resource a PSEA function that reports to human resources.
- Put staff recognition systems and capacity building in place to retain gender champions.
- CIGN members value its

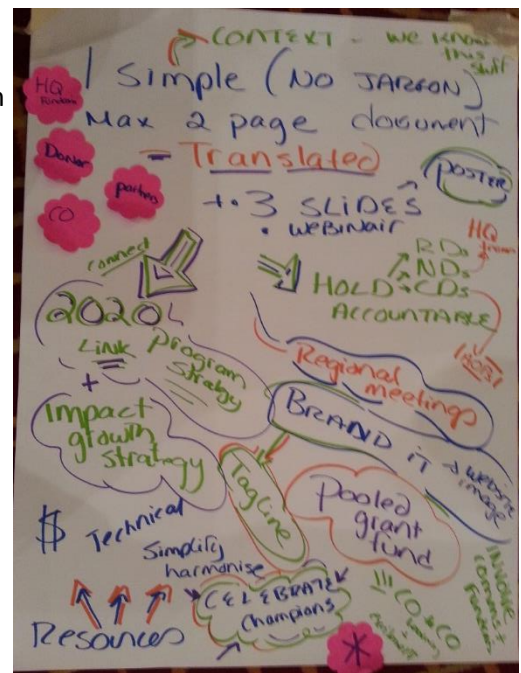


informality but would also like more interface with the formal CARE global structure and more opportunity to feed into CARE's work on global events and days.



8 Test Driving New Tools and Guidance

Participants reviewed the [Gender Equality and Women's Voice guidance note](#) by dividing into small discussion groups. This is the document that will guide how CARE implements the GEVW approach in the program strategy. A theory of change group noted that the gender equality theory of change that updates the Women's Empowerment Framework still requires change in relations and structure as well as agency in order to shift power dynamics amongst people of all genders and life stages. Further guidance on what is meant by "all genders" is needed. CARE's proven models, such as VSLA or scorecards, need to be scaled up more deliberately across our work. The guidance document includes ten minimum gender equality standards to promote program quality and accountability across the organization. While the new global indicators cover the CARE approach, the LFFV outcome, and other global outcome areas, good qualitative measures from all three domains are needed. CARE can be a better and more effective partner, particularly to feminist and gender justice movements. A final group generated a proposal for how to roll out the guidance note (see picture, to right). This will be taken forward by the CIGN working group on GEVW.



In plenary, conference participants tested the draft gender marker. While piloted in a humanitarian setting, this marker will soon be used as a key accountability tool at all stages of CARE's work. Participants made suggestions to improve the tool and a working group rapidly formed to continue with roll out efforts. Please contact [Isadora Quay](#) if you would also like to be involved.

9 Our Commitments

At the end of this inspiring and practical conference, participants presented their commitments to applying and following through on the learning and enthusiasm from the conference. Many of these commitments and the recommendations from the meeting were incorporated into the work plans of the different CIGN working groups for 2016. Progress will be shared in the 2017 CIGN meeting!