

**1st Report on the Implementation of the
CARE International (CI) Gender Policy
(2011)**

**by the CIGN Co-Chairs (Norge, Österreich
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CI Gender Network (CIGN) – the “Story”

In 2006 gender specialists from most CARE International (CI) members agreed to form the CARE International Gender Network (CIGN) to coordinate and strengthen the quality of CI members’ work on gender equality and women’s empowerment as both a human right and a tool for development effectiveness.

The CIGN held its first meeting in February 2007 and identified as a priority the need to review and assess the current status of country office and CI members’ gender policies and related initiatives. The CIGN focal points¹ have since provided valuable contributions to support the implementation of gender equality, resulting in multiple promising steps and achievements across the CARE confederation.

CI Gender Network – Achievements

The annual CIGN meetings, conducted since 2007, are providing a valuable platform for sharing of best practices and include organizing common strategies and future planning.

Thematic work is supported by CIGN members to ensure that gender equality is integrated across the range of CARE’s engagement. Thematic areas of work are Reporting Mechanism, Communication Plan, Review of TORs and Membership, Harmonization of Tools, Governance, Global Branding and Knowledge Sharing.

Further, the Gender in Emergencies Working Group, which is now member of the CIGN, supports the implementation of the CI emergency response strategy.

The finalization of the “Gender Toolkit²” – a comprehensive resource for gender analysis, outlining key areas of inquiry, questions and tools - is a significant achievement of the CIGN. The Gender Toolkit is an interactive resource library to support gender analysis. It comprises an array of resources, tips and contacts on (i) frameworks/tools for planning ethical research, (ii) tools for situational analysis, M&E or impact measurement and (iii) guidance on building from analysis to action.

Why this first Report on the Implementation of the CI GENDER POLICY?

The CI Executive Committee endorsed the *CARE International Gender Policy* in February 2009. It demonstrates an important milestone in CI’s history as it not only commits CI to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment standards in Program Quality, but also identifies the key organizational steps to be taken to achieve this. It provides high-level guidance for gender equality programming and well functioning organizational systems to advance CARE’s mission. If well implemented, it should position CI as “the” INGO providing high quality Gender equality work and help align programming, branding and communications, thus putting gender equality at the heart of CARE’s work.

The CIGN has been mandated by the CI Executive Committee to compile a *consolidated CI Report on the Implementation of the CI Gender Policy*.

¹ Focal points from CARE USA, CARE Australia, CARE Canada, CARE Deutschland/Luxemburg, CARE Denmark, CARE France, CARE India, CI Japan, CARE Nederland, CARE Norway, CARE Österreich, CARE Peru, CARE Raks Thai, CI United Kingdom are representing their organization in the CI Gender Network.

² See: <http://pqdl.care.org/gendertoolkit/default.aspx>



The CIGN focal points serve as contact persons for monitoring the implementation of the CI Gender Policy. In March 2011, all 14 CI members submitted individual reports giving account of their achievements against the policy indicators. These reports have been consolidated into this first joint CI report³ which effectively serves as an internal baseline.

We now have a much better understanding of the multiple efforts and achievements already made across the federation, where CI stands in terms of meeting its commitments, as well as where CARE has potential for improvements.

The following section presents the summary of the CIGN's key recommendations based on the analysis of the major challenges highlighted by the CI members' reports.

1. At the organizational level

a. Challenges

Lack of institutional commitment

- For most CI members, endorsing the gender policy did not immediately translate into devising strategies or action plans to move their commitments forward.
- In some cases, organizational cultures are not conducive to the changes required by the policy. This was raised by some CI members as an important issue given that the very society which perpetuates inequity and patriarchy is also the same system from where some staff have internalized their gender stereotypes and beliefs.
- It is proving challenging to see what sorts of organizational changes may be needed beyond programming. There is a need for guidance on what the gender policy actually means for different functions across CIMs and how it relates to every staff member's work. This tends to impact the sense of ownership of the policy among CI members.

b. Recommendations

Greater accountability systems in place and a stronger CI Gender Network

- CIGN recommends that CI members include updates on the implementation of the CI Gender Policy into the reporting format of the semi-annual membership report to the CI Secretariat as a way to improve and harmonize the CARE-wide implementation of the gender policy and generate greater buy-in and accountability towards its implementation.
- CIGN also highly recommends that a specific question on progress in implementing the gender policy shall be included into the membership report to the Secretariat. The CIGN has to be adequately resourced to carry on its mandates.

³ There are three versions available: the shortest version is providing a basic overview, the Report Synthesis and the full version – which are internal working documents and will be published upon approval on <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/>



- The CIGN recommends that CI members contribute resources and/or funding as per their availability of their resources.
- This would allow the network to play a greater role in the accompaniment of CI members' implementation of the policy.
- An appropriately resourced CIGN will be able to engage more broadly with relevant CI spaces including working groups such as the Programme Approaches Coordination Team and task forces like the accountability framework task force, while engaging with strategic allies like the CI Programme Director to be hired shortly by the CI Secretariat.

2. At the programming level

a. Challenges

- Only a small number of CI members incorporate gender analysis strategically and systematically into program and project design. There is still inconsistency in the definition of gender related terms and a lack of common understanding of gender within CI members.
- There is a great need for capacity building, for the harmonization of definitions around gender and different approaches to tackle gender inequality, as well as a need for greater dissemination tools and resources already available, also multi-lingual, to better understand gender inequality.
- There is a need for greater understanding and implementation of gender sensitive M&E⁴.

b. Recommendations

Setting up Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Programs for success

- CARE's focus has increasingly been aimed at understanding the underlying causes of poverty and injustice. In most country contexts where CARE works, gender inequality has been identified as a key driver of poverty and injustice. Over 90 percent of Country Offices have developed a program specifically focused on women or girls as their impact group. In this context, gender analysis is absolutely necessary to understand the norms and dynamics driving inequality. The CIGN recommends that the gender toolkit and the gender analysis framework (<http://pqdl.care.org/gendertoolkit/Pages/core.aspx>), developed by CIGN and financed by CARE USA, be institutionalized as a training module for programme staff in headquarters and in country offices where CARE works.

Creating synergies across the CARE system and coordination at CO level

- The CARE confederation has to build additional in-house capacity to enhance program quality and work on retaining trained staff rather than depending so much on external consultants. CI members need to work more closely together in order to exchange ideas, share resources and create the highest level of synergy possible.

⁴ e.g. whether gender relevant data should be collected in every project, how to further proceed with data, how to avoid gaps in the consistent disaggregation of data by sex; how to include gender sensitivity in the more quantitative survey tools; how to include the impact group effectively in participatory evaluations; how to strengthen the capacity of staff to do data analysis in order to better inform programming and learning and how to ensure "gender-sensitivity" of evaluations.



3. At the donor level

a. Challenges

Lack of awareness and evidence on the importance of gender equality

- There is a lack of awareness among some donors about the importance of gender equality which makes reporting back to those donors on progress towards gender equality a real challenge. There are also donors who understand the importance of gender equality but lack the information and evidence of how attention to gender barriers can improve poverty reduction programme results.
- Funding from major donors is often restricted in a way that does not explicitly encourage enhanced focus on integrating gender elements. Hence, there are difficulties in attracting funding from institutional donors to support the non-programmatic commitments included in the CI Gender Policy.
- There are limited funding opportunities from private donors for the purpose of mainstreaming gender at the organizational and programming level.
- There is reluctance from some CI members to incorporate gender programming into budgets as it is perceived as a risk that budgeting for gender could 'displace' funding needed for other important programmatic work (e.g. the risk that budgeting for gender could negatively influence the budget for disaster risk reduction).
- Budgetary constraints remain a main argument for not implementing the policy comprehensively.

b. Recommendations

- CI members need to actively engage donors in supporting effective, creative and impactful ways to promote gender equality.
- CI members need to focus on documenting and communicating links between gender equality, poverty reduction and social justice and provide donors with information and evidence on how attention to gender equality improves poverty reduction and social equality programming results.

4. At the Human Resources level

a. Challenges

Limited resources and inefficient use of expertise across the organization

- The policy is not effectively resourced and there is few dedicated staff formally mandated to advance the policy implementation.
- There is insufficient gender expertise and few dedicated human resources for the mainstreaming of gender across the organization.
- There are few human resource policies addressing key gender issues.



b. Recommendations

Good Practices for Gender Human Resource Policies

- CI should develop a set of good practices for gender equal Human Resource policies by looking at key gender issues including leave and travelling for mothers and fathers, ensuring a healthy and conducive environment for work/life balance, facilitating women's access to field positions given that they face different constraints compared to men. There is a need to harmonize HR gender data collection and analysis; as well as to harmonize some of the basic Human Resource policies and guidelines.
- CIGN recommends that CI members include gender specifications into job descriptions and into staff appraisal systems to ensure accountability towards gender commitments. Besides, CIGN recommends that CI members identify dedicated staff to advance the policy implementation and whenever possible dedicate single positions to human resource management for internal mainstreaming across the organisation, focusing and retaining existing in-house capacities.



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