



Information Brief

The Evolution of CARE International's Focus on Empowering Women and Girls

CARE's focus on women and girls is rooted in our program work, where results showed that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by poverty, and that empowering girls and women is the most effective way to fight poverty – for women, girls, boys and men. In recognition of this, several key decisions have been taken to clarify CARE's focus on empowering women and girls.

CARE's programmatic focus on women and girls was formalized in the CARE International Gender Policy, approved by the CI Board in February 2009 and included in the [CI Code](#), which highlights the critical importance of empowering women and girls and achieving gender equality in CARE's work:

Through this policy CARE seeks to promote equal realization of dignity and human rights for girls, women, boys and men, and the elimination of poverty and injustice. Specifically, this policy is intended to improve the explicit incorporation of gender in programmatic and organizational practices. CARE International commits to:

- a. Promote gender equality as an explicit internationally recognized human right.
- b. Address systemic and structural practices that create barriers to the realization of women's rights and gender equality; including prevention and response to gender based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- c. Support the empowerment of women and girls as a key strategy toward ending poverty, conflict, human suffering and gender inequality.

At the CI Board meeting in November 2009, the CI Board of Directors took a decision to align CARE's brand around empowering women and girls:

"In recognition of the pivotal role played by women in the fight against poverty, and noting the links between the coherence of the CI brand and fundraising, advocacy and communications success, the CI Board endorses the

proposals of the Fundraising and Branding Sub-Committee to align CARE's brand globally around the theme of women's and girls' empowerment."

The new [Global Advocacy Strengthening Strategy](#) approved by the CI Board's Executive Committee in June 2010 aligned CARE's global advocacy priorities around women and girls:

Objective 1: CI-wide advocacy strategy on women's and girl's empowerment focusing on priority areas developed and implemented, and inclusion of women and girls impact group and evidence in advocacy work of individual Members strengthened.

The focus on women and girls is a key part of the *CARE 2020* transformational change, and is outlined in the [CARE 2020 vision](#) approved by the CI Board in June 2011 and the [CARE 2020 2-pager series](#) approved by the CI Board following the June 2012 Board meeting:

"Within this global movement, CARE is known for its work across the relief, recovery, and development spectrum and its particular focus on empowering poor women and girls as a means to overcome poverty." —CARE's future identity as described in *CARE 2020*.

"CARE's decision to focus on **key global programs** and its **commitment to the empowerment of women and girls** made it easier for CARE to identify like-minded partners." — *CARE 2020 Two-pager: Local to Global Partnership, Advocacy and Connecting to Civil Society*

The new [CARE International Humanitarian and Emergency Strategy 2013-2020](#), approved by the CI Board in June 2012, for the first time formalized our focus on women and girls in emergency work:

Our goal for 2020 is to be a leading humanitarian agency having lasting impacts on the needs of poor women, men, boys and girls affected by humanitarian crisis and known for our particular ability to reach and empower women and girls in emergencies.