

CARE USA's REVISED GENDER POLICY

I. RATIONALE

CARE's vision of a world of "hope, tolerance, and social justice" challenges the organization to work towards the eradication of discrimination in all its forms. CARE recognizes that in our societies and organizational cultures, biased stereotypes and social norms prevent women and men from exercising their free choice and from taking full and equal advantage of opportunities for individual development, contribution and reward. It is increasingly clear that gender disparities and biases undermine the effectiveness of CARE's operations, in both stable and emergency contexts.

CARE recognizes that gender equity is a critical component of the organization's commitment to diversity. This Gender Policy, along with related policies that support diversity, seeks to clarify the organization's expectations and guidelines to assist staff in their efforts to advance gender equity. The policy is marked by two fundamental principles:

- That all people, by virtue of their shared humanity, carry inherently equal dignity and rights. Therefore, CARE should always affirm and uphold the equal rights, opportunities and status of men and women.
- That each person, by virtue of her or his particular character and context, has a unique identity and combination of aspirations and abilities. Therefore, CARE must strive to understand how the particular conditions of each individual or social group shapes its ability to achieve equal fulfillment, and create tailored opportunities for each to thrive.

Realizing our vision and upholding our mission and core values will require staff to apply standards to our organizational behavior that support and reaffirm the fulfillment of equal dignity and rights of all human beings.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

In order to fulfill our mission and vision, CARE is dedicated to advancing *Gender Equity* in our organization and in our programs.

CARE will improve the ability of men and women to work creatively and effectively in the organization and in communities in the developing world by increasing awareness of gender inequities and, by working with women and men to change the conditions that create and maintain them. We will advance gender equity within the institution through our management of human resources and the organizational culture, and within the communities we serve through our programming and our advocacy. Ultimately, by harnessing the full potential of all women and men, this commitment will improve our organizational effectiveness and the quality and impact of our programs.

III. GOALS

A. Programming

To enhance program quality and to affirm our commitment to uphold the dignity and rights of all, CARE's goal will be to promote gender equity through programming systems and structures where:

- 1) CARE systematically analyzes gender relations as a critical element of Household Livelihood Security (HLS), and uses this gender analysis to design and implement projects that maximize impact on gender equity as well as HLS.
- 2) CARE targets project activities towards appropriate participants, balancing consideration of gender roles and responsibilities with a commitment to also advancing long-term strategic gender interests.
- 3) CARE monitors and evaluates all projects that measure the relative impact on women and men, and on the relations between them.

B. Organizational Culture

CARE will seek to create and maintain a gender sensitive work environment where:

- 1) Based upon available talent, an equitable gender balance exists at all levels of the organization, and women and men are fully represented in senior management positions and the decision-making process.
- 2) All employment decisions related to hires, transfers, compensation and promotion at CARE will be uniformly considered based upon qualifications, including skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, and responsibilities.
- 3) CARE's benefits policy is equitable and responsive to the need to balance work, family, civic life, and the different gender roles of staff (e.g. responsibilities of pregnancy, childrearing and family care).
- 4) CARE fosters an environment where non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles is encouraged.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

CARE recognizes that gender equity will progress at different rates and by different means around the CARE world. While we must respect the flexibility of this process, CARE will hold all its staff accountable for achieving measurable progress toward a situation where men and women enjoy equal opportunities, rights and access to power and resources. In some cases, this may require changes in the way we work, and how we design our intervention strategies. CARE staff and partners must develop innovative approaches that provide responsible support to communities to explore gender dynamics and advance gender equity.

Three minimum standards to ensure implementation of this policy include:

- All CARE USA Country Offices will commit to implement this policy and monitor progress.
- CARE will invest human and financial resources at all levels to support implementation, monitoring and evaluation of plans to advance gender equity.
- CARE will integrate activities (as illustrated in Appendix I) to advance both programming and institutional goals within strategic planning tools such as: Annual Operating Plans (AOPs), Individual Operating Plans, Long Range Strategic Plans (LRSP), and will utilize performance evaluation tools such as Annual Performance Appraisals (APA) to ensure accountability.

APPENDIX I - DETAILED ACTIVITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. Implementation of Program Goals

CARE will incorporate gender equity into programming through the application of gender awareness and analysis to the project cycle including design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation through:

- 1) Incorporating gender questions and perspectives into project design documents, guidelines and monitoring and evaluation tools.
- 2) Analyzing the roles, responsibilities, cultural constraints, stereotypes and relationships between males and females in programs.
- 3) Examining the structures beyond the community that affect men and women's access to and control of resources, power of decision-making, and how these structures might be influenced by the program.
- 4) Developing the gender analysis tools and skills to support project participants not only in meeting immediate practical needs, but also in exploring and advancing strategic interests that may challenge socially defined roles which limit development potential.
- 5) Ensuring that technology, training and information are appropriate and accessible to both women and men.
- 6) Increasing the level of staff awareness through training on gender issues, gender sensitivity and analysis.
- 7) Building gender awareness as a criteria into any partnership strategy and supporting partners in developing and applying gender equity in their programming and management.
- 8) Continuing to expand CARE's knowledge of and commitment to gender issues, through research, documentation and sharing of lessons learned.

B. Implementation of Organizational Goals

All CARE divisions, managers and directors in Headquarters and in Country Offices will be responsible for implementing activities that foster a work environment that supports and rewards the full contribution and productivity of both men and women.

Activities will include, but not be limited to:

- 1) Conducting gender analysis to identify and address barriers to equal representation in staffing patterns. Once data are analyzed, specific goals will be set for addressing staffing imbalances and modifying personnel and benefits policies if necessary.
- 2) Ensuring that career development opportunities are afforded to both men and women. This may include such activities as a formal mentoring and coaching system.
- 3) Ensuring that sufficient effort is made where appropriate that candidates of both sexes are given equal consideration for available positions.
- 4) Developing and/or reviewing existing policies, procedures, and systems to ensure that they support a gender-sensitive and family-friendly work environment.
- 5) Developing core competencies that address core values and gender awareness and equity. These competencies should be integrated within performance management systems and into any management development model.

- 6) Building staff skills and institutional capability through training in gender sensitivity and gender analysis.

APPENDIX II - DEFINITIONS

- A. GENDER is a term that describes certain attitudes, roles and responsibilities assigned through a social process to males and females, and can often result in different opportunities and behavior for both men and women.

Gender is:

- determined by society
- varies within and between societies
- influenced by cultural, economic, political and environmental factors
- dynamic, not static

- B. GENDER EQUITY is defined as the condition of justice in relations among women and men, leading to a condition in which women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities and status.

- C. GENDER ANALYSIS is the study of how gender identities shape individual choices and opportunities in relation to material resources, social, political, and economic activity within a given community or group. Gender analysis is a process that also includes determining what strategies, institutional changes and related resources are required or available for resolving a given problem and decreasing the disadvantage.

- D. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD) is a term applied to the consideration of gender in the social structure and economic conditions of societies. GAD does not focus exclusively on women, but on the socio-economic-political relationships between males and females.

A GAD approach is concerned with creating equal opportunities for both sexes. It also targets members of society who are disadvantaged and empowers them to take their development into their own hands.

- D. GENDER SENSITIZATION - is the process whereby individuals improve their ability to consider the impact of plans, policies, behavior and attitudes on both females and males, and to be sympathetic to each group's social and physical needs.

- E. PRACTICAL AND STRATEGIC NEEDS - Men and women currently have "assigned" gender roles and identities, and may require support in fulfilling those roles. These are practical gender needs, and may include mechanization of farming for male landowners, or home water taps for female homemakers. If men or (more often) women carry inequitable gender roles, they may require support in transforming those roles. These are strategic gender needs, and may include literacy for women, or couple counseling on family planning.