



CARE'S JOURNEY OF CHANGE

towards gender sensitive humanitarian responses

WHAT needs to change:

Improved effectiveness of humanitarian programming through closing the capacity and evidence gaps, as well as the accountability and efficiency deficits in gender sensitive response design, action, & monitoring

Since the mid-90s, CARE has committed to keeping gender equality and women's empowerment at the center of all its work. The journey to reach this goal in respect to CARE'S humanitarian programming involved actors inside and outside CARE. A key component of this change process has been the adoption, testing, refinement and eventually CARE-wide application of a Gender Marker for humanitarian and development programme design, implementation, and evaluation.

In the early 2000s, CARE conducted a Strategic Impact Inquiry (SII)¹, a multi-year review of CARE'S practices around the world. The results were alarming: despite having recognized the importance of gender sensitive programming in humanitarian response, CARE lacked evidence of actual improvements in programming in practice. The SII results spurred a call to action for CARE's global leadership to investigate consistently the systematic analysis, design, and monitoring of gender programming.

After gradually enhancing its expertise in humanitarian gender programming CARE collaborated in 2011 with the UN OCHA to produce the report "Sex & Age Matter". It aims to demonstrate that "in order to ensure vulnerabilities, needs and access to life-saving services are best understood and responded to, it is important to have information on different segments of society".

Concurrently, CARE adopted the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) gender marker², a tool to rate emergency response proposals on their level of gender sensitivity before submitting them to UN and other donors. Despite this effort, CARE's proposals continued to receive low gender marker scores. Even when gender-related components were identified in the proposals, there was no systematic way to monitor the gender sensitivity of the actual actions and of the results of the program.

Recognizing the gap existing between gender sensitive rhetoric and gender sensitive monitoring, the CARE Emergency Group decided to expand the application of the Gender Marker to all stages of programming, from emergency preparedness to evaluation. After a successful pilot applying the Gender Marker throughout a number of large responses (e.g. Philippines & Syria) the Gender Marker was incorporated into the design, monitoring, and evaluation of all humanitarian responses.

2000:

Addressing the Gaps

Document the evidence and critical information gaps to prompt increased investment by CARE global leadership and to influence the wider sector.

2010:

Aspirations & Realities

Introduce the Gender Marker as a coherent tool within a systematic process of monitoring gender sensitivity of humanitarian interventions throughout the programme cycle and of efficient accountability and learning of all CARE stakeholders involved.

¹ Strategic Impact Inquiry see <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/Strategic+Impact+Inquiry>

² The IASC Gender Marker. August 2012. Humanitarian Response. Online.

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/gm-overview-en.pdf>

In 2016, CARE produced the report “Empowering Women and Girls Affected by Crisis” based on a number of evaluations between 2011 and 2015. It highlighted some of the successes induced by the use of the CARE Gender Marker, demonstrating further the effectiveness of the tool when it is applied large-scale across humanitarian responses. This report also furthered discussions related to the linkages of gender and women’s empowerment programming in humanitarian and development programmes.

Concurrently other programme teams in CARE had also developed similar tools for monitoring gender sensitivity in programming. While recognizing that the potential for gender transformative programming differs between humanitarian and development sectors, CARE’s leadership took up the challenge of developing a common Gender Marker that can be used in all of CARE’s programming. It should also help determine where investments need to be made or who needs to act in order to produce gender transformation. Since October 2016 the new CARE Gender Marker is now applied to all CARE initiatives, projects and programmes. Gender Marker scores are recorded through CARE’s Project Information & Impact Report System, thus capturing change at all stages of the process.

Taking the Gender Marker to the next level:

In 2017/18 CARE will continue to take responsibility and lead on gender equality in the humanitarian sector, promoting the CARE Gender Marker as a good practice tool in humanitarian responses across multiple users. Aiming to ensure strong commitment for common gender goals, CARE will work with IASC, GenCap, peers and donors on gender benchmarks using the gender marker as an advocacy tool and for proposal approval in Common Appeals Process. During the World Humanitarian Summit (May 2016) donors like the Governments of Austria and Australia already agreed to promote the systematic application of the Gender Marker. Training of practitioners in the application of the Gender Marker as well as related programme design and accountability processes will also continue (e.g. through the START network SHADO training program of gender advisors in Asia).

Furthermore CARE works closely with IASC-GenCap on a revised version of the IASC Gender Handbook, taking into account CARE’s practical experiences with the Gender Marker and related design and monitoring tools.

CARE’s journey, from its poor performance reviews in the early 2000s to its recognition as a leader in gender and women’s empowerment programming today, demonstrate the adaption and persistence required to make critical change to humanitarian concepts and practices.

2016:

Taking the Gender Marker beyond humanitarian

Developing a Gender Marker that is applicable to all types of programming in order to break down barriers between humanitarian and development programming and hold all CARE managers accountable against the same gender programming standards.

2017/18:

Industry-wide Gender Standards, Accountability and Learning

CARE works closely with IASC-GenCap, donors like ECHO and peers on the practical use of Gender Marker criteria with the aim to achieve humanitarian sector wide quality criteria, mutual accountability and collective learning.



All the CARE Gender Marker materials are available for other agencies to use at <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/Gender+in+Emergencies>

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