



CARE NORWAY HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY



Rational

CARE International (CI) is one of the world's largest humanitarian organizations fighting global poverty and social injustice. CARE is a dual-mandated organization, working to respond to life-saving humanitarian needs in line with the humanitarian principles, while also supporting development and long-term solutions to poverty and social injustice¹.

CARE Norway's (CN) unique and added value lies in delivering gender-transformative interventions in emergencies, promoting gender equality as a means and as an end in its humanitarian preparedness and response efforts. CN's expertise is specifically on Gender in Emergencies (GiE), Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE) and Sexual Reproductive Health in Emergencies (SRHiE). CN's ambition is to expand its scope and take on a larger role as a humanitarian actor effectively reaching, protecting and empowering women and girls affected by humanitarian crises. This humanitarian strategy will guide CN's humanitarian work 2021-25.

¹¹ CARE's approach is grounded in international law, humanitarian principles and international guidelines and policies on emergency response and towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Context analysis

The last decade has seen an increased need for humanitarian action due to disasters, protracted conflict and global pandemics. Humanitarian needs are at unprecedented levels with 270 million people estimated to live in hunger², and some 82 million people displaced³ – the highest figure on record. Climate change, fragile states and the proliferation of viruses will only exacerbate these needs. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by crisis, but typically left out of humanitarian coordination, planning and response mechanisms despite the fact that women are key frontline responders. Furthermore, humanitarian responses can inadvertently cause harm, increase risks and reinforce gender inequality if needs and capacities of people of all genders are not appropriately considered. This strategy recognizes that gender inequality is a key predictor of the occurrence and recurrence of large humanitarian crises, as people in countries with weak human rights standards and patriarchal societies are more likely to experience violence and armed conflict.

Objective

The objective of this strategy is to position CN as a leading humanitarian organisation effectively saving lives and having lasting impacts on the needs of vulnerable boys, girls, men and women affected by humanitarian crisis and is particularly known for putting gender at the centre of humanitarian action and the ability to reach and empower women and girls in emergencies.

Progress towards this goal will be measured through key performance indicators:

- NOK humanitarian funding (institutional/private sector)
- Number of humanitarian donors
- % of humanitarian funding to local and national responders (disaggregated by type of responder, incl. Women's rights organisations and women-led organisations)
- Perception by general audience of CN as humanitarian actor (IPSOS)

Strategic priorities

To reach the above objectives, CN will make strategic geographic, thematic and donor priorities.

Geographic priorities

CN will prioritise humanitarian interventions in selected countries. This prioritisation is the result of acknowledging that CN is relatively small and need to focus to ensure CN has strong knowledge of and can adequately support.

Following a comprehensive mapping process, CN has decided to prioritise humanitarian intervention in the following countries: Afghanistan, DR Congo, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Uganda and Syria.

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/covid-19-pandemic-exacerbating-hunger-worldwide>

³ <https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>

Humanitarian capacity and ambition within the CARE country offices, as well as synergies with ongoing CN-supported programs have been considered during the mapping. Other factors relate to the severity of the humanitarian situation (see annex 1). An annual evaluation of the list will be conducted to ensure continued relevance.

In the priority countries, CN will:

- Develop partnerships with the country offices with clear expectations on both sides
- Stay updated on the humanitarian situation
- Actively seek financial support for humanitarian projects
- Proactively keep key donors informed about the humanitarian situation
- Actively support field engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms
- Support the country offices' humanitarian response
- Be a voice in the Norwegian media on priority countries

Thematic priorities

To provide immediate life-saving assistance, dignity, and protection, CN will prepare for and respond rapidly and at scale to sudden onset natural disasters, protracted and complex crises. Based on [CARE International's humanitarian strategy](#) and CN's existing expertise, CN will prioritise the Gender in Emergencies approach, gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health⁴. CN will also seek support from other members of the CARE confederation whenever it is necessary to respond to humanitarian needs in other sectors, including Food and Livelihood Security, Shelter, WASH, Education in Emergencies, Health and Nutrition.

The **Gender in Emergencies (GiE) approach** developed by CARE is central to CN's response and focuses on gender equality, women's rights and participation. The GiE approach involves understanding the different needs, capacities, and vulnerabilities of people of all genders in all their diversity. The GiE approach focuses on the following 4 key areas: Rapid gender analysis (RGA), Minimum standards and commitments, Women's leadership in emergencies (WLIE) and Protection from gender-based violence.

Protection from gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE) is both a mainstreamed and stand-alone component within CARE's programming. GBV is a pervasive public health issue and global human rights violation for all genders, and emergencies exacerbate pre-existing inequalities and violence and often generate new forms and risks of GBV. Protection from GBViE involves risk mitigation, response and prevention. In times of crisis, existing patriarchal structures are often reinforced⁵. While Engaging men and boys to develop consciousness and reflect on masculinities, gender, power and privilege, it is important to recognize that men and boys also have unmet needs in the context of humanitarian situations, and can be survivors of GBV. As with GBV, Engaging men and boys can both be a mainstreamed and standalone component.

⁴ UNSCR 1325 is a key reference and entry-point for guiding our humanitarian work on promoting gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment.

⁵ ActionAid On the frontline: Catalyzing women's leadership in humanitarian action (p. 10), 2016 and OCHA, World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2016 (p.3)

Sexual reproductive health in Emergencies (SRHiE) will be providing people of all genders with SRH service delivery in line with the [Minimum Initial Service Package \(MISP\)](#). CARE's integrated GBV and SRH program approach can offer an alternative and less stigmatizing referral path to GBV services while GBV survivors often need urgent access to SRH services to prevent unwanted pregnancy, avoid sexually-transmitted infections, and heal from other injuries.

In the thematic priority areas, CN will:

- Ensure in-house technical expertise
- Design projects with specific objective (outcomes) in the thematic areas
- Keep key donors informed about thematic priorities
- Position CN as the know-how organisation on thematic priorities
- Be a voice in the Norwegian media on thematic priorities

Donor priorities

Institutional and private donors are key stakeholders in supporting humanitarian action. CN will prioritise three institutional donors based on previous experience, expertise, access⁶ and donors' strategic priorities: Norwegian government, the European Union and the Swedish government. CN will also seek to increase its income from private donors.

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) is one of the largest humanitarian donors in the world. In line with its [humanitarian strategy](#), Norway works to ensure an effective response in areas where the needs are greatest, to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity in humanitarian crises. The gender perspective is to be integrated into all humanitarian efforts, and special priority is to be given to women's rights and participation⁷. Norway selects strategic partners to achieve the objectives of the strategy. The strategic partners are chosen through an open process and are valid for the strategy period. In addition to strategic partnerships, ad hoc funding is available for actors without strategic partnerships. CN will work actively to position itself for strategic partnerships at the next opportunity (tentatively 2024)⁸ and actively seek ad hoc funding.

CN will:

- Keep NMFA updated on the humanitarian context in prioritised countries (the Humanitarian section but also other relevant sections)
- Share updated concept notes (and proposal) to position CN for funding
- Ensure close dialogue on funded projects to enhance ownership and value add
- Actively position CN as an expert on the thematic priorities and channel the voice of women affected by humanitarian crisis
- Provide input to key strategic processes

⁶ There are frameworks in the CARE confederation that govern what access CN has to institutional donors and provide some limitations.

⁷ Norway focuses on protection, with particular emphasis on combating sexual and gender-based violence and safeguarding women's rights, protection of children and young people. Norway also gives high priority to measures that promote women's and girls' reproductive health in humanitarian crises.

⁸ The current strategy covers 2019-2023. It is therefore probable that the next opportunity will be in 2024 as it happened after the strategy was launched.

- Actively seek areas of collaboration
- Develop communication material on funded projects

The Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) is the European Commission's department for overseas humanitarian aid and for civil protection. It aims to save and preserve life, prevent and alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity and dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises. DG ECHO is among the leading donors of humanitarian aid in the world. CN has obtained the EU humanitarian partnership certificate for the period 2021 – 2027, which makes us eligible to be awarded EU funding. Coordination between European CARE Members means that CN only has right to apply for humanitarian funding for specific countries (Afghanistan, Myanmar and Uganda). CN will actively pursue humanitarian funding in these countries.

CN will:

- Advocate for CARE's humanitarian priorities at a country level and in Brussels
- Seek humanitarian funding to specific countries (Afghanistan, Myanmar and Uganda)
- Ensure in-house capacity on ECHO as a donor
- Actively participate in joint advocacy efforts

Sida is the Sweden's government agency for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Sida's humanitarian strategy (2021-2025) aims to improve ability to provide protection and assistance for crisis-affected populations and increase the capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian system. Sida's humanitarian assistance is channelled through strategic partners and tentatively the next opportunity is in 2023/2024. CN be considered for humanitarian partnership it would have to represent the whole CARE confederation, not just CN. CN and C-Denmark will work together to position CARE for humanitarian funding at HQ level and certain selected embassies to position itself for strategic partnership (indicatively mid-2023).

- CN will:
- Together with Denmark agree on a plan to approach Sida
- Position CARE as a relevant humanitarian actor in selected countries (based on agreed plan) with the Swedish embassies
- Actively position CARE as an expert on Gender in Emergencies at Sida Stockholm level

Support from **private sector** is increasingly important given that the number of people affected by humanitarian crises continues to increase worldwide. Communications and Marketing will work in close collaboration to raise awareness about the humanitarian needs as well as making an impact and fundraise within the private sector market.

CN will:

- Rapid start-up of fundraising campaigns
- Fundraise where we have comparative advantage over other NGO actors
- Explore partnerships with corporations

Cross cutting issues

To effectively saving lives and having lasting impacts on the needs of women, men, boys and girls affected by humanitarian crisis certain cross cutting issues needs to be considered.

Localisation

CN has long promoted working with local actors in development settings and is increasingly partnering also in emergencies. CN believes that localized aid is both more effective and fair, and leads to greater reach and sustainability. By endorsing the Charter for Change and the Grand Bargain, CN joins the call to reinforce – not replace – existing local and national capacities. CN will therefore advocate towards and support humanitarian donors to reach the ambition of increased localisation. CN will strive to develop locally-led emergency responses, in which local actors – organizations, communities, women frontline responders, etc. – have equal decision-making power and are supported to access global spaces of influence. This requires a nexus-based approach that meet immediate and lifesaving needs while simultaneously also having a clear link to development response.

Environment and climate change

CARE Environmental Policy integrates environmental issues and safeguards into CN operations and program quality. CN is committed to mitigating negative impact on the environment and climate, but also support the protection, enhancement, and restoration of ecosystems.

Accountability to affected populations

At the heart of CARE's humanitarian efforts to impact poverty and social justice, is its engagement with marginalised communities, and vulnerable adults and children. CN will actively seek affected populations' input and feedback in line with the Core Humanitarian Standards and seek to engage them in decisions that affect them.

Safeguarding⁹

CARE has a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, and child abuse (PSHEA-CA). CN will continuously strive to prevent PSHEA-CA from happening, and to effectively respond to incidents perpetrated by staff, partners or other related personnel. CN will carefully examine allegations and investigate, and take appropriate disciplinary action where this is needed, taking into consideration the rights and interests of the survivor, consistent with CARE's survivor-centred approach.

Coordination

CN recognizes that effective humanitarian action requires cooperation and coordination and can harness the diversity of the humanitarian community to optimize its work. CN will support engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms at country level in accordance with the current systems set out by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). CN promotes a collaborative approach of working with partners and peers, while being careful to retain its independence and impartiality, particularly in conflict settings.

⁹ Safeguarding includes Protection from Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse and Child Abuse (PSHEA-CA). For more details, see [CI Safeguarding Policy](#).