



# *Supporting women. Defeating poverty.*

CARE AUSTRALIA STRATEGIC AMBITION 2021–2025





**For 75 years,  
CARE has  
worked around  
the globe to  
save lives,  
defeat poverty  
and achieve  
social justice.**

Guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, we support those affected by humanitarian crises and tackle the underlying causes of poverty to create transformative change.

With a vast majority of staff local to the country where they work, supporting a strong network of local partners, we have deep connections and impact in more than 100 countries.







Our programs focus on women because we know that we cannot overcome poverty until all people have equal rights and opportunities. And women have critical roles — women are often the first responders, the carers, the providers.

It is unacceptable that women should be disadvantaged compared to men.

Women and girls bear the brunt of poverty and are more severely affected by crises like climate change, disasters, COVID-19, conflict and other emergencies.

The statistics are shocking:

- More than **150 countries** have at least one law that is discriminatory towards women.
- In the Asia-Pacific region, **women and children are 14 times more likely than men to die** or be injured in a disaster and its aftermath.
- Violence against women persists at unacceptably high levels, and is being intensified by the pandemic. **One in three women** globally have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.

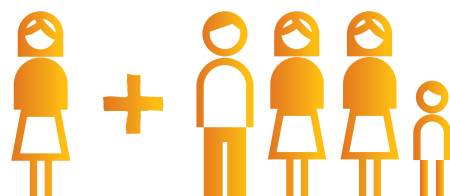
But when a woman has the tools and opportunity to lift herself out of poverty, she brings her family and her community with her.

When her voice is listened to, she speaks not just for herself, but for others too. Around the world, women reinvest the majority of their income back into their families.

**That's why investing in women isn't just about women's rights or human rights — it's the smartest way to help communities defeat poverty.**

When it comes to defeating poverty and helping communities withstand disasters and crises, working with and supporting women is the solution.

When one woman escapes poverty



**she'll bring four others**

with her – and that's a powerful multiplier.



## We work in partnership with local communities, organisations and governments to ensure women:

- have **equal opportunities** to earn an income and have sustainable livelihoods;
- gain access to their **fair share** of resources;
- **lead and participate** in decisions that affect their lives; and
- have the **resilience** to withstand the increasing impacts of climate disasters and other crises and shocks.

But right now, our vision — one of a world of hope, inclusion and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people of all genders live with dignity and security — faces unprecedented global threats.

Decades of poverty reduction and the realisation of hard-fought gains in rights have been pushed into sharp reverse by a combination of the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing climate crisis.

The impact of COVID-19 has already pushed tens of millions of people back into extreme poverty and threatens to push back a generation's worth of gains in reducing gender inequality.

**Although all people have been affected, women and girls are bearing the brunt.**





# Now is the time for action, to redouble efforts.

**With three focus areas, we will relentlessly pursue an end to systemic poverty and injustice:**



## **Support her to have equal opportunities**

To deliver meaningful and lasting outcomes, it is not just about having empowered individuals; it is also about challenging gender inequality across society to improve representation of women and shift unequal power dynamics. And we must go one step further to challenge the very systems that perpetuate injustices and keep people in poverty. We also advocate for Australia to do its fair share to address global injustices and inequalities, as part of the international community.



## **Invest in her livelihood**

Women should have equal access to and control over economic resources, assets and opportunities. We help women access the skills, knowledge and resources they need to succeed as entrepreneurs, farmers and leaders.

Through local partnerships, we engage with communities to address unequal household burdens and advocate against discriminatory laws, policies and systems.



## **Strengthen her resilience**

People who have often contributed least to global warming are already feeling the effects the most.

We will work to ensure vulnerable and marginalised people, especially women, can adapt and have increased resilience to the impacts of climate change and other crises and disasters.

**We will work to protect her rights across all of our work.  
And we will do this with full engagement of men and boys.  
When they speak and act in solidarity with women, they are  
powerful co-agents of change.**

## To drive greater impact, we must first evolve and reimagine how we achieve our mission

### 1. Laser focus

Through our Program Strategy, we will remain clear on who we serve, where we focus our efforts geographically, and how we deliver results. As part of a global confederation, we know we can be most effective focusing on our closest neighbours in Asia and the Pacific whilst responding to humanitarian crises outside this region only when we are well-placed to do so.

### 2. Local and female leadership

Women-led and women's rights organisations are best-placed to lead change in their communities.

We will strengthen our partnerships with local organisations that leverage local leadership and shift resources and decision-making power closer to impact.

### 3. Global connection

We will join forces with the rest of the CARE International Confederation to bring locally-tailored and locally-led solutions to scale.

## Second, we must inspire Australian investment in a gender-equal future

### 1. Female-focused

We will proudly put women and girls at the heart of everything we do. Our commitment to supporting women and working with them to defeat poverty will be front and centre, consistently demonstrating our support for women's rights and their critical role as community builders when they have equal opportunities.

### 2. Partner for good

We will convene public, private and philanthropic investment, building innovative partnerships that leverage and support locally-driven and locally-led business models that are best equipped to solve complex problems.

### 3. Mobilise resources

We will build a model for resource mobilisation, income generation and fundraising that is diverse, market-focussed, sustainable, and delivers greater impact for every dollar spent.

### 4. Accountable and safe

As we always have done, in all that we do, we will remain accountable, including to the communities we support, and ensure we do no harm.





## Finally, we are transforming ourselves to be **future-ready**

### 1. Diverse and inclusive

We commit to anti-racism, gender equality and inclusion.

### 2. Agile and innovative

We will pursue market-shaping innovations that amplify our impact.

### 3. Digital-first

We will leverage data and technology for better outcomes.

### 4. Influence and reform

We will use our voice to support local partners and directly influence key stakeholders on critical issues, and drive targeted policy and structural reforms locally, nationally and globally.

### 5. Talent and expertise

We will build and maintain an organisation full of talented, diverse, empowered, accountable and passionate people.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have undoubtedly been, and continue to be, terrible for individuals, communities and countries. They have magnified and exacerbated existing inequalities.

Yet the global crisis provides a unique opportunity to build forward rather than fall back. We are seizing this moment to focus on the future and help build a world that is more equal.

We are fully committed to ensuring women have the opportunities to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty. We cannot let the pandemic and climate crisis reverse the hard-won gains that have been made. Now is the time to relentlessly drive forward, tackle the complex issues head on, embrace change and work smarter if it can mean better outcomes for all.

The world we want to live in is one where discrimination or privilege do not determine how much decision-making power you have, how safe you feel or how you provide for yourself or your family.

*The world we want to live in truly includes all genders, races, abilities, religions - everyone.*







[care.org.au](https://care.org.au)



Supporting women.  
Defeating poverty.

