

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Better Schools for Papua New Guinea
Annual Project Impact Report

Reporting Period:
July 2019 - June 2020



It starts with equal

Thank you for your support

In Papua New Guinea poverty is a huge barrier to education. More than 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas, schools are far away, teaching materials are inadequate and school fees are too high. The situation is worse for girls — struggling families will often use what little resources they have to send their boys to school and girls are more likely to drop out early to help look after the family, doing household chores.

Since the Better Schools project started in 2017, CARE has been helping children to access the education they deserve by providing teachers with essential training, equipping schools with quality learning materials and better infrastructure, and strengthening government accountability and transparency. CARE has also worked with communities to change harmful cultural norms and encouraged the wider community to support equitable learning for boys and girls.

With your support, CARE has supported 5,987 people (2,667 females and 3,320 males) over the past year — providing 376 girls and 550 boys with access to quality education. Five women and five men with disabilities, as well as three girls and two boys, were also able to benefit from project activities, including the construction of toilets with disabled access at three schools.

By building a strong, inclusive education system, we will help break the pattern of generational poverty, giving these children and their families the bright future they deserve.

Quick facts



Struggling families are more likely to spend what little they have sending their boys to school.



Adult literacy rates in the rural Highlands region of Obura Wonenenara are among the lowest in the country.



Since the project began, CARE has seen a 10% increase in girls graduating from school as well as improved literacy and numeracy.



What you've helped achieve this reporting period

July 2019 – June 2020

Supporting people in Papua New Guinea through the COVID-19 pandemic

CARE Australia is monitoring and responding to COVID-19 around the world — pivoting projects to include teaching vulnerable people the best ways to protect themselves from disease, and taking extra precautions to reduce the risk of spreading infection for, and from, our own staff and partners.

Restrictions caused by the pandemic meant that some project activities were unable to be completed. CARE was unable to undertake Community Score Card (CSC) assessments at three schools, or the review of the School Learning and Implementation Plan (SLIP).

The project reflection workshop (where final year information is shared with stakeholders) which was scheduled for March 2020 could not take place. CARE developed a BG4E website to share project information, including a lessons-learned report, to keep stakeholders informed.

CARE was able to support 4,037 people during the pandemic — 1,765 females and 2,272 males.

Project team members helped construct tippy taps at three schools, and awareness and hygiene messages were explained and printed for students and teachers.

Six women and 14 men in the District Education Implementation Committee (DEIC) were given health and hygiene training. In addition, 47 female and 27 male trainers; and three female and two male CARE staff, all received refresher training on health and hygiene which is vital in light of the global pandemic.



Improving the skills, standards and qualifications of remote teachers

With your support, CARE was able to help 746 teachers (334 female, 412 male) living and working in remote areas to improve their skills and knowledge, which in turn improved the children's results. An evaluation of four schools showed that teaching and learning had improved in two of the schools visited during the reporting period.

Helping more girls go to school and improving facilities

By improving gender relations at home and within the community, the project has focused on encouraging families to invest in education for their girls too. End of project evaluation showed that there has been a shift in the community valuing education and an improved attitude towards girls' education. This was demonstrated by parents contributing towards school improvements, including the building of toilets, shower blocks and water sources.

Community members were also actively involved with working in the school on significant projects to improve facilities and students' wellbeing, including iron roofing, vinyl flooring and blackboards.



Improving school management practices and women's representation

At the end of the reporting period, three of four schools had active Boards of Management who all reported that they had improved their skills, budget planning and financial management. They also had a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

CARE provided various types of support to DEIC members, including training 20 people (6 females and 14 males) with the CSC tool. They were also provided with financial management training so that funds are managed in line with the government's Financial Management Act, and training on Gender Equality and Diversity which helps to break harmful social norms and gender inequality.

In an End of Project evaluation, 191 people were interviewed and reported significant improvements.

DEIC members reported that they understand their roles and responsibilities and feel confident in them. Female DEIC members reported feeling more confident in speaking up and felt that they were being listened to by their male counterparts.

The Provincial Education Board officially recognised DEIC and granted each group K3,000 to support their work.

Improving the allocation of local government resources to better fund education in remote areas

By establishing and strengthening school management at all levels, project activities are building equitable and sustainable systems for future education in Papua New Guinea. The project has strengthened relationships with the National Department of Education, the Provincial Education Board (PEB) and the District counterparts, meaning a more cohesive system of governance.

The SLIP identified the needs of the schools and community. With CARE's support, project team members submitted proposals to the local Member of Parliament who funded K130,000 for five projects which were all successfully completed.

In light of successful activities at Ande-Mala Community School, the PEB approved an upgrade of the Elementary school to Community school — intake of students will begin in 2021.



CASE STUDY

Opening the doors of change

Life for Alina was very different before CARE came to Ande-Mala. Having finished school in grade 10, Alina led a life similar to many women in her area. Her husband dominated their family life, while Alina was expected to do most of the work and their community did not value women's opinions or consider them in making decisions.

"I first heard about CARE in 2012 and I wished that they could come to my area, Ande-Mala. Not long after, CARE was here with two elementary teachers — it was my dream come true," she recalls.

Alina took part in training on gender equality and diversity and was amazed to learn about a more equal world, where men and women shared responsibilities, and education for girls is valued.

"I was very impressed. We learnt how we can adjust our personalities and behaviours and how we can support our girls to access basic education," she says.

Alina took part in further training in community planning, Jolly Phonics, benchmarking and assessment, and was delighted when CARE asked her to co-facilitate GED training at Asinave, before co-facilitating Girls' Child International Day with CARE International.

"I was so happy to share my experience and what I'd learnt with my community and family. I was so vocal about cultures and norms that hinder girls' education."

Alina's experiences with CARE have opened the doors to many opportunities to continue making change within her community — a role that she is proudly taking on. She is recognised within her community as a strong leader and advocate for change, and has even started a literacy class.

"The past has gone and I am a changed woman in my community. I am able to advocate for change in my community. I am able to manage my time wisely, support my husband and do a lot of advocating for girls' education. I see more girls attending school, and more women are engaged in school work."

Alina is just one of the women who have benefited greatly from your support and the changes will undoubtedly continue to give her and her community a more prosperous future. She is grateful, saying, "Thank you CARE for your support to rural women in Yelia. I am an agent for change!"



If you would like more information about this project and how you can be involved, please contact:

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