

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE







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## INTRO

CARE stands in solidarity with women living in poverty and supports their efforts to fulfil their economic rights and aspirations. This document provides an introduction to CARE's 2030 strategy for Women's Economic Justice.

SINCE 2014, CARE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO MORE THAN  
**11 MILLION WOMEN**  
increasing their economic empowerment.

We will continue to focus on supporting women to access financial services, participate in dignified work, and thrive as entrepreneurs and small-scale producers. Through a stronger emphasis on economic justice, we are committed to changing the discriminatory social norms and economic structures, laws, policies and practices that marginalize women, rather than seeking the empowerment of women within an economic system that is broken.

**GOAL:** *Our impact goal is that **50 million women** have more equitable access to and control over economic resources and opportunities by 2030.*

## WHY

Women, in coalition with a wide range of stakeholders, have driven significant gains towards women's economic justice: there are more women in management positions; the gender gap in starting new businesses is narrowing; a new ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work has been adopted; and governments across Sub-Saharan Africa have recognized the power of informal savings groups.

However, COVID-19 has exposed and exacerbated the deep inequalities in our societies and economic systems and threatens to roll back decades of progress. The next ten years will see the world deal with the fallout of COVID-19, including an anticipated increase in multiple forms of inequality, as well as increasing risks from climate change and other protracted crises. An estimated 60% of the world's poor will live in a fragile or conflict-affected state by 2030. Globally, patterns of increased political polarization, shrinking civic space, concentrated private sector power and a growing dependence on digital technology threaten to compound barriers to women's economic justice even further.

Yet, there are still some shoots of hope in the energy of growing youth movements, the potential for economic and leadership roles for women in a zero-carbon economy and the use of technology as a force for good. There is also a significant movement to decolonize the aid sector to support an agenda which is inclusive, anti-racist and gender responsive. CARE must adapt to respond to these threats and harness these opportunities, so that in partnership with others, we can protect and accelerate progress towards women's economic justice.

# WHAT

CARE will work with economically marginalized women who have no or limited access to and control over economic rights, resources and opportunities. Within this, our sub-impact groups include workers, entrepreneurs and small-scale producers, as well as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) members. This includes young women and women living in fragile or conflict-affected contexts (including women who have been displaced).

CARE's Women's Economic Justice Strategy is based on our [Gender Equality Framework](#).



The strategy will build on our successes and capabilities from the [2020 women's economic empowerment strategy](#). This includes work on dignified work, financial inclusion (with a focus on VSLAs and a growing focus on VSLA in Emergencies) and entrepreneurship. We will also build on recent advocacy successes related to the ratification of [ILO Convention 190](#) on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work and the [Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition](#).

# WITH WHOM

Partnership is central to [CARE's global vision](#) and to the achievement of CARE's Women's Economic Justice impact goal. We will be more adaptable and flexible, and support partnerships based on reciprocity and mutuality. We will recognize the power imbalances and inequities in the global aid system, and seek to redress this balance and support better outcomes for women's economic justice by shifting the power. We will work with:



We actively seek new partners that pursue a transformative agenda towards women's economic justice.

# CASE STUDIES



Justine Nuwabiine and her husband Deus Turyamureeba, participants in CARE Uganda's Digital Sub-Wallets program

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1. "We never planned together. Financial decisions were mainly done by my husband and I was fully responsible for all the housework." That was what life was like for Justine, above, before she and her husband, Deus, took part in household dialogues facilitated by CARE. Now, Deus says he has changed: "I respect my wife and we share responsibilities and roles in our home."

*"What we learned changed our lives and our marriage as well... We have managed to buy land for our farming and started selling brew which has enabled us to buy building materials for our house."*

*(Justine Nuwabiine)*

CARE's **Digital Sub-Wallets program in Uganda** was designed to improve women in VSLA's access to formal finance by addressing household social norms. This was done through household dialogues, which helped to increase women's agency and shift social norms that were limiting women's economic rights, including their control over income and access to formal finance. By the end of the project,

ALMOST THREE QUARTERS OF WOMEN  
**MET THEIR FINANCIAL GOALS**  
**81%** HAD SEEN A CHANGE IN THEIR  
HUSBAND'S BEHAVIOUR





Narcisa Cruz Sosa, ceramics  
artisan from Chulucanas, Peru

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2.

*“As individuals we sometimes can’t achieve the things we want to, but by uniting as a group we are stronger.”*

**Narcisa Cruz Sosa**, 48, is from Chulucanas in the north of Peru and makes artisanal ceramics. In 2008, she set up her own association for women artisans:

*“We started out with eight women and now we just keep on growing.”*

CARE has supported the association with business and soft skills training, to register a collective brand, enabling them to strengthen their collective reach and income, and has also linked the association with local and regional government fairs and events. As part of the **Women in Enterprise** programme, CARE has supported nearly 270,000 women entrepreneurs in 11 countries, with women seeing an average increase in daily enterprise earnings of 91%.

Narcisa is now President of the ‘Consortium of Women Entrepreneurs of Piura’ which represents 21 associations of women entrepreneurs, with over 300 members.

**270 000** WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS  
**REACHED ACROSS**  
**11 COUNTRIES**  
WITH WOMEN SEEING 91% INCREASE IN EARNINGS

*“I want to let people know that women are capable of starting and growing their own businesses and contributing to their communities.”*



**3. Made by Women** works with national and regional partners from trade unions and other civil society organizations and with garment factories and brands, to promote the rights of female garment workers.

The program has enabled

# 167,000

**WOMEN GARMENT FACTORY WORKERS  
TO CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS  
OR REDUCE RISK OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT  
IN THE WORKPLACE**

and a further 4.1m stand to benefit from improved legal practices CARE and our partners have influenced.

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**FACTORIES HAVE  
WORKED WITH CARE**

to make changes to their policies, systems and workplace cultures in order to be more responsive to the rights of women workers, resulting in more than 154,000 workers gaining more dignified working conditions.

Momena, pictured to the right, is a garment worker turned union leader at a factory in Bangladesh who is using her leadership skills to ensure the issues faced by workers are not ignored. By standing up for her colleagues – such as a woman who was struggling to get her maternity benefits – she is encouraging factory management to improve their systems, so workers aren't denied their rights. Women like Momena are [leading changes in their homes, communities and workplaces](#) which benefit thousands of workers.

