

CARE's Strategic Impact Inquiry on Gender in Emergencies:

Learning together to change what is possible in the worst of times

You have spoken: it is time.

Over the past six months, a group of staff from CARE International's program leadership network across emergencies, gender, and monitoring and learning have started canvassing colleagues across the organization about the merits of launching a Strategic Impact Inquiry to examine the changing nature of CARE's contributions to impact on the underlying causes of poverty and social injustice. From these consultations, we heard that while we are all working hard to advance important priorities, many feel a need to dig deeper to understand impact in several important areas. Loudest of all is the call to examine how CARE's emergency response work is contributing to the immediate and long-term state of gender equality in the world. The message was clear: the time is now.

Why Gender in Emergencies?

Two-thirds of the world's poorest people are projected to be living in fragile states by 2030, and the humanitarian sector is called to dramatically improve its ability to protect and promote the rights of the most vulnerable in these settings. CARE is emerging as a leading humanitarian agency known for its particular ability to reach and empower women and girls in emergencies. Yet although we have learned much about the process of gendered social change in our development work, the links between CARE's emergency response and its lasting impacts on gender relations remain unclear. Survivors. Refugees. Conscripts. Men and boys; women and girls. It is both a strategic and a moral imperative for CARE to galvanize our capacity to promote gender equality for all in the crucible of humanitarian crisis.

Better together: Organizational learning for change

Over the years, CARE has invested mightily to better respond to gender in emergencies, with staff deployments and organizational structures, analytic tools and programmatic strategies, and advocacy to raise the profile of gender in the wider humanitarian sector. Under sharp constraints of time and resources, individual emergency response teams have produced a body of data tracking gender integration in emergency responses, and attempted to review the immediate effects of these efforts. However, it is nearly impossible, without concerted investment, for those teams to trace the more subtle gender dynamics at work in the heat of the emergency, and even more difficult to examine the longer-term changes in gender relations as the crisis passes, and communities rebuild. By investing to support rigorous inquiry in individual response sites, and drawing systemic insights across our diverse regional and global operations, the SII can be a platform of organizational learning for systemic change.

Starting where you are: SII phases and pathways

Because emergencies push our teams to give 110%, the SII has to help us work smarter together, not harder alone. It can only succeed by supporting, connecting, and complementing **your** research and learning processes - building over time through iterative phases of research, synthesis and strategic change. Today, we are in Phase Zero - a global consultation and research design process aiming to launch field studies by the beginning of 2019. Read on to learn how you can join the effort to build an SII that reflects and enlarges the questions, resources and capacities we share, over time.

How will it work?

- A **Global Coordination Team** is working to build the infrastructure so that individuals, country programs, regional teams, CI members and working groups can connect to the SII. This includes:
 - an online SII communication and learning platform for regular updates and collaboration

- a staff coordinator, funding commitments, and team structure to support the key elements of a successful global SII, such as: global and regional research planning, individual site/study support, internal communications, external engagement, and fundraising
- A **Global Design Dialogue** invites you to you shape the future of the SII by [participating in peer-to-peer key informant interviews](#), promoting inter-office exchange among staff and researchers to refine concept of impact for gender in emergencies and share existing knowledge.
- A **Global Research Protocol** will lay out the core principles, key questions, domains of inquiry, research methods and ethical guidelines that will guide any study included in the SII. We are working on the first draft now, [and welcome collaborators to help us shape this vital tool!](#)
 - What's a Research Protocol? See here for an example from CARE's first SII on Women's Empowerment.
 - Is this a template? No! Detailed research designs have to reflect the context, questions and capacities of specific research sites and teams. The Global Protocol will ensure that all studies include a common core so that we can synthesize findings across them all.
- **Global Methods** will analyze our existing data and studies through the lens of the SII Research Protocol – for example, emergency response plans/strategies, completed evaluations, gender analyses and PIIRs. Volunteering as an analyst in a Global Method allows anyone to support the SII in a critically important way. [If you are interested in being a part of this process, let us know!](#)
 - Who does the Global Methods? The SII Coordinating Team will build platforms and tools for interested staff to participate in this document-analysis process later this year
 - How will Global Methods work? After compiling the relevant data and developing the analytic tools, a globally distributed team of volunteer staff analysts will code each document, and help shape and interpret the findings.
- **Field Methods** are the living heart of an SII, where staff, partners, and community members use the SII framework to build a grounded and rigorous assessment of CARE's contributions to impact on gender in emergencies. For teams that want to understand and improve the gendered impacts of their emergency work, this is a way to do so with global support from CARE.
 - How are Field Sites selected? SII fieldwork will start early in 2019 with two pilot studies to test and improve the Global Protocol, but we are already looking for Phase 1 expansion sites. Initially, we seek interested sites with at least partial research funding, but welcome all nominations as we work to secure additional funding.
 - Can my upcoming relief project evaluation or AAR be an SII study? Probably! We can help you carry out your planned study in a way that informs the SII, so [let us know what inquiry opportunities you have coming up, and whether any funding is available.](#)

How can you connect? [Use and share the Google Form to:](#)

1. Sign up for regular updates and to be linked when the communication platform is ready.
2. Give your input and support at key points as we build the global design and site studies.
3. Share your plans for evaluation or research on gender in emergencies in the coming 2 years.

Want to know more?

- A little... [here's a snapshot of current thinking on the SII's proposed purpose and methods.](#)
- A little more... [sign up for short updates as we build the research protocol and plan studies](#)

Contact us at sii@careinternational.org, or through the members of the Global Coordination Team (quay@careinternational.org, Susannah.Friedman@care.org, diana.wu@care.org, elisa.mart@gmail.com).

If you have questions, suggestions, or want to get involved, we want to hear from you!