



Global Knowledge Sharing Fund

Application format

Name of KS initiative:	Experiences of gender among women working in emergencies in CARE	Contact person:	Holly Solberg (ARMU) Zarmina Nasir (CARE Australia) Joy Shiferaw (CARE USA) Megan Chisholm (CARE International)
CO/Region/Unit:	CIGEE Network (CARE Initiative for Gender Equity in Emergencies) * A Community of Practice of Women working in Emergencies)	Email:	solbergh@care.org Zarmina.nasir@careaustralia.org.au Shiferaw@care.org chisholm@careinternational.org

What knowledge do you want to share?

What knowledge do you want to generate, share, and/or use? Share the main learning objective of this Knowledge Sharing (KS) initiative.

The CIGEE network emerged as a community of practice following discussions at the Asia Regional Conference in 2005 about personal experiences of gender within CARE. A group of women working in the field of emergencies began to share stories relating to their personal experiences of gender within the context of their work with CARE in emergency responses. In this and subsequent discussions, it became clear that many women working in emergencies within CARE had stories to tell about their experiences, which began to raise a number of questions about our own working culture. It was decided to create a support network where these issues could be further shared and explored (focussing on gender as a workplace diversity issue rather than a program issue). The network was named the CARE Initiative for Gender Equity in Emergencies (CIGEE).

The network is made up of women working throughout the CARE world in emergencies. At present the network includes approximately 50 women, (both international and national), from various levels of CARE COs, RMUs and Members.

The CIGEE network would now like to build upon the informal discussions which have taken place within the group to learn more about women’s experiences and gender dynamics in emergency work within CARE.

This proposal will allow the group to explore and document their personal experiences of gender as emergency workers within CARE. They will identify common issues and themes faced by women working in emergencies (in particular contributions, positive lessons, risks, barriers and obstacles for women in emergency work) in order to ultimately raise awareness of the gender issues existing within the organisation and help advance work around improving gender balance, conditions and opportunities for women within emergency work.

Why is this knowledge relevant to CARE?

Why do you consider this knowledge relevant to CARE’s mission/vision? How is the main objective of the KS initiative related with other objectives and goals of your area, unit, CO?

CARE’s vision and mission commits CARE to ensuring it not only advocates for the rights of women in our programs as beneficiaries but that we seek to provide a workplace where gender and diversity are valued, where emergency teams have a gender balance, and where discrimination and obstacles to the full participation of women in our work, including leadership roles, are

overcome. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in our emergency teams there is a low level of participation of women, few women in leadership roles, particular roles tend to be dominated by one gender or other. In addition, anecdotal stories and findings from various research suggest that women working in emergency teams face a number of gender issues relating to the conditions and culture of the workplace which affect their work and wellbeing. It is important to strengthen our understanding of gender imbalances within our organization in general and also how they play out in emergencies, in order address those imbalances.

Beyond the anecdotal stories however there is little understanding of the real picture, no clear identification of the key issues, to what extent they are shared or what their impact is on CARE's work and staff. By exploring and documenting women's experiences of working in emergencies, CIGEE hopes to begin to generate knowledge and learning which will help CARE to understand the role of gender in emergencies, create greater awareness of the issues to ultimately improve CARE's quality as an employer for women in emergencies and to help overcome barriers to women's participation in CARE's emergency work. Learning from this initiative will contribute to CARE's work and learning in the Strategic Impact Inquiry (SII) Phase III, focusing on Women's Empowerment in Emergencies. Knowledge gained from the CIGEE review will also support CARE as an organization to better understand internal issues relating to program quality vis-à-vis women's empowerment.

How do you intend to share the knowledge?

What are the main activities of the learning process? Which knowledge sharing method(s) will you use?

CIGEE will engage a consultant to assist with designing and coordinating the learning process together with a team formed from CIGEE members. The project will focus on exploring and documenting the experiences of women working in emergencies for CARE (including former employees as well) by conducting a series of interviews and story sharing. Stories will be collected through telephone interviews conducted by the consultant, self written stories submitted by email and by pair sharing between international and national staff where appropriate. Interviewees will have an opportunity to contribute drawings or photos to further illustrate their experience. The stories will be documented in written form in a story book format (if possible, options for stories recorded digitally through video and/or audio will also be explored by the consultant). Selected senior managers, male and female, will be asked to read the stories and share their reaction to the storyteller's experience, which will also be documented. In addition to generating and documenting the narratives of women around this topic, a brief analysis of the stories will also be undertaken in order to identify and highlight the key common issues emerging. A brief summary of key points/lessons/emerging themes about women's experiences will be shared widely throughout the CARE International world. Recommendations will be developed as to next steps for beginning to address some of these issues which will be presented to CEG, ERWG and other relevant senior managers of CARE. As mentioned previously, the outputs will be linked with work underway by the IMLT (Impact Measurement and Learning Team in Atlanta) through SII. The document could also be shared with other peer NGOs such as CARE's partners in the Emergency Capacity Building Project, and can bring useful perspectives to how we go about mainstreaming gender within the soon to be developed CARE Emergency manual, particularly in human resource and operational sections.

Who will benefit from this knowledge?

Who are the people involved in the KS initiative and how will this knowledge be useful for them? Who (outside the group) will find this knowledge useful and why?

The key group involved in this initiative are the CIGEE network members, which as described above currently includes approximately 50 women who are involved with emergency work and are drawn from all corners of CARE's COs and members. Stakeholders who will benefit from this knowledge will include:

- Women working in or interested in developing careers in emergency work (including but not

- limited to CIGEE members)
- All staff within CARE seeking to improve their understanding of gender and diversity within CARE's workplace
 - Emergency managers seeking to improve gender balance of teams and quality of emergency responses

How will you measure success?

How will you know if you achieve your main learning objective? What are the indicators of success?

- Digital product is shared throughout CARE and reports indicate staff have listened to/read the stories
- Report is read and discussed by senior managers within CARE
- Report is included and discussed at ERWG meeting
- Topic of gender and emergencies receives attention from ERWG and CEG and contributes to the inclusion of specific strategies to address gender in emergencies in CARE's HR and management policies

What are the associated costs of your KS initiative?

Please develop a brief budget and include it with your proposal. If you have a match (money or in-kind) include it as part of the total budget.

- Consultant for 10 days spread over 3 months @ \$400 per day = \$4,000
- Communications, documenting stories, miscellaneous = \$1,000
- Key CARE staff members involved in CIGEE will contribute time to project management and providing their own stories as appropriate.

Do you require any assistance?

Will you need any support? If so, from whom and for what?

- All CIGEE members will be requested to participate in the process of data collection through participating in interviews or story telling.
- Assistance will be sought from key gender experts within CARE to review and advise on the methodology.
- As CIGEE is a community of practice and not a specific unit, assistance would be needed from a Unit (possibly EHAU) to provide the contracting of the consultant and management of the funds.