CARE is an international humanitarian aid organisation fighting global poverty, with a special focus on working with women and girls to bring lasting change to their communities. As a non-religious and non-political organisation, CARE works with communities to help overcome poverty by supporting long-term development projects as well as providing emergency relief. We do this by directly implementing programs and also working with local partners on projects. We believe supporting women and girls is one of the most effective ways to create sustainable change in communities.

CARE International in the Pacific

Though they span more than 10,000 square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean, the people of the Pacific face many of the same challenges, including pervasive gender inequality, limited economic opportunities, and high vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters.

Services in the Pacific’s often remote areas are limited, so many people don’t have access to clean water sources, basic sanitation and essential health care, which is particularly critical because of the frequency and impact of natural disasters in the region. Despite a growing economy, income opportunities are also limited, particularly for women. Violence against women and girls is a serious social and economic problem across the Pacific, and women are underrepresented in local and national decision making.

CARE has been working in the Pacific for almost three decades, with country offices in Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu and projects in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Samoa. We work with and support local partners across the region, including the Pacific NGO Live & Learn, the Pacific Red Cross Societies and MORDI Tonga Trust.

With a special focus on improving inclusion and protection of women and girls in emergencies, CARE has delivered responses to large-scale disasters including Tropical Cyclones Gita (2018), Winston (2016) and Pam (2015), the 2018 Papua New Guinea earthquake and the 2015-16 El Nino event. We also work long term with both men and women to tackle gender inequality and build communities’ resilience to disasters and climate change, and co-lead the Gender and Protection Cluster in Vanuatu and the Protection Cluster in Papua New Guinea.
Gender Equality

Gender inequality is a root cause of many social and economic problems in the Pacific, including violence against women and girls. CARE is tackling gender inequality across the region.

Women and girls’ voice and leadership

In Vanuatu, CARE is working to build the skills and confidence of women and girls to amplify their voice in decision making at the family, community and national level.

Ending violence against women and girls

CARE is working in Vanuatu and PNG with other gender-focused organisations as well as communities to prevent violence against women and girls.

Women’s economic empowerment

Working with coffee and cocoa producing families in PNG and rural families in Vanuatu, CARE engages with men and women to increase women’s income and decision making.

Gender in emergencies

CARE acts as co-lead for the Gender and Protection Cluster in Vanuatu and PNG, a member of the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster, and partners with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to build gender inclusion and protection capacity across the region. CARE has also developed gender tools and conducted rapid gender assessments for emergencies in Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands and PNG and carried out Rapid Gender Analysis training for local partners in Samoa.

In Tonga, CARE has worked with women’s groups to discuss their unique post-cyclone recovery needs, facilitate conversations about how they could address those needs themselves, and provide items like seedings to support them to re-establish their livelihoods.

Resilience

The Pacific region is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. CARE is helping communities to prepare and respond.

Disaster risk reduction and preparedness

CARE works with communities in Vanuatu, PNG and Timor-Leste and through local partners in Fiji and the Solomon Islands to be more resilient and prepared for disasters, including action planning, emergency simulations, first aid training, and food security and livelihoods strengthening.

Build Back Safer awareness and training

In Tonga, CARE has promoted Build Back Safer techniques through both male and female trainers as part of emergency shelter support to help people recover from the recent cyclone.

Climate change adaptation and advocacy

In PNG, Vanuatu, Timor-Leste and Fiji, CARE is working with communities and local partners to reduce risks, build resilience and advocate for strong gender-responsive climate action.

WASH

Many people in the Pacific don’t have access to improved water and sanitation. CARE is improving water, sanitation and hygiene in communities, schools and health services.

Water systems and sanitation infrastructure

Prioritising gender inclusion, CARE rehabilitates water systems and constructing toilets and handwashing facilities in remote communities in Vanuatu and Fiji.

Hygiene promotion and water safety planning

In Tonga, Vanuatu and Fiji, CARE works with communities to promote good hygiene practices and safeguard water supplies, particularly in disasters.

Gender and social inclusion

In Solomon Islands, CARE is developing gender and social inclusion in WASH guidelines. In Vanuatu, CARE’s Menstrual Hygiene Management project works with girls through schools to break down stigma and enable them to manage their period safely.

WASH in emergencies

CARE brings a gender focus to WASH in emergencies, providing assistance such as hygiene kits, plumbing and guttering repair kits and technical support to local partners in Tonga, Fiji and Vanuatu in recent disasters.