

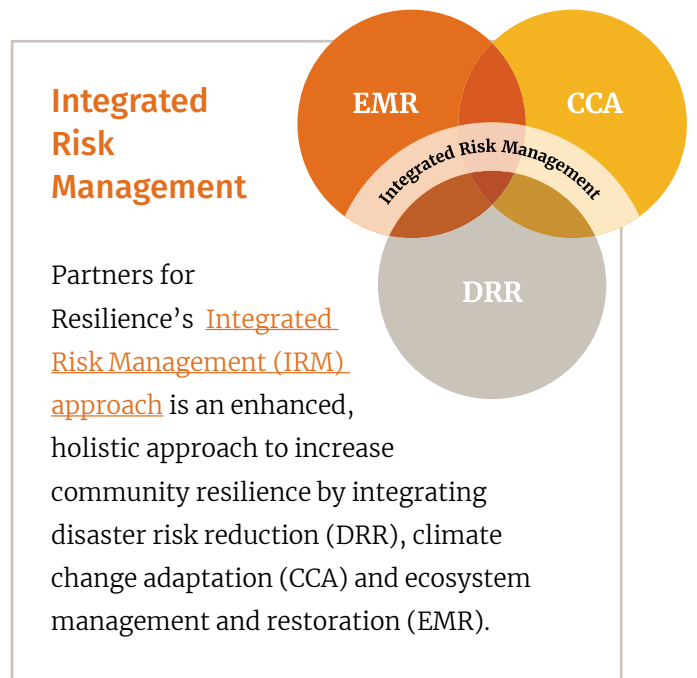
Partners for Resilience in Ethiopia

For ten years, CARE has worked with communities, civil society and government in Afar to increase resilience in the face of rising climate and disaster risks, and to foster systemic change.

- 2011–2015**

CARE accompanied pastoral communities, with specific attention to women and youth, to reduce disaster risk and diversify livelihoods. With partner Support for Sustainable Development (SSD), activities focused on establishing DRR Committees, rangeland management, access to credit and climate-resilient agriculture and infrastructure construction.
- 2016–2020**

CARE focused on including Integrated Risk Management (IRM) into the Afar region laws and policies, with communities at the centre, by increasing the dialogue capacities of civil society organisations (CSOs) and strengthening government capacity.



CARE’s Partners for Resilience (PFR) programme in Ethiopia



1,259,733 people covered by DRR, CCA, and EMR plans



12 CSOs with strengthened capacity on dialogue and advocacy for IRM



>11,000 community members introduced to climate-resilient crops



281 government officials trained in disaster preparedness and disaster risk management (DRM)



18 water schemes rehabilitated



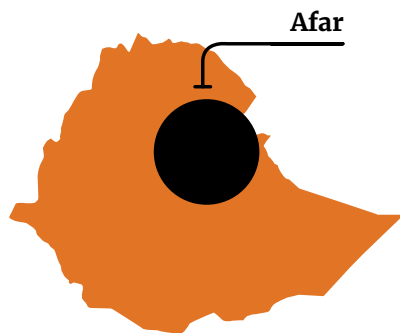
4 policies integrated IRM, including the Afar regional DRM strategy and the Afar Environmental Impact Assessment guideline



118 hectares of farmland regenerated

Context

In the Afar region in Northeast Ethiopia, with 1.8 million inhabitants, climate change has increased the frequency and severity of climate-related disasters. In this arid environment, irregular rainfall and extreme drought threaten livelihoods and food security. Pastoralism is the main source of income: most people rely on their livestock and move around the region, particularly during the dry season, to look for water and pasture for their animals. With increasing investments in the Awash River basin, and government policy favouring sedentary agriculture, the space for pastoralists is increasingly constrained. There is limited space for civil society organisations to speak out and engage the government for inclusive, integrated solutions. In this context, a consortium of CARE, Cordaid, The Netherlands Red Cross, Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre and Wetlands International implemented the **Partners for Resilience** programme for ten years, funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This publication outlines CARE's main achievements.



Main achievements

Disaster Risk Reduction and Ecosystem Management

Communities became able to limit the effects of disasters and improve degraded and flooded areas through trainings on rehabilitation of rangelands, construction of community infrastructure and collective coordination for preventive actions.

- CARE and local CSOs strengthened knowledge and community organisation, including DRR committees, in four communities in Dewe district (or *woreda*), enabling measures to reduce the impacts of constant grazing and intensive agriculture on water availability and soil quality.
- With communities, CARE and partner Support for Sustainable Development (SSD) constructed soil and stone bunds (22 km), drains and dams (601 m³) and maintained canals, regenerating 118 hectares of farmland. CARE also introduced good forestry practices to conserve nutrients and reduce surface run-off and erosion causing crop losses.
- CARE enhanced Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction across the Afar region. Communities engaged in the identification and analysis of risks through **Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis** and preparation of contingency plans to address the root causes of their vulnerabilities, strengthening their response capacities.

CARE's gender focus

Natural hazards pose significant threats to women in Ethiopia as they are often neglected or under-represented within development and climate action. In order to tackle this gap, CARE integrated gender as a crosscutting topic in the PfR programme. By training CSOs and communities in gender equality and advocacy, CARE built the conditions for women's participation. CARE Ethiopia applied **CARE's gender tools, policies and approaches**, such as **CARE's Gender Marker**, a yearly self-assessment programme quality and learning tool to make sure that women benefitted from interventions and had access to information.



Climate Change Adaptation

The integrated approach allowed communities in Afar to cope with the effects of a changing climate, increasing resilience by diversification of income generating activities, climate-resilient agriculture and new technologies.

- CARE improved access to credit services through raising awareness on financial institutions and multi-purpose cooperatives. In Dewe district, women formed 18 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) to build a buffer for dry seasons. These VSLAs strengthened women's collective voice and action.
- CARE introduced more than 11,000 community members to climate-resilient crops and agriculture technologies. Moreover, CARE supported the rehabilitation of 18 water schemes to regulate and provide water access, especially during the dry season. An [external evaluation by International Institute for Rural Reconstruction and Bahir Dar University](#) showed that these interventions improved food security despite the recurrent droughts.
- CARE also supported the development of seasonal climate forecasts in the four communities by multi-sector and multi-stakeholder [Participatory Scenario Planning](#) for pastoral and agropastoral households. This enhanced communities' risk anticipatory action in Afar, locating them in the driver's seat for planning and preparedness.

Strengthening capacity of civil society and government

Strengthened advocacy capacity of CSOs, coupled with a strong knowledge base and strengthened IRM capacity of the government, lead to an environment that enables vulnerable communities to become resilient.

- CARE's advocacy and community development allies in Afar were Support for Sustainable Development (SSD), Afar Pastoralist Development Association (AISD), Action for Integrated Sustainable Development Association (APDA). As a result of PfR, these CSOs engaged with the government in Afar to integrate climate, ecosystems and community needs into the regional Disaster Risk Management strategy.
- CARE and PfR partners developed the [IRM advocacy Training Manual and Resource Booklet](#). This extensive manual is the basis for systematic IRM (advocacy) training of communities, governments, and CSOs.
- CARE built a strong partnership with relevant government offices and knowledge institutes (see the box *Sustaining the PfR programme*). CARE trained these institutes to take an integrated approach to disaster risk, incorporating climate and nature-based solutions. They are now training regional experts in IRM and generating appropriate knowledge to improve implementation of DRM interventions.

Drought? We Can Handle It

Kediga Humed's story of resilience

Kediga Humed works hard and is dedicated to changing her life for the better. She farms and lives in the Beladulo village in the Afar region in Ethiopia, where recurrent droughts have made life for pastoralists like Kediga both difficult and unpredictable.

Through CARE's Partners for Resilience programme, Kediga and her community received training in irrigation crop production, market accessibility and storage systems for agricultural products. This inspired her and her community to diversify their livelihoods and income streams and form a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), so that they are prepared to face the drought. They farm, rear livestock, and share their agricultural produce with relatives during drought. For Kediga, resilience means being prepared to face the drought — together.

Influencing laws and policies

On paper, the national DRM policy takes an integrated approach to disaster risk reduction, with attention to climate change adaptation and ecosystem management. In practice, most interventions focus on short-term solutions, failing to develop long-term DRM capacities to bounce back from disasters. CARE and partners supported the development of an IRM-sensitive DRM implementation strategy and related materials for Afar.

- With support of CARE, the Afar region now has an effective and contextualised [IRM sensitive Disaster Risk Management Strategy \(2020–2024\)](#), with a [DRM implementation guideline](#).
- The [Guideline of Participatory Rangeland Management for Afar](#) was developed by CARE to enable the sustainable use of rangeland, recovery of degraded rangelands and prevention of further degradation.
- The Afar Environmental Protection, Rural Land Use, and Administration Bureau developed a new [Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Guideline](#). With support by CARE and partners, this strategic document has become IRM and gender sensitive.
- CARE conducted an [adaptation finance tracking study for Ethiopia](#) with Climate Change Consortium – Ethiopia (CCC-E) to assess the adaptation relevance of international climate finance, to what extent the activities are targeting the poorest and most climate vulnerable parts of the population, and if the activities are gender sensitive. The study indicated gaps and provides a basis to advocate for community access to climate funds in the country.
- The principles for PfR's integrated approach informed [the curriculum](#) of the Semera University post-graduate programme for DRM and Pastoral Development.

Sustaining the PfR programme

CARE strengthened the capacity of CSOs and government agencies to implement integrated risk management. CARE's key civil society partners are SSD, AISD, APDA and CCC-E. Key government and knowledge partners are the Afar Disaster Prevention & Food Security Program Coordination Office, the Afar Livestock, Agriculture & Natural Resource Development Bureau and Semera University.

Lessons & recommendations

- A dual approach of supporting both the government and civil society to strengthen their capacity in IRM, allowed the development of trust needed for CARE and civil society partners to be able to integrate IRM principles into guidelines and strategies.
- A strategy to produce accessible knowledge products creates institutional memory to overcome high turnover of staff in decision-making positions in government and local NGOs. These products ensure the IRM approach is understood and included in other strategies/planning of CSOs, communities and government institutions.
- Continuous monitoring and feedback loops through strong partnerships with communities and government offices helped build adaptive capacity in the face of uncertainty (such as the limited civic space and COVID-19).
- Lobby and advocacy to integrate the IRM approach at national level are dependent on the civic space and developments in the political arena. Advocacy capacities in Ethiopia are increasing and in need of sustained support, so that civil society can take its role in advocating for resilient communities and integrated, people-centred policies and investments in DRR, climate and ecosystems.
- The involvement and capacity strengthening of partner CSOs are what sustains the programme and the IRM approach, and for this the CSOs need support in developing a diverse and sustainable funding base.

Key publications & tools

- [Partners for Resilience \(PfR\) Ethiopia Integrated Risk Management Program: Final Evaluation](#) – an ex-post evaluation of the results of the first phase of PfR, by International Institute for Rural Reconstruction and Bahir Dar University.
- [Integrated Risk Management Advocacy Training Manual and Resource Booklet](#) – providing concrete guidance for training and workshop sessions on IRM and its components DRR, CCA and EMR, and on developing an advocacy strategy.
- [Climate Adaptation Finance Study Report - Ethiopia](#) – assessing if multilateral and bilateral donors' reporting of adaptation finance is reliable, if these activities are targeting the poorest and most climate vulnerable populations, and if the activities are gender sensitive.
- [A Practical Guide to Participatory Scenario Planning](#) – an approach to collaborative design and delivery of seasonal user-centred climate information services.

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PARTNERS FOR RESILIENCE
Working together on disasters, climate, ecosystems