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CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

Capacity Statement CARE in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region has been exposed to a variety of climate-related shocks and pressures. From 1930 to 2019, approximately 840 climate-related phenomena occurred in the region with flooding, storms and droughts being the most frequent ([ECLAC, 2020](#)). Of all the regions in the world, LAC is the second most prone to climate-related disasters resulting from rapid-onset events such as floods or hurricanes ([IADB, 2023](#)). Slow-onset events such as temperature increase, or sea level rise are also frequently experienced in the LAC region ([IADB, 2023](#)). These climate-related phenomena are already affecting the livelihoods and household assets of people living in vulnerable conditions.

Climate change is projected to accelerate and intensify the impacts of climate-related phenomena in the LAC region. Some impacts include changes in the severity of extreme temperatures, increase of drought conditions and changes in the intensity and frequency of precipitation ([ECLAC, 2020](#)). These changes have a direct consequence on agricultural activities, ecosystems services, and crop production. This in turn will affect the food and water security and the health and well-being of people. Under a high-emission climate

change scenario, the number of people experiencing poverty in the LAC region could increase by 5.8 million by 2030 ([World Bank, 2020](#)).

Climate change intensifies preexisting inequalities in marginalized groups that are already being affected most by its impacts. This is because often these groups depend on ecosystem services that could also be affected by climate change or do not have the necessary conditions to adapt to its consequences. For instance, a high-emissions climate change scenario projects a decrease of precipitation with a more intense dry season in the LAC region. This has implications on crop production and heightens the risk of food insecurity amongst farmers and the communities ([ECLAC, 2020](#)).

Factors such as gender, ethnicity or levels of poverty also increase people's vulnerability to climate change ([ECLAC, 2019](#)). Women could lead climate action since they possess valuable knowledge of their communities and environment and also play a role in the transmission of this important knowledge ([UNODC, 2008](#)). With the migration of men to cities for work, women are becoming more involved in farming, consequently maintaining crop knowledge often influenced by their cooking work ([Women's Environment and Development Organization \(WEDO\), 2016](#)). However, women are disproportionately affected by climate change due to gender inequality. For instance, data shows that women and girls experience food insecurity disproportionately compared to men by reducing their food consumption after being affected by a weather event ([WEDO, 2016](#)).



Some reasons for this are that women farmers have less access to agricultural credits, capacity strengthening and technology which hinders their possibility to adapt ([World Bank, 2022](#)). This is related to a gap in land access where approximately 25% of land managers in Latin America are women. ([WEDO, 2016](#)).

Indigenous communities are also disproportionately affected by climate change despite their little contribution to it. These communities play an essential role in ecosystem conservation and possess valuable knowledge on climate resilience yet have not been fully engaged in the climate change discussions ([UNODC, 2008](#)). A human rights perspective is therefore essential when looking to achieve equality outcomes

in climate adaptation programming along with guaranteeing livelihoods and providing access to information ([ECLAC, 2019](#)). Climate change must be addressed while also working on reducing already existing vulnerabilities.

Climate change exacerbates inequalities and threatens the human rights of people living in vulnerable conditions. Climate justice thus needs to be at the core of climate action so that those who need it most have their resilience strengthened. For CARE, Climate Justice is about a future in which the poorest and most marginalized people have significantly improved their wellbeing and can enjoy their human rights due to increased resilience to climate change, increased equality and a global temperature rise that is limited to 1.5°C ([CARE 2030 Strategy](#)).

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Climate Justice in CARE

CARE Climate Justice Strategy 2030

CARE works towards climate justice in its [2030 Strategy](#) through three interconnected pathways of change: 1) increased capacities and assets for people of all genders, 2) improved enabling environment through policies and actions by powerholders in the Global North and the Global South, and 3) strengthened collective voice and action of Civil Society, including Social Movements. The pathways are shown in the figure below.

CARE's Theory of Change



CARE Climate Justice in Latin America and the Caribbean

CARE in Latin America and the Caribbean (CARE LAC) has “Humanitarian assistance and Building Resilience” as one of the five priority areas of interventions in the CARE LAC 2030 strategic framework. CARE LAC envisions that by 2030 populations affected by crisis, human mobility, and climate change, particularly women and girls, have access to resources to prepare, respond and adapt to climate change so they have increased livelihood and food security. To do this, CARE LAC involves diverse stakeholders that promote changes in policies and practices towards equality, inclusion, and no discrimination, to strengthen inclusive leadership.

Who are we?

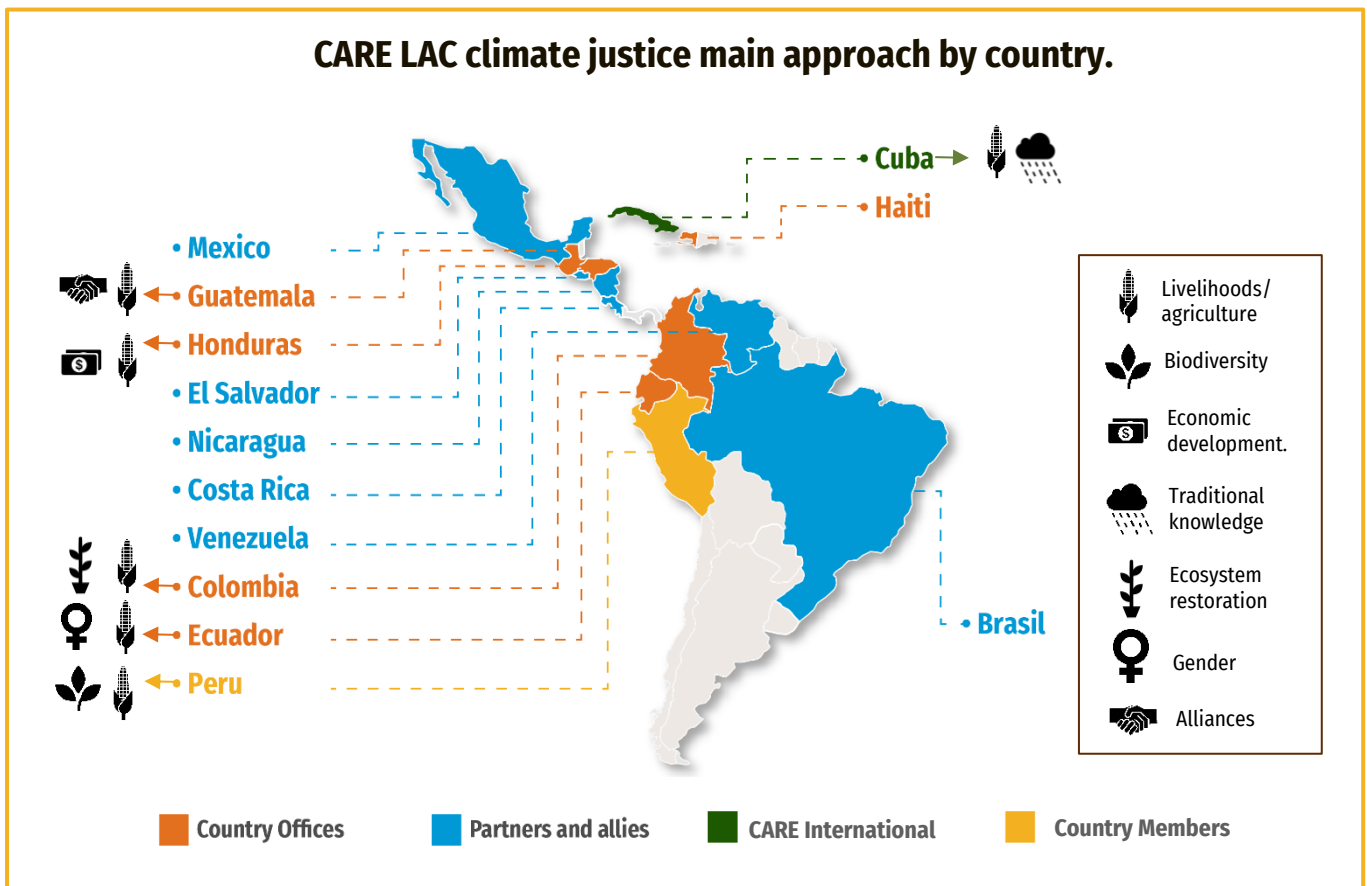
An overview of CARE's mission.

CARE is a leading humanitarian organization founded in 1945 that works in 111 countries around the world. This includes Latin America and the Caribbean with Country Offices located in Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Peru as a CARE Member Partner. CARE aims to fight poverty and social injustice with a focus on women and girls.

We envision a world of hope, inclusion, and social justice where poverty has been overcome and all people live in dignity and security. We work with funding partners, project partners at local or national level, advocacy allies, research and technical institutions and suppliers. CARE acts locally but also influences regional and global agendas. CARE has six programme areas where Climate Justice is one of them. Our climate justice goal is that by 2030, 25 million poor and marginalized people, particularly women and girls, have strengthened their resilience and adaptive capacities to the effects of the climate emergency.

According to the theory of change 2021-2030, CARE LAC prioritizes women and youth who are in vulnerable conditions. These conditions include people with economic fragility contexts, people who are exposed to climate-related phenomena, rural, indigenous, or sexually diverse groups. The four CARE LAC climate justice sectors are 1) resilience capacities and disaster risk reduction, 2) voice and leadership, 3) adaptive capacities, and 4) gender justice as a cross-cutting topic. CARE LAC seeks to achieve their climate justice vision through strengthening knowledge and sharing resilience capacities, creating multi-stakeholder dialogues, and brokering a global, regional, and local network.

In addition to the regional strategy, CARE LAC countries have their own climate justice approach. The map presented below provides an overview of CARE work in the LAC region. It shows the Country Offices, Partners and allies, CARE International (CI) and Country Member Partners (CMP). Furthermore, it presents the climate justice main approach of each of the countries.



CARE Value Proposition of Latin America and the Caribbean

We Link Climate Justice and Gender Justice: Gender Transformative Adaptation.

Gender inequality is a root cause of poverty. In 2019, for every 100 men experiencing poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean, there were 112.7 women in the same situation ([Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2019](#)). Poverty and gender inequality may be exacerbated by climate change. Women and girls are made vulnerable by climate change due to gender gaps such as restricting access to resources, participation in decision-making or limiting options to act in the face of risks and uncertainties ([CARE, 2020](#)).



Rural Women Facing Climate Change by CARE Ecuador

Ecuador is projected to be affected by climate change with a 1.5°C temperature increase by, for instance, having a 300% increase in the population affected by floods (IPCC, 2022). This [project](#) (2021-2024) is being implemented in the provinces of Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, and Bolívar in Ecuador. It addresses the important role of women in smallholder farming to supply food markets in Ecuador's urban areas. The project is capacitating women farmers, following a training of trainers' approach through schools of agroecology designed in cooperation with academic institutions. This has resulted in women gaining knowledge on climate-resilient agricultural practices, improving their productivity, as well as their access to markets by participating in local trade fairs. The project is also supporting the collective voice of rural women to call for more sustainable and inclusive public policy at the local level. Women groups have been supported to develop and present "Women's Climate Change Agendas", as a result of participatory work. This work aims at strengthening women's participation in policy and advocacy in their territory. The agenda is aligned with national and international public policy instruments on climate change and gender and is providing concrete recommendations for a better implementation of these instruments at the local level. The project's main donor is L'Oréal Foundation, additionally

CARE Ecuador has built partnerships with local government, academic institutions, and women's organizations.

Promotion Of Rural Economic Development of Women and Youth in The Lempa Region (PROLEMPA) by CARE Honduras

Honduras is projected to be affected by climate change by having drier conditions with more than 10% of precipitation decrease in a high-emissions scenario by the end of the century (ECLAC, 2020). This [project](#) (2017-2023) was implemented in the Lempa Region in Honduras. It aimed to promote the economic development of rural women in a climate change setting. The project resulted in the creation of 25 women's networks. Noteworthy is the Regional Network of Lenca Indigenous Women conformed by almost 11,000 women. This is the first network of its kind in the region, and women are now making demands to decision-makers on climate change adaptation and mitigation actions. The project also partnered with the Local Agricultural Research Committees (CIALs, for its acronym in Spanish). These are community research and innovation centres to adapt technologies to local agriculture. This has had a positive impact on reducing women's time spent working on household tasks, allowing them to engage in other activities. CARE Honduras has built partnerships with women's organizations and networks, CIAT, FAO, municipal governments, academia, and local NGOs with a clear focus on women.

We Build Strong Partnerships Towards Climate Resilience and Food Security.

CARE has built strong partnerships throughout its projects in the LAC region to enhance climate resilience work towards food security. These partnerships also allow us to influence local agendas with public actors, maximize the impacts of our programs, support and reinforce existing capacities.

CARE's Work on Climate Advocacy



CARE promotes inclusive, just and gender-transformative policies and actions for climate change as a pathway of change. This includes holding the government from the Global North accountable for developing climate-relevant policies; and providing financial support to the Global South for climate change adaptation. The latter is relevant since less than 20% of available climate finance goes to climate change adaptation (ECLAC, 2022). The pathway of change also includes the government, local institutions, and communities from the Global South to influence the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Regarding the LAC region, most countries have established adaptation commitments in their NDCs through sectoral adaptation plans (ECLAC, 2022). CARE has been involved in advocacy efforts by engaging in the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The LAC region has been active at some of the COP events such as the COP20, COP25 and the COP28.



During the COP20 that took place in Lima, Peru (2014) CARE Peru and CARE Guatemala were part of the delegation on adaptation. CARE demanded to strengthen adaptation measures and reduce the risk of disasters, to strengthen food security and the right to food of poor and vulnerable people. CARE also demanded for gender equality in climate action. During this COP20, CARE sought partnership with organizations such as the Green Climate Fund and CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CAAFS) that led to planning, engagement, and funding discussions.

During the COP25 in Madrid, Spain (2019) CARE Peru was active. CARE demanded developed countries, to significantly increase finance for gender-just climate resilience measures including committing at least 50% of international climate finance towards principal purpose adaptation initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of vulnerable people and countries. CARE also demanded developed countries to commit to at least 85% of their adaptation finance towards projects supporting gender equality outcomes.

In 2023, at the COP28 that took place in Dubai, UAE, CARE demanded for gender just adaptation. This included new finance pledges for adaptation-specific funds focusing on women-led and gender-transformative initiatives. This also included to accelerate the integration of adaptation into local, national, and regional planning, including the development and implementation of participatory, inclusive and gender-transformative National Adaptation Plans. CARE Peru participated in COP28 through side events as part of the adaptation committee. The Conference of the Parties is an important opportunity to keep developing strategic partnerships through side events, seminars given by CARE and informal networking.

Mi Cuenca / My Watershed Project — Multicountry (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua)

The project [Mi Cuenca](#) (2008-2012) is a good example of CARE's partnership work. It aimed to improve the adaptive capacity of communities to water-related impacts as well as to improve water use and access for productive purposes. The project was part of the Global Water Initiative (GWI). The GWI operated as a consortium including Catholic Relief Services (CRS), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and local NGOs. Diverse stakeholders worked together on the project to exchange capacities for ecosystem conservation actions and strengthen the local governance. CARE Guatemala collaborated with municipal

water and sanitation institutes with municipal forestry offices or environmental management units. This advocacy work led to the guaranteed continuity of the implemented plans and actions beyond the project duration. Key results included improved access to water resources for 3,080 families, technical assistance received by more than 30,000 people and formation of 28 community water commissions.

We Share Knowledge and Capacities with Communities for Climate Adaptation.

CARE's Climate Justice Strategy 2030 has a pathway of change focusing on increasing capacities to anticipate and prepare for risks and usage of skills and resources to absorb shocks and stresses. It also aims to increase people's assets on human potential, social capital, economic resources, physical capital, natural resources, and ecosystem services. This can be achieved through climate-resilient livelihoods, sustainable energy use, financial services, and climate information.



Vil Nou Pi Bel project by CARE Haiti

Haiti was the third most affected country by extreme weather events in the period from 2000 to 2019 ([Global Climate Risk Index, 2021](#)). This [project](#) (2018-2022) was implemented in the village of Jeremie. It addressed the vulnerability that Haiti faces to natural disasters which is exacerbated by poverty. The project aimed to increase the resilience of the community to climate-related shocks and stresses. This was done through participatory and inclusive DRR activities, rehabilitation of public spaces, access to basic services and income-generating activities. This resulted in having a more participatory and inclusive local governance, improvement of awareness and advocacy on resilience. CARE Haiti engaged and partnered with diverse stakeholders such as Groupe URD, local institutions, CBM, local government, and ministers. It also aimed to strengthen local organizations' capacities.

Resilient Watershed Project by CARE Cuba

Cuba is projected to have 6% precipitation decrease in a high-emissions climate change scenario by the end of the century ([ECLAC, 2020](#)). This [project](#) (2021-2023) is being implemented in Cuyaguatete, Cuba. It addresses Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Early Warning Systems related to water and climate change. CARE Cuba has modified [CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment \(CVCA\)](#) to include people with disabilities, chronic illnesses, and Black people by also considering other tools on climate vulnerability and adaptive capacity. The project has a strong focus on decoloniality for climate change through contextualized adaptation. This means prioritising and transmitting indigenous and traditional knowledge by identifying the people who possess the knowledge to pass it on. For instance, the *varaentierra* technique, traditional indigenous construction made of guano and local material that serves as a safe room. CARE Cuba has built partnerships with

Humanity Inclusion, Pinar del Río Government as a local partner through the DRR Management Centre, Ministry of Science and Technology, NGOs, and technicians.

She Feeds the World by CARE Colombia

Colombia is projected to be affected by climate change through, for instance, drier conditions such as heatwaves (IPCC, 2022). This [project](#) (ongoing) is being implemented in the municipalities of Ipiales, Pупiales, Igualmatán and Pasto, Colombia. It addressed food security and nutrition in a climate change context with a cross-cutting gender approach. It is based on potato

production where women have a crucial role. The project has implemented field and business schools for farmers having 4000 women and men trained in agricultural production techniques. It also collaborated with the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA) to certify smallholder farmers good agricultural and environmentally friendly practices. The project has reached people through community voice calls, leaders, and community radio. CARE Colombia has engaged with student, community mediators, PepsiCo Foundation, ICA and has international cooperation partners such as UN Women, FAO, UNDP, and Save the Children. The project also seeks public policy advocacy.

We Localize Climate Action.

CARE has a pathway of change that looks to shift power through localized work. Diverse stakeholders such as communities, civil society organizations, and women-led organizations are involved. CARE acts as an amplifier to support communities and organizations to increase their transformative capacities and their influence.



El Agua Nos Une (EANU) / Water Unites Us by CARE Peru

Peru is projected to be affected by extreme precipitation events where the population affected by floods is projected to increase by 400% in a 1.5°C temperature increase (IPCC, 2022). The [project](#) (2022-2026) is implemented in the complex area of the Rimac River Basin, one of the main sources of water for the city of Lima, where almost a third of the Peruvian population resides. In the context of climate change, water resources availability goes through patterns from abundant rain/floods to scarcity/droughts, directly affecting the population settled throughout the basin. The project seeks to promote the conservation and

restoration of ecosystems, prioritizing those that provide water resource provision services. The participation of women is crucial and must be recognized, since they provide ancestral knowledge regarding conservations methods, differentiated needs, and ways to implement various conservation and restoration techniques. Thus, the project seeks to promote women's leadership in water management and usage (population, agricultural and industrial production) and in decision-making spaces. The project will work with the communities of the upper and middle zone of the Rimac basin and implement ecosystem-based adaptation measures such as water sowing and harvesting based on their traditional knowledge. Likewise,

one of the project's main lines of actions is the promotion of ventures that optimize water use throughout the productive processes, emphasizing those led by women, to materialize economic inclusion and sustainability.

Regional Project for Adaptation to the Impact of Rapid Glacier Retreat in the Tropical Andes (PRAA) – Multicountry.

This [project](#) (2008-2012) was implemented in the sub-basin of the Antisana glacier, basin of the Napo river and micro-basin of Papallacta in Ecuador and in the sub-basin of the Shullcas River in Peru. It addresses the melting of glaciers which increases the risk of vulnerable communities' exposure to landslides, mudslides, and lake outbursts. The project aimed to strengthen the resilience of local ecosystems and economies to the impact caused by rapid glacier retreat. It used [CARE's CVCA](#) methodology with local communities and municipal leaders to identify context-specific adaptation measures to then develop the Community's Management and Action Plan. The project also included understanding the communities' perceptions about changes in the climate and their impacts on livelihoods. The project had numerous partners such as the Ministries of Environment, the Global Environment Facility, universities, research institutes, United Nations Habitat, and meteorological services.

Promoting Sustainable and Resilient Territories in Landscapes of Guatemala's Central Volcanic Chain by CARE Guatemala

Guatemala is already being affected by hydrometeorological events and is among the countries with the most displacements caused by these events ([IPCC, 2022](#)). This [project](#) (2021-2023) is being implemented in seven municipalities in the Quetzaltenango region and one in the Sololá region, Guatemala. It addresses ecosystem-based adaptation and diversification of agriculture. The project has resulted in the establishment of 1,720 hectares of passive biological connectivity between agricultural and forestry production systems and protected areas. It has also demonstrated the importance of [CARE's CVCA](#) tool in helping communities to assess their climate risks and propose local climate change adaptation plans. This contributes to climate resilience by building capacity and ownership of affected communities to plan, seek resources and take action. CARE Guatemala partnered with the municipality including the technical office, the environmental management unit, community leaders and universities for evaluations. This has helped to strengthen municipal governance to ensure the continuity of the activities beyond the project.

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