PHILIPPINES

Country Snapshot
Population: 105 million (women: 49.8%)
Life expectancy at birth: 69.6 years
Adult (15+) literacy rate: male: 96% -- female: 97%
GDP per capita: USS8,400
Population below poverty line: 21.6%
Ratio of children & youth (0-24 years): 52%
Ratio of urban population: 47%
Labor force – by occupation:
- 42.78 million – agriculture: 25%, industry: 18%, services: 56%

Program Overview
CARE supports local communities in the Philippines in recovering and developing sustainable livelihoods. This includes supporting women’s economic empowerment through entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and providing cash-based support. CARE places a particular focus on women and girls, because when they are equipped with the proper resources, they have the power to help lift entire families and communities much faster out of poverty. CARE’s impact in the Philippines is significant: between mid-2018 and mid-2019, CARE has supported in recovering and enhancing livelihood options as well as improved food security and resilience to climate change for some 54,780 participants, 52% of whom were women and girls.

CARE in the Philippines
CARE has been providing development assistance and emergency relief in the Philippines since 1949.

CARE’s key program areas include:
- **Livelihood recovery** – promoting women’s economic empowerment, providing cash-based assistance and furthering enterprise development;
- **Integrated risk management** – combining Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Ecosystem Management and Restoration (EMR) in rural and urban areas;
- **Emergency preparedness and response** – meeting immediate needs in food, shelter, cash, protection, water, sanitation and hygiene and non-food items;
- **Health** – providing sexual, reproductive and maternal health services and addressing non-communicable diseases in emergencies;
- **Prevention and response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** – ensuring psychosocial therapy, referral pathways and GBV education.

Why focus on women and girls?
Women and girls bear the brunt of poverty. They have limited access to resources, information, livelihood opportunities and education. They are often denied of basic rights and services and the possibility to have a say in decisions that affect their lives. Yet, they are the key to overcoming poverty. When you empower a girl or a woman and equip her with the right resources, she becomes a catalyst. Women and girls have the potential to help lift entire families and communities much faster out of poverty. When women earn an income, they invest it in their children and families, creating benefits for generations to come. CARE invests in women and girls to tackle the root causes of rural and urban poverty and gender inequality.
Building on CARE’s global approach

WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

CARE’s livelihood recovery and development work in the Philippines includes interventions focusing on Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) which is one of CARE’s four global priority areas of work. CARE defines WEE as the process of increasing women’s access to and control over economic resources for the benefit of themselves, their families and their communities. This enables women to have the means to recover from shocks and rebuild and develop their livelihoods in a sustainable manner. CARE focuses on four inter-related pathways globally to achieving WEE based on decades of experience and where we can have the greatest impact: Financial Inclusion, Women in Value Chains, Entrepreneurship and Dignified Work (in the Philippines, CARE does not program in Dignified Work). In all pathways, CARE uses a gender-transformative approach, addressing both the symptoms and structural causes of gender inequality to achieve lasting change in the power and choices women have, beyond temporary improvements in economic opportunities.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY AND RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CARE’s livelihood recovery and development work is closely linked with our global strategy She Feeds the World. The strategy builds on CARE’s more than 70 years of experience in promoting an integrative approach to food and nutrition security and resilience to climate change. CARE promotes access to markets and critical inputs like water, land, seeds and finance and places an explicit focus on nutrition, safety nets and social protection in times of crisis, with WEE being at the heart of everything we do. CARE strengthens women’s skills and confidence in sustainable agriculture practices, financial inclusion, market engagement, gender equality, and food and nutrition security. CARE works to build SuPER food systems that are Sustainable, Productive (and profitable and nutrition-sensitive), Equitable and Resilient.

All CARE programs are based on in-depth gender and social norms analysis to identify and address underlying factors that perpetuate discrimination and lack of equality and equity in accessing economic and social resources. CARE engages with men and boys to challenge negative gender norms that see men as the sole breadwinner and natural decision-maker. CARE involves girls and boys, women and men in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and collects and incorporates community feedback into programming. This enhances the relevance, quality, impact and accountability of CARE’s work and empowers participants through their increased ownership of the social and economic change process.

CLIMATE-RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS

CARE supports climate-resilient livelihood development and recovery both globally and in the Philippines. CARE, for instance, helps women and men learn new climate-smart farming techniques and protect themselves from recurring disasters. We also help secure people’s rights and access to valuable resources such as land. CARE’s inclusive governance work strengthens women’s voice and agency to have a stronger influence in decisions which affect their lives concerning their livelihoods, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change Adaptation and Ecosystem Management and Restoration. CARE advocates for the rights of the poorest and most vulnerable communities, in particular women and girls to be heard during the planning of national and global responses to climate change.

CARE’S IMPACT IN THE PHILIPPINES – SELECTED EXAMPLES

LIVELIHOOD RECOVERY AFTER TYPHOON HAIYAN

Since Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) has hit the Philippines in November 2013, CARE has been supporting people in some areas which have been severely affected by its devastating impact.

CARE’s innovative project, ASENSO SA GOOD AGRICULTURE PACKAGE (aGAP) furthers livelihood recovery and development by supporting farmers’ access to inputs, equipment, training and technologies, financial services and linkages to market through women roving agents.

In partnership with local organizations, CARE has established the COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE FACILITY (CEF) which has provided financial and training support to community-based associations in 2015-2016. The CEF became the starting point of livelihood projects managed by community-based groups. Funding and training were provided to various women’s groups, farmers and fisher folk associations to establish and manage community enterprises linked with existing value chains and other community enterprises. Community associations and groups have set up a total of 285 community enterprises, e.g. for cassava production, seaweed processing and vegetable farming.

CARE also implemented the WOMEN ENTERPRISE FUND program which has empowered over 900 women micro-entrepreneurs through financial and training assistance.

Funded by Global Affairs Canada, CARE’s TYPHOON HAIYAN RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE furthe red economic reconstruction and well-being in remote, rural areas of Leyte, Antique and Iloilo provinces from 2015 to 2019.
"We’ve learned so much from the technical assistance (...) that, in fact, can help increase our yield. I have a stable livelihood now. Through this I was able to support my son’s education.”

[Imelda Bacor (64), a farmer woman in Lemery (Iloilo)]

Further stories about CARE’s impact are available here.

The project used a ‘value chain development’ approach, a commodity industry focus and entrepreneurship capacity-building package. Over four years, it has directly benefitted nearly 32,600 people (57% of whom were women and girls, and indirectly benefitted an additional more than 153,200 people across 474 communities (barangays).

As part of the project, CARE addressed root causes that prevented the equal economic empowerment of women and men, and their equal and effective access to knowledge, skills, products and services. CARE particularly strengthened women entrepreneurs and group-owned and -managed enterprises. The ‘value chain development’ approach provided a deeper understanding of market dynamics, demand, supply and inter-firm relationships. This helped to promote ethical business practices, extract more value and facilitate the development of more equitable relationships throughout the value chain.

CARE worked with community-based associations, farmers and entrepreneurs engaged in five focus commodity value chains: abaca in Antique; cassava and other root crops in Leyte; and herbs, vegetables, and seaweeds in Iloilo. These five commodities had an identified market demand and involved the largest number of vulnerable households. CARE involved target associations and individuals in the different phases of the value chain and provided them with tools and equipment, technical assistance and capacity-building on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, value formation, good agricultural practices, disaster preparedness, climate change mitigation and adaptation, gender and development, value chain analysis and other industry-focused subjects. CARE strengthened local implementing partners’ technical capacity in enterprise development, monitoring and evaluation, value chain approach, gender, DRR and CCA.

CARE collaborated with the government, civil society groups, academia and the private sector including financial and business development service providers to facilitate an enabling environment for enterprise development. Organizing farmers into community associations and registering them with the Department of Labor and Employment facilitated increased access to government assistance such as equipment, seeds, financial and technical support and helped farmers make business with industrial buyers.

CARE addressed gender disparities such as the devaluing of women’s economic roles and the traditional gendered division of labor. CARE advocated for improved policies on gender integration, disaster risk reduction, environmental management, commodity inclusion and sustainability. In the province of Antique, CARE and the Antique Development Foundation successfully influenced the Provincial Government to include abaca in the Provincial Commodity Plan providing more support to abaca farmers. To support the sustainability of the established community enterprises, CARE facilitated the conclusion of 50 formal agreements between supported collectives and market institutions.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION: LENDWITHCARE

An initiative of CARE International UK, Lendwithcare (LWC) is a peer-to-peer micro-lending website which allows individual supporters to lend as little as US$20 to micro-entrepreneurs who have little or no access to financial services. In addition to running the platform, CARE supports LWC micro-finance partners in strengthening their capacities and social performance management and poverty alleviation mission.

In the Philippines, CARE partners with Lamac Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LMPC) providing loans and saving services to members predominantly engaged in farming, fishing and small retail stores (sari-sari) in Cebu island, most of them women and based in rural areas. Since the beginning of the partnership in 2014 until end-August 2019, LMPC has loaned to nearly 1,330 borrowers (75% of whom were women) via LWC with a total value of approx. US$1.4 million and with an average loan size of US$1,049. Lendwithcare has also directly supported LMPC’s cluster farming initiative that provides a holistic package of support to rural farmers and technical assistance through employing 13 full-time agri-technicians.
WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

CARE’s initiative ‘Skillpower’ invests in and develops women’s enterprises in 12 countries, including in the Philippines as part of CARE’s Women Enterprise Fund program. Funded by the H&M Foundation, the program strengthens women’s organizations and businesses and provides them with access to skills training and financing. CARE works to enhance women’s control over time and resources, overcome social and cultural barriers and stimulate favorable policy conditions. CARE works with local stakeholders to create a favorable environment and organize national campaigns where role models engage in activities to inspire other women entrepreneurs.

CASH FOR LIVELIHOOD RECOVERY

In emergencies, CARE provides communities with cash-based support to recover their livelihoods as per their needs. This can include for instance conditional or unconditional, restricted or unrestricted, single- or multi-purpose cash grants and cash for work. CARE has provided cash support for instance to meet the immediate needs of nearly 360,000 internally displaced people in the Marawi siege in 2017. CARE has provided cash support following Typhoon Mangkhut (Ompong) affecting over two million people in Cagayan, Kalinga and Benguet provinces. CARE and partners have strong expertise in livelihoods recovery, food security, enterprise management and business development to drive and scale up cash-based support.

PARTNERSHIPS AND RESEARCH

CARE transforms agriculture and market systems beyond the communities where we work via alliances, partnerships, inclusive policies, advocacy, research and innovation. CARE multiplies impact by working with women and girls in rural and marginalized communities, businesses, women’s organizations, national and international NGOs, government ministries and departments, the academia and public and private donors. CARE’s approach is to work with instead of through partners, including sharing resources, staff and knowledge, which further the localization of humanitarian assistance and development of local capacities for sustained impact.

CARE leverages learning and innovation from extensive research, particularly on resilience, gender and humanitarian action. CARE has commissioned research, for instance, on gender-related aspects, risks and opportunities of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) and on how to effectively foster positive and sustainable gender roles and relations through gender-sensitive CVA programming. CARE is also conducting a study on Climate Change Adaptation Funding as well as on self-recovery approaches of communities in areas affected by Typhoon Haiyan in collaboration with World Habitat.

IN-HOUSE EXPERTISE AND SCALE-UP CAPACITY

CARE’s global livelihood recovery and development programming draws upon dedicated technical specialists across the confederation who support Country Offices in designing and implementing cutting-edge programming, generating evidence of impact, scaling up initiatives and responding to new funding opportunities.

Over the past seven decades, CARE’s team in the Philippines has built a significant capacity in delivering sizeable contracts up to US$45 million as lead or sub agency in large and small consortia for a range of institutional and private sector donors including, among others, the European Union, Global Affairs Canada, bilateral government funds from the Netherlands, Germany, France, the UK and the US as well as Abbott, Diageo, and International Hotel. CARE has solid relationships with government agencies engaged in livelihoods recovery such as the Department of Agriculture, of Trade and Industry, of Labor and Employment and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Building on the above, CARE is ready to scale up its work with additional generous donor support to help Philippine communities, in particular women and girls recover and develop productive and sustainable livelihoods.