



Defending dignity.  
Fighting poverty.

# Afghanistan

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## Country Snapshot

<b>Population:</b>	27 million
<b>Life expectancy at birth:</b>	44 years
<b>Adult literacy rate:</b>	28%
<b>Access to improved water source:</b>	22%
<b>GNI per capita (GDP plus external aid):</b>	US\$250
<b>Infant mortality rate:</b>	165 per 1,000 live births
<b>Maternal mortality rate:</b>	1,800 per 100,000 live births

Source: UNICEF State of the World's Children Report 2009

**Program Overview** CARE first established its mission in Afghanistan in 1961, but suspended activities after the Russian invasion of 1979. Resuming activities in 1989 from a new base in Peshawar, Pakistan, CARE delivered assistance to Afghanistan from across the border until 2002 when it shifted its main office back to Kabul. CARE Afghanistan's programs centre around four main areas: education, women's social and economic empowerment, rural development, and emergency response. Each program strives to strengthen self-reliance while promoting basic human rights, good governance, and social, economic and gender equality. In addition to its community-based work, CARE Afghanistan advocates with and on behalf of vulnerable and marginalized Afghans for national and international policies that support and protect their interests and maximize their chances to break out of the cycle of poverty. At the beginning of 2010, CARE Afghanistan was serving more than 1,500,000 people.

### Education

CARE began its education activities in 1994 with a pilot project in Khost. Today, CARE is recognized in Afghanistan as a leader in community-based education, particularly for girls. From mobilizing communities and training teachers, to building schools, establishing libraries, and protecting schools and students from attacks, CARE covers eight provinces directly and seven through partners. CARE is the lead agency of a consortium of four non governmental organizations implementing the Partnership Advancing Community-based Education in Afghanistan (PACE-A), a five-year project aiming to reach 90,000 Afghan children, youth and adults in 1,000 remote communities. CARE also works in partnership with the Ministry of Education to develop solid community-based education curriculum and teaching standards.

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David Rochkind/CARE



David Rochkind/CARE



Lynn Heinisch/CARE

### Social and Economic Empowerment of Women

CARE's support to vulnerable women in Afghanistan has evolved considerably over the years. The Humanitarian Assistance for Women of Afghanistan (HAWA) Program started in 1994 with the provision of food packages to war widows during the winter. At its peak between 1996 and 1997, HAWA was assisting up to 13,000 widows with food rations. Today, approximately 1,800 widows and their families (9,000 people) receive food assistance, while many others have graduated into vocational training, livestock rearing, and micro-finance programs.

CARE's Vocational Training for Afghan Women Program (VTAWP) is one of the first of its kind in Afghanistan. VTAWP grounds its work in culturally-sensitive market research analysis to determine what niches women would be able to fill in the Afghan economy; it delivers training in those areas, and provides employment linkages or business start-up support upon graduation.

CARE also supports maternal and newborn health, and is building a coalition of solidarity groups amongst vulnerable Afghan women to raise awareness about their rights and strengthen their capacity to advocate for them.

### Rural Development

CARE is a facilitating partner of the National Solidarity Program, a country-wide initiative which aims to strengthen good governance at the local level and link it to higher levels of government.

Through the establishment and training of Community Development Councils and the provision of local grants, CARE has successfully stimulated community-driven development in 1,670 communities over the past seven years. CARE provides training in financial management, procurement, technical skills and accountability, and has assisted communities in implementing nearly 3,000 sub-projects such as the construction of roads, irrigation systems and schools.

CARE also stimulates agricultural rehabilitation by offering vouchers for tools, seeds and fertilizers to struggling farmers, alongside the provision of technical support.

### Emergency Response & Rehabilitation

CARE Afghanistan's Emergency Response and Rehabilitation Program responds to natural and man-made disasters to alleviate suffering, while providing long-term support to help affected communities recover and rebuild. CARE also works to reduce the impact of future disasters through disaster risk reduction activities and emergency preparedness planning.

A second major focus of CARE's rehabilitation work is the implementation of integrated shelter projects for refugees returning from Pakistan and Iran. In 2009, CARE had large-scale reintegration programs in both Kabul and new settlements outside of the city, focusing on safe housing, basic services and livelihood opportunities, and community governance structures.

Since 2009, CARE has been implementing a major food security program in Kabul city, providing work opportunities for over 50,000 food-insecure households. The activities undertaken through the project serve the additional benefit of providing essential environmental services for the city, such as solid waste removal from city streets, road gravelling, ditch cleaning, and park rehabilitation.

### Major Donors

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