© Sankalpa Acharya/CARE
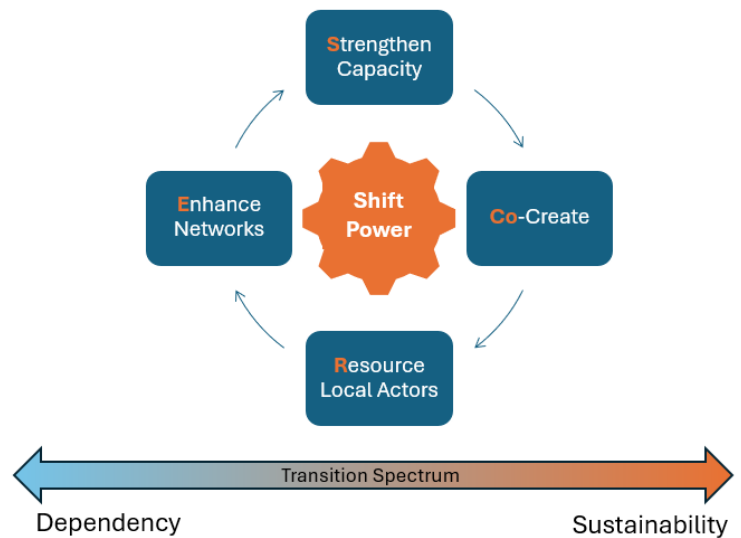


# Localization at CARE

CARE seeks to contribute to the sustainable transition of leadership and ownership of development and humanitarian assistance to a range of public, private, and civil society partners. CARE's Localization efforts support diverse local actors in over 100 countries to define priorities, design solutions, drive implementation, and sustain efforts tailored to their unique development and/or humanitarian context. CARE does this while aiming to maximize impact across six priorities – Gender Equality, Humanitarian Response, Food Security, Water and Nutrition, Economic Justice for Women, Right to Health, and Climate Justice.

In line with CARE's **SCoRE Framework for Localization**, CARE fosters conditions and approaches that **shift power** to local actors by:



The SCoRE Framework for Localization

**S**trengthening Capacity: Enhancing the systems and capacity of local partners to implement and sustain programs and the change they enable, while supporting local leaders, amplifying marginalized voices, facilitating capacity sharing, and ensuring effective, inclusive, and accountable governance with and for their communities;

**Co**-creating: Bringing together the perspectives, needs, local knowledge and thought leadership of local partners, communities, impact populations, and other stakeholders to ensure that development and humanitarian responses are fit for the local context, demand-driven, and tailored to the unique needs of diverse communities, engaging them throughout the project cycle we support;

**Resourcing Local Actors:** Channelling resources and strengthening systems to sustain and scale community level work, supporting local partners to absorb, grow, diversify, leverage, and manage their resource base; supporting the transition of key partners to direct donor funding and;

**Enhancing Networks:** Developing, strengthening and amplifying local networks that enable coordination, inclusive programming, capacity sharing, and collective action.

**In FY 2024 alone, CARE:**

- Worked with over 1,274 local partners
- Carried out 47% of its activities with and through local partners, with 32% of activities including at least one partner that was a local women's rights and/or women-led organization
- Channeled 22.6% of program funds through local partners ($198 million).

### Key Tools and Methodologies

CARE combines industry-leading tools with its own proprietary methodologies to support each pillar of the SCoRE Framework. Selected tools we use include:

**Participatory Capacity Assessment (PCA)**- A process based on USAID-supported **Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) tools**, focusing on domains of leadership, governance, strategic management, financial management, service delivery, advocacy and sustainability. (*Strengthen Capacity*)

**Guide to Participatory Outcomes Focused Monitoring**- A guide used by CARE to help local partners grow their ability to design and implement qualitative monitoring using Most Significant Change (MSC), Outcome Harvesting (OH), or Outcome Mapping (OM), which are participatory, outcome-focused qualitative methods. (*Strengthen Capacity*)

**Social Analysis and Action (SAA)**- A facilitated reflective process, adapted for use across sectors to bring community members together to solve challenges, facilitate social and behavior change, and improve governance and accountability, while building shared responsibility and leveraging local resources to co-design development solutions. (*Co-create*)

**CARE Partner Funding Agreement and Due Diligence Toolkit**- An Internal toolkit with due diligence tools and program eligibility assessments that helps right-size local partnerships based on the capacity of the partner. (*Resource Local Actors*)

**Advocacy Influencing Impact Reporting (AIIR) Tool**- A CARE tool that local networks can use to document and measure the impact of their advocacy efforts. (*Enhance Networks*)

## Localization in Practice

### Transferring Leadership to Local Partners

In Cameroon, CARE applied **a mentorship model under a USAID transition award** to transfer leadership of USAID's Continuum of Prevention, Care and Treatment of HIV/AIDS with Most At-risk Populations (CHAMP) Activity to a

strong local prime partner, while continuing support to local CBOs for greater sustainability. The phased transition process aimed to prepare a local prime for management, financial oversight, and reporting responsibilities, based on selection among national NGO applicants. Due Diligence, Institutional Development and Organization Strengthening (IDOS), and NUPAS Pre-Award Survey assessments were conducted with each partner, and tailored organizational capacity strengthening plans were co-designed and then co-managed. Capacity support included virtual and onsite training, joint implementation, quality assurance, and coaching throughout the phased handover. Working closely with USAID, CARE supported the prime through a successful NUPAS plus remediation plan. **By 2022, CARE had successfully transitioned 100% of project leadership and funding**.

### Resourcing Local Actors in Humanitarian Settings

CARE has been supporting USAID in the Philippines through the [**Humanitarian Partnership Platform**](link) (HPP) initiated in 2015, together with a network of local NGOs, cooperatives, private companies, faith-based groups, and women's organizations from across the country. Humanitarian responses present significant localization challenges, with a remarkably low % of humanitarian response funding reaching local partners (1.2% in 2022) which is consequently a barrier to rapid response. This platform sought to address this and other challenges, resulting in ground-breaking improvements in resource transfer, with **76% of humanitarian funding reaching local partners, enabling better coverage of the response.**

### Co-creation Centering Youth Voices

CARE now supports USAID's [**Bangladesh Integrated Youth Activity**](link) (USAID Bijoyee) – a five-year, $35M initiative grounded in *Positive Youth Development* (PYD) that aims to contribute to more effective, inclusive, locally-led development by and with Bangladeshi youth by enhancing the capacity of local youth-led organizations while preparing them to directly receive funds. Rooted in power shifting and power sharing, Bijoyee aims to model localization, youth leadership, empowerment, and inclusion in its management structure, with CARE initially leading, while strengthening capacity of youth-led organization partners to take over the consortium leadership in the 3rd year. **Bijoyee prioritizes inclusive youth participation in design, staffing, management, monitoring, and research, fostering internal and external transformation in power relationships and gender and social norms**.

---

### Measuring Results

CARE's internal global systems track relevant outcomes for our localization and sustainability efforts, and aim to answer questions that reflect power shifting, the nature of the partnership, partner roles in a project, what portion of projects have a learning agenda that was defined and implemented with local partners, and local feedback and accountability mechanisms involving local stakeholders in design and feedback. CARE is currently undertaking efforts to begin measuring and reporting on the following indicators:

- % of CARE's projects ensuring local partners are engaged or leading in each aspect of collaboration with CARE noted above
- % of project funds reaching local partners
- % of projects which have local partners providing technical leadership in one or more areas
- % of projects with locally defined learning agendas

---

For more information on CARE's Localization work, contact Emily Usher Shrair at [Emily.Shrair@care.org](mailto:Emily.Shrair@care.org)