



# CARE Nepal Strategy 2026 - 2030

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# CARE Nepal Strategy 2026 - 2030

## Section 1: Introduction

CARE Nepal is an international humanitarian, non-governmental and non-profit civil society organization. We work with women and young/adolescent girls along with their communities, organizations and movements, to strengthen their agency and enable them to claim rights and access to resources. Through this approach, CARE Nepal seeks to overcome exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability to achieve justice and to save lives.

We are an active part of CARE International and have been working in Nepal since 1978. Placing women and girls at the front and center of transformational change, it has worked alongside communities across the country for more than four and a half decades to save lives, defeat poverty, and achieve social justice. CARE Nepal is committed to supporting women, young/adolescent girls, and marginalized communities not only to withstand shocks, but to lead and sustain transformative change toward a more just, equitable, resilient, and inclusive Nepal.

Over time, its role has evolved from delivering direct services to supporting locally led solutions and system-level changes that address the root causes of poverty, vulnerability and inequality, grounded in local leadership, equitable partnership, accountability, and learning. It recognizes that lasting change requires sustained investment in the systems, institutions, markets, to transform social norms, narratives, and structures that shape people's lives.

Guided by its CARE International's 2026-2030 Strategy and Nepal's changing context, CARE Nepal is evolving its role as a facilitator, convener, advocate and orchestrator for driving locally led solutions to achieve justice and save lives. It supports communities and social movements to exercise agency, builds collective action through networks and alliances, and connects local voices to decision-making spaces at local, national, and global levels, thereby supporting system change that meets the needs of the impact population for larger development or systemic transformation. CARE Nepal combines evidence, innovation, and long-term frontline experience to influence policy, practice, and resource allocation and distribution.

Anchored in CARE Nepal's strong foundations and track record, this CARE Nepal Strategy 2026-2030 is informed and influenced by lessons learnt, knowledge and models developed. This strategy is also informed and influenced by CARE Nepal colleagues and teams as well as by the feedback and recommendations of our partners and networks in Nepal.

This CARE Nepal Strategy 2026-2030 also represents our ambitions and promise that we will hold ourselves accountable to and deliver accountability to women, young and adolescent girls and communities we serve and stakeholders we work with. Additionally, our strategy focuses on contributing to Nepal Government's development agenda (for instance, 16<sup>th</sup> five-year plan) and priorities of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Association of INGO in Nepal (AIN). Considering the contextual realities of evolving Nepal, the strategy aligns with the role that Nepal Government has expected from development partners in Nepal. Finally, our strategy is a live document which will be kept in constant review and will adapt as we learn and as external contexts and landscape change.

## Section 2: Organizational Fundamentals

### CARE Nepal's Vision

A just, equitable and sustainable society, country and world where all people have hope, freedom and resources to live and thrive with dignity and security.

### CARE Nepal's Mission

CARE Nepal works to enable and ensure that people and communities can claim their agency, rights and resources to overcome exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability to achieve justice and to save lives.

### CARE Nepal's Values

**Equality:** We believe in the equal value of every human being and respect and honor each individual for who they are, where they come from and how they show up.

**Diversity:** We respect differences and embrace/include people in all their diversity - race, caste, gender, sexuality, age, ability, personality, and backgrounds – ensuring that no one is discriminated against or left behind.

**Integrity:** We are accountable to the people and partners we serve, sharing our results, stories, and lessons with transparency. We believe in and are committed to living by our values and remain transparent and accountable to people, communities and movements who we work with, for our promises, actions, results and learning.

**Transformation:** We believe in urgent and strategic action, innovation, and the need to change structures and systems that keep and perpetuate injustice, exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability in our society, country and the world.

**Solidarity:** We believe that gravest systemic problems of our society, country and world can only be solved when we connect, stand and pool agenda, resources, and actions together with people, communities and partners.

**Sustainability:** We believe that humans must live in harmony with nature and commit to act responsibly to maintain planetary ecological balance and boundaries not only for now but also for future generations.

**Excellence:** We challenge ourselves to the highest level of learning, adaptation and performance, drawing on the best of the human spirit to create impact

# CARE Nepal’s Core Constituencies

People priority	Area priority
<p><b>Level 1 Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women, Young/adolescent Girls (10-24)</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dalit, Ethnic and Indigenous minority people</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 1 Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madhesh Province</li> <li>• Karnali Province</li> <li>• Lumbini Province</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terai</li> <li>• Western Hills/Mountains</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Engagements</b></p> <p>CARE Nepal engages with other groups, communities, organizations outside the above priorities when necessary to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>deliver/achieve changes that impact the above priority groups</li> <li>deliver humanitarian assistance in response to crisis or disaster</li> </ol>	

Over the course of five years, CARE Nepal aims to contribute to change the lives of approximately 1.6 million women and young/adolescent girls.

## CARE Nepal’s Role

CARE Nepal assumes the following inter-related roles to deliver its vision and mission, guided by its values and to serve the people, communities, partners, networks and movements it works with:

### 1. Connecting Local to Global to local

We understand that the root causes of complex systems (e.g. patriarchy, casteism, neoliberal economics) that we work to transform extends beyond the localities where poor and excluded women and young/adolescent girls live. With the vantage point of CARE Nepal as international organization, it is our role and responsibility to connect our work and people, partners, networks and movements we work with, at all levels from local to provincial to national to regional to global, and vice versa, with systemic spaces, levers and institutions for solidarity, claims, influence and transformational change.

### 2. Mobilizing/Leveraging funds, knowledge and solidarity

CARE Nepal, with the advantage of global to local connections and networks, takes the role of mobilizing (and where necessary demanding) funds - finance, knowledge, policy - practice change, solidarity actions to support the work that impacts the lives of women and girls and communities in Nepal positive and sustainably.

### **3. Advocating for influence and change**

It is CARE Nepal's role and responsibility – not only just an approach - to advocate to influence and change policies, practices and resourcing of governments, corporations or society at large to deliver our vision and mission. CARE Nepal facilitates people, partners, networks and movements to claim seat at the negotiating spaces for their direct engagement as well as engages with policy makers and decision takers directly, in their support.

### **4. Strengthening networks, alliances and coalitions**

CARE Nepal strengthens wider civil society sector and community it belongs to, by joining and strengthening relevant networks, alliances and coalitions at all levels from local and national to regional and global. In addition, more specifically, CARE Nepal takes the role of strengthening networks, alliances, coalitions and movements of people, community and partners it directly relates to and works with, for mobilizing, strengthening and orchestrating their collective agenda, knowledge, resources, solidarity and actions. An integral part of this role is also to support, nurture and promote “women and young/adolescent girls change – leaders” for now and future. Depending upon their needs and demands, CARE Nepal plays the role of convenor, coordinator, co - creator, resource provider, member at different phases and stages of process.

### **5. Capacitating mutually**

CARE Nepal continually learns from women and girls, community, partners and networks as well as from its own team and work. Generating actionable learning and developing them into knowledge, frameworks and models for wider applications as well as experimenting and innovating is CARE Nepal's role. Added to this, CARE Nepal's role is also to aggregate, share and even orchestrate important knowledge widely and openly to build our own capability and capacity as well as of people, community, network and movements we work with.

### **6. Delivering humanitarian assistance and preparedness**

CARE Nepal provides knowledge, goods and service assistance to people, community and organizations facing and responding to disasters for relief, rehabilitation and recovery but are in needs of external resources and assistance. Strengthening disaster preparedness is also an integral part of CARE Nepal's humanitarian role.

## CARE Nepal's Core Approach for Transformational Change

CARE Nepal, based on decades of its experience, learning and innovation, has an effective and unique package of core approaches to bringing about transformational change. CARE Nepal's approach for transformation change (Program Approach) are guided by two overarching principles and thinking:

1. **Feminist Principles**, seek gender equality and gender justice by transforming unequal power relations by challenging patriarchy and all intersecting forms of oppression - such as those based on gender, caste, class, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, age, and geography. They center their lived experiences, leadership, and agency of women, girls, and gender-diverse people; promote equity, dignity, and bodily autonomy; and prioritize inclusion, solidarity, and collective action. These principles guide CARE's choices in programming, partnerships, advocacy, and resource allocation, emphasizing accountability, transparency, and ethical use of power, while valuing care, collaboration, and reflexivity. Feminist principles, in this sense, are both political and practical requiring attention not only to outcomes for women and girls, but also to the processes, power dynamics and relationships through which transformational change is pursued.
2. **Systems Thinking**, at the core of which is the holistic approach of addressing structures and supporting mechanisms of both symptoms and root causes of the systems (e.g., patriarchy, casteism, neo - liberal economic system, anthropocentrism) that cause and perpetuate exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability in people, communities, societies where we work. Our approach for transformational change yields both sustainable change and expands the scale of impact beyond the locality of our direct interventions/engagement.

Following are the approaches that collectively constitutes CARE Nepal's core approach for transformational changes. These approaches are applicable, in one way or other and in some combination, to all our mission related work and programs:

### 1. People - powered and locally led

- CARE Nepal powers people, communities, and their movements to strengthen their agency, space, and action to claim, exercise, and realize their rights and active citizenship. The change must be rooted in local realities, shaped by local leadership, and accountable to local aspirations. While lives are anchored in specific places, power operates across multiple spaces - from households to municipalities, provinces, nations, and beyond.

- CARE Nepal works to support, connect, convene, and enable people and their networks to act and influence across these spaces - without appropriating their voice or breaching their agency. We listen first, learn continuously, and respond to locally defined priorities, offering ideas only where and when invited and always leaving the autonomy to accept or reject with local women and young/adolescent girls. We remain ready to strengthen capacities, resources, networks, and collective innovation - walking alongside.
- We prioritize community leadership, ensuring interventions are designed, owned, and scaled by local actors, with a focus on women, young/adolescent girls, and marginalized communities, and fully integrating development, humanitarian, and environmental considerations.
- We support, nurture and promote women and “young/adolescent girls change leaders” for social justice at the frontlines of transformation.

## **2. Transforming norms and narratives**

- Another important core approach of systemic change and transformation is the emphasis we put in transforming norms and narratives. Norms are perceived informal, often unwritten, rules that define expected, accepted or appropriate behavior in society, while narratives are stories, explanation or belief systems used to interpret events, problems, solutions and responsibility. Norms and narratives are mutually influencing and reinforcing.
- CARE Nepal works to transform norms and narratives fueling harmful customs and practices in the social, economic, environmental and political spheres and promotes positive norms and narratives for overcoming exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability. We achieve this through facilitating dialogues, reflection, demands and accountability by the women and girls, people, communities and their movements amongst themselves and with the other stakeholders concerned.

## **3. Collective action: networks, alliances, coalition and movements**

- CARE Nepal believes that sustainable systemic change will come from the collective consciousness, organizations and actions of women and young/adolescent girls and communities. Thus, it is an important and integral part of our approach for change to build, strengthen and mobilize collective actions in various forms: networks, alliances, coalitions, and movements.
- Primary focus of our collective - action approach are the networks, alliances and movements of women and young/adolescent girls and communities at the claiming, demanding and receiving end of exclusion, exploitation, poverty and

vulnerability. However, we also connect, convene, mobilize the wider ecosystem of supporters and allies (e.g., lawyers, academia, media, funders, other movements) for their support, resources, connections, specialization and solidarity actions to add value, synergy and influence in the process of transformation. CARE Nepal will add value as a system orchestrator.

- CARE Nepal remains the ally and supporter of the social movements of women and young/adolescent girls and community we serve and provides necessary support in response to their demands, without ever encroaching or trespassing their space, identity and agency. However, in case of the ecosystem network, alliances and coalition, CARE Nepal will play any role (initiating, joining, convene, resourcing, leading) that is necessary to build, strengthen or mobilize the collectives for the common cause.
- We recognize and accordingly support, nurture, build and promote “women and youth/adolescent girls change leaders” towards a connected and networked women and girl leaders across the ecosystem of feminist and social justice movements.
- We deliberately and strategically work along with partners’ networks - e.g. currently, Humanitarian Partnership Platform (HPP) and Network of Partners (NoP) to amplify local voices and leadership in national and global advocacy spaces while expanding engagement with feminist, youth - led, disability rights, climate justice, and multi - stakeholder networks to deepen influence and systems - level impact.

#### **4. Influencing policy, practice and resource allocation and distribution**

- CARE Nepal engages in the process of influencing policy makers and decision takers - at all levels from local to global and all sectors from public to private to civic. Policy influencing advocacy or lobbying or mobilization are for developing new policies or changing current adverse policies as well as for allocating and distributing necessary resources and implementing policies for addressing both the symptoms and root causes of exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability faced by women and girls and communities we work with and work for.
- Our approach to advocacy and influencing is evidence-based, collaborative, and based on examples from global experience. Bearing witness to and understanding the real issues and problems, listening to the women and young/adolescent girls in need of policies and resource allocations and distribution, learning from experiments and experience from different locality and situations including global

context related to concerns and issues of our constituencies, gives us solid basis for advocacy.

- We ensure that excluded, exploited, poor and vulnerable people, communities and their movements and “change-leaders” have agency and facilitate their access, as necessary, to negotiation and decision - making/taking spaces in their own rights.
- We collaborate – online and offline - with others to build and leverage complementary advantages and collective powers for effectively influencing the policy makers and decision takers locally and globally for wider solidarity and support.
- We take responsibility to do advocacy and influencing directly and on our own, as necessary, to leverage our space, contacts and credibility.

## **5. Adaptive and scaling**

- CARE Nepal recognizes that we live in a complex world and system we are committed to change are complex. We remain ready for uncertainties; make/keep sense of the trends and emergent patterns; responsive to feedback loop for learning, and act with agility to respond to needs of changed contexts. Our programs, projects and models keep an adaptive mindset and practice.
- Our overall emphasis on system change is built of our conviction that the impacts we make or realize are sustainable/lasting and that they spread (through replications or policy - practice) beyond the community and locality we directly work with. Therefore, we do not just do activities and project work, but we seek to build ideas, approaches and models that will power the advocacy - influencing work and/or allow others to adopt/adapt to yield scale - up.
- CARE and our partners, from country to regional to thematic/global levels, are continually identifying or testing innovative approaches to address exclusion, exploitation, poverty and vulnerability. Once adapted for scaling (through ideation, research and development), those solutions that show success at a small scale (proof of concept) then seek support and resources to be contextualized and tested in multiple locations (transition to scale) and also to share the learning globally.

## **6. Inclusive market-based approach and private sector engagement**

- CARE Nepal’s approach to inclusive and gender sensitive market is grounded on interventions that address development and humanitarian challenges, assures fair and inclusive participation of women and girls in market system and engage private sector to contribute to development and humanitarian efforts.

- CARE Nepal’s program focuses on improving access to finance for women, young/adolescent girls, landless people, and small holder farmers through savings - credits, cooperatives, and other banking and financial mechanisms and institutions.
- Our approach also includes empowering local enterprises and entrepreneurs in the value chain, collaborating with private companies, and ensuring their access to various digital and non- digital marketing platforms by engaging and supporting end to end processes.
- CARE Nepal’s approach recognizes that ‘private sector’ is layered and are of different kinds. Our approach is to collaborate with those private sector actors which our constituency finds helpful in realizing positive outcomes and impact and confront/advocate with those private sector actors that are extractive, exploitative and harmful to people and communities we work with and support

## **7. Digital Technology integration**

- CARE Nepal recognizes that digital technology and spaces are now integral part of lives, livelihood, governance and business of people and communities we work with. We also recognize that digital technology and space are both sources of power as well as sites of exclusion and exploitation.
- CARE Nepal’s digital technology integration approach work at the following three aspects in all our mission - related goals, objectives and work: (a) women and young/adolescent girls’ equitable access to and utilization of technology (hardware - software - data - knowledge) (b) women and girls’ equitable access to digital platforms for direct social (e.g. collective action), political (e.g. e-governance) and economic participation (e-commerce) and (c) safety and security of women and girls’ agency, lives and livelihoods in digital space. CARE Nepal also engages with the digital and technological entrepreneurs, companies, governments, movements and other stakeholders in pursuit of equitable, safe, secured digital access to women and young/adolescent girls for meaningful participation, work, livelihood and solidarity beyond local context.

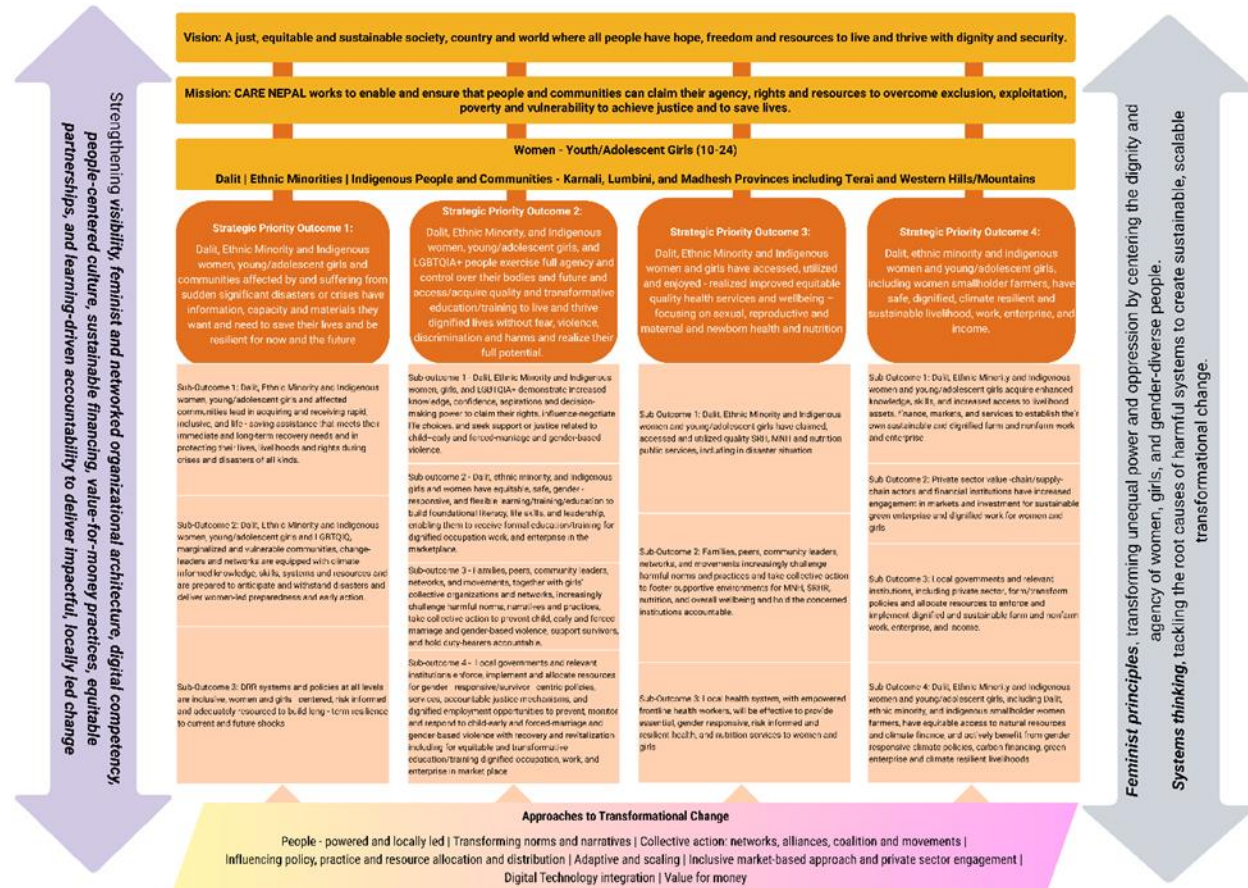
## **8. Value for Money**

- CARE Nepal’s value for money approach ensures quality impact per cost by prioritizing the generation of foundational evidence. In an environment of constrained resources and increasing humanitarian and development needs, this approach positions CARE Nepal to make smarter, evidence - driven decisions that maximize value, impact and sustainability.

- CARE Nepal conducts detailed costing analysis to deliver the greatest impact for the excluded, exploited, poor and vulnerable populations. Leveraging advanced data systems, AI - powered analytics, and evidence, CARE Nepal embeds cost - efficiency, effectiveness insights into program design and resource allocation and distribution without compromising equity and leave - no - one - behind principles.
- Value for money approach ensures optimizing project costs, expanding reach/coverage and enhancing impact while safeguarding program quality and accountability to communities and donors.

# Section 3: Theory of Change

## CARE Nepal's Strategy 2030 Theory of Change



## **Section 4: Strategic Context**

The external context for CARE Nepal’s strategy is shaped by profound global, national, and systemic disruptions that are redefining development, governance, and civic space.

### **Global Disruption and Geopolitical Transition**

The year 2025 marks a historic rupture in global order, with simultaneous crises affecting democracy, economic systems, climate governance, multilateralism, and human rights. The rise of elected nationalist authoritarians, retreat from climate and carbon commitments by major powers, legitimization of occupation and war crimes, withdrawal from and weakening of multilateral institutions, and growing anti - migrant sentiment have fundamentally destabilized global cooperation. The world has decisively moved beyond a unipolar system, yet the functioning of an emerging multipolar order remains uncertain within an increasingly interdependent and volatile global system.

### **Aid and Development in Irreversible Transition**

The global aid and development architecture is undergoing deep and likely irreversible transformation. Sharp aid reductions, combined with rising defense spending, geopolitical rivalry, and backlash against human rights and gender equality are reshaping development priorities. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors face fiscal and political pressure, while G7 and G20 processes signal a reconfiguration of development cooperation models. By 2030, before the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) period ends, new paradigms of development and aid are expected to emerge, redefining relationships between Global North and South, public and private actors, and donors and recipients. In this context, collective civil society engagement, globally, will be critical to ensure future development models are just, equitable, and sustainable. Even though the traditional bilateral and multilateral aid gaps will not be filled, significant rise in the funding, engagement and influence from private sector whether philanthropic or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – in the global north and the global south - is already a trend and will continue to grow.

### **Nepal’s Aid Landscape and LDC Graduation**

In Nepal, aid inflows have declined since the COVID pandemic peak, though foreign assistance - largely in the form of loans - remains central to development financing. Growing uncertainty has intensified efforts to mobilize domestic resources, leverage remittances, and attract private investment. Nepal also faces persistent challenges of weak aid absorption, declining grants, rising debt risk, shrinking and shifting civic space, and reduced public trust in NGOs and INGOs. Nepal’s scheduled graduation from Least

Developed Country (LDC) status in November 2026 - even if delayed for a short while - will further compound uncertainty, as it entails reduced access to grants, greater reliance on concessional loans and blended finance, and loss of preferential trade access. It is hoped that the disruption in the development aid landscape will lead to positive discourse, direction and decisions about the country - led and country - owned development that are just, equitable and sustainable.

### **Political Transition and Uncertainty**

Nepal's political landscape is in flux following a significant Gen Z - led uprising that has revitalized public activism and challenged entrenched political elites. Unprecedented youth engagement in politics has ushered in a new era of hope for the future of the country. Emerging youth - backed and reform - oriented parties have disrupted the dominance of the major political parties through the 2026 elections. While this transition presents opportunities for governance reform, anti- corruption efforts, and digital modernization, it also carries risks of instability and policy confusion and indecision. Key political trends that have emerged include a generational shift in leadership with single party gaining majority in the parliament and renewed debates on constitutional reform, governance efficiency, and federal restructuring. And the development drive may be more about employment - first strategies, deregulation, private-sector leadership, digital-freedoms, energy focus, tax reforms and anti-corruption commitments. While there is hope that emergent youth - led political forces may advance social and gender justice and prevent backlash on the excellent gains made in gender equity arena in the past decades, there is little in party manifestos - or in the composition of top leadership - that suggests progress will come without sustained struggle and movement - building, especially as politics trends toward the center-right. With hopes and expectations on the rise, the political leadership space remains deeply hyper-masculinized, with emerging leadership styles largely reproducing patriarchal norms rather than advancing transformative / feminist leadership. Without deliberate efforts to challenge these gendered power structures, there is a real risk that new leaders will replicate old exclusions, rebranding change while entrenching the same unequal political order.

### **Economic and Digital Transformation**

Nepal's economy faces short-term slowdown due to political instability and climate shocks, with recovery expected through infrastructure investment and digital transformation. Structural dependence on remittances, agriculture, and natural resources will persist, even as policy emphasis shifts toward private-sector-led growth, foreign direct investment, and public infrastructure expansion, particularly in anticipation of LDC graduation. Digitalization is viewed as a major growth pathway, supported by the IT Decade

(2024–2034), Digital Nepal Framework 2.0, and emerging AI, e-commerce and e-governance policies. However, a deep digital divide shaped by geography, income, education, and gender threatens to exclude large segments of the population from these opportunities. The new political landscape and the new economic drive is expected to not only significantly increase the internet penetration (currently at 55.8%) but also significantly reduce urban–rural and inter-provincial gaps in digital access. Efforts to increase equitable digital literacy (currently, 31% internet use) for developmental use, beyond just social media and entertainment to education, employment, or e-governance and e-governance will continue to remain a challenge but is likely to get priority from governments, donors, private sector and public. The marginalization of the care economy in economic and digital strategies reflects persistent gender bias in policymaking and risks reproducing inequality even amid growth and modernization. There have been conscious efforts to address it, however, the impact is yet to be observed.

### **Social Justice, Gender, Youth, and Climate Risks**

Despite development gains, poverty and inequality remain widespread. Around 20% of Nepal’s population is multidimensionally poor, with deep systemic inequality across gender, caste, region, and community. Gender inequality persists, particularly in economic participation, with high levels of gender-based violence driven by structural patriarchy, economic stress, and climate and migration pressures. Nepal’s ranking in the Global Gender Gap Index has declined sharply in recent years, largely due to setbacks in economic participation, despite relative strength in political representation.

Despite Nepal’s constitutional commitment to equality and protections for Dalits, caste-based discrimination and violence persist. A recent report based on Census 2021 showed that Dalits—13.44% of Nepal’s population—face significant structural disadvantages, including poorer housing, lower access to safe water and electricity, higher rates of poverty, limited property ownership by women, lower literacy, and earlier marriage age, with Madheshi Dalits consistently experiencing the most severe deprivations. **Dalit women and girls experience compounded discrimination** due to the intersection of caste, gender, class, and poverty, making them especially vulnerable to gender-based violence, exploitation, and exclusion from justice.

Likewise, Indigenous Peoples (Adivasi Janajati), who make up over a third of Nepal’s population, continue to face **systemic marginalization, political underrepresentation, land dispossession, cultural erosion, and gendered discrimination** despite constitutional guarantees of inclusion and cultural rights. They remain excluded from decision-making—while they are 35% of the population, Indigenous representation in government, judiciary, and state structures remains disproportionately low. Indigenous women face **intersectional discrimination**, high vulnerability to trafficking, economic

marginalization (including criminalization of traditional livelihoods), and limited access to justice and services. Indigenous children experience high dropout rates as education policies fail to support mother-tongue learning, accelerating language loss.

Nepal's "youth bulge" presents both opportunity and risk. Full unemployment among youth (15 - 29) is estimated at 19.2%, compounded by high under-employment. Around 70% of the workforce remains in the informal economy. Youth unemployment and under-employment will continue to drive labor migration that sustains the economy through remittances. The outmigration of working-age men has led to labor shortages, de-agrarianization, social fragmentation, increased burdens and vulnerability for women and children left behind, and heightened risks for migrants - especially undocumented women - who face exploitation, wage theft, and unsafe conditions.

Nepal is among the world's most climate vulnerable countries, with 80% of its population exposed to hazards such as floods, landslides, and glacial lake outburst floods. Climate risks will continue to remain serious with more erratic monsoons, hotter dry seasons, rising disease burdens, and threats to agriculture and hydropower. These risks may get worse with ecosystem stress from deforestation, habitat degradation, and unsustainable tourism continues to grow.

The positive push from government, IFIs, and donors for green and climate resilient development will continue. However, ensuring that climate finance and policies work for women, Dalits, Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups who bear the brunt of climate risks remains a profound challenge.

### **Civic Space Under Pressure**

While civil liberties are constitutionally protected, civil society organizations and movements have been experiencing the shrinking of civic space in practice due to regulatory constraints, funding barriers, and surveillance risks – compounded by very low public trust. At the same time, digitally enabled youth movements and issue-based social mobilization continue to demonstrate transformative potential. Depending upon the level of flux of political landscape between the two elections during the period of this strategy, backlash on gains made by women's, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+), Dalit, landless, farmers, labor movements is a plausible scenario that civil society will need to be prepared to resist, while fighting for new and more advances. For meaningful and sustained resistance and change, civil society will have to work hard, first, to overcome internal Civil Society Organization (CSO) sectoral fragmentation, donor dependency, party - political affiliation/control, and lack of public trust and, secondly, to influence governance,

development, and social justice outcomes for excluded, exploited, vulnerable and poor people and communities.

The disruptions and transitions of the scenarios we face in the coming 4-5 years are just as many opportunities as potential risks. CARE Nepal remains confident about its adaptability and agility to respond effectively to the uncertain future. The priorities and strategies below for the period are realistically ambitious focusing, first, on resisting the backlash and backsliding from various fronts of the gains made in the past while taking advantage of the energy of the transitions in the country and beyond to gain new grounds towards achieving our vision and mission.

## Section 5: Strategic Priority Outcomes 2030

### Strategic Priority Outcome 1: Humanitarian Response and DRR

Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls and communities affected by and suffering from sudden significant disasters or crises have information, capacity and materials they want and need to save their lives and be resilient for now and the future

#### Context and Rationale

Nepal's high vulnerability to earthquakes, floods, landslides, and climate-induced crises disproportionately affects Dalit, ethnic minority, Indigenous communities and women and girls.. The disaster risks to these communities in Nepal are shaped by structural inequalities, limited resources, and exclusion from decision-making and also who often live in hazard prone area. Women experience increased exposure during floods and landslides due to caregiving roles, restricted mobility rooted in social norms, and stigma and insecurity when husbands migrate for work, leaving them responsible for evacuations and household survival during disasters. These intersecting burdens make climate, and disaster impacts disproportionately harmful to their lives, livelihoods, dignity and safety. Women and girls in these groups experience compounded risks, including limited access to health and nutrition services, heightened exposure to gender-based violence, and barriers to exercising their rights during emergencies.

This priority outcome aligns with Nepal's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (2017), National Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Policy (2018), and the 2024 Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) - DRR Strategic Action Plan, all of which emphasize inclusive resilience and equitable access to lifesaving resources. Prioritizing this outcome ensures that Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls and communities have the information, capacity, and lifesaving materials they need to survive and recover from disasters, while building resilience for the future. Additionally, this strategic outcome directly contributes to SDG 1, 3, 5, 10, 11 and 13.

Building on CARE Nepal's progress towards establishing and sustaining networked operated model in responding to and recovering from the crisis, the upcoming strategy will drive CARE Nepal's effort to enhancing preparedness and anticipatory action that are crucial elements for realizing a resilient community through reliable information and women-led actions. By prioritizing this outcome, CARE Nepal ensures its 2026–2030

strategy is grounded in national laws, global commitments, and proven practices, enabling vulnerable communities to access information, build capacity, and secure materials they need to save lives and strengthen resilience for the future.

Humanitarian Response and Recovery, the program focuses on ensuring that women, girls, and affected communities receive rapid, inclusive, and locally led lifesaving assistance that meets both immediate and long-term recovery needs while safeguarding their rights during crises.

**Sub-Outcome 1:** Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls and affected communities lead in acquiring and receiving rapid, inclusive, and life - saving assistance that meets their immediate and long-term recovery needs and in protecting their lives, livelihoods and rights during crises and disasters of all kinds.

**Sub-Outcome 2:** Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls and LGBTQIA+, marginalized and vulnerable communities, change-leaders and networks are equipped with climate-informed knowledge, skills, systems and resources and are prepared to anticipate and withstand disasters and deliver women-led preparedness and early action.

**Sub-Outcome 3:** DRR systems and policies at all levels are inclusive, women and girls - centered, risk-informed and adequately resourced to build long - term resilience to current and future shocks.

### **Major Strategic Interventions**

- Strengthen and scale humanitarian delivery platforms with local leadership-expand HPP networks to district, province and national levels.
- Enhance social and economic well-being of women from disaster-affected households by creating sustainable and resilient livelihoods.
- Build climate and disaster risk understanding, enhance anticipative, absorptive, adaptive and risk transfer capacity of **Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls and at-risk communities**
- Establish local and inclusive response mechanisms, plan and pre-position them with emergency stockpile (CARE relief pack) and funds.
- Build women-led response capacity and culture in humanitarian ecosystem by developing and mobilizing women and girl DRR champions; onboarding and

strengthening Women-led Organizations (WLOs) and issue focused advocacy organization in humanitarian architecture and, instituting Women Lead in Emergencies (WLiE) and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE) in humanitarian responses.

- Institutionalize Women-led Anticipatory Action (WLAA) with climate triggers, establish local thresholds and triggers, organize local women networks, citizen scientist for risk communication and early actions.
- Establish and expand community driven early warning and inclusive preparedness networks and develop and institute women/girls' meaningful participation in task teams and as first responders.
- Collaborate with DRR networks, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM), Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) and other stakeholders at all levels to integrate and localize women-led anticipatory and early warning mechanisms.
- Strengthen/establish digital platforms for resilience, including AI driven real time early warning and digital cash and voucher assistance mechanisms.
- Localize and operationalize DRR frameworks with inclusive representation - ensuring women's and girls' representation in local DRR committees and comprehensively localizing inclusive DRR policies, SOPs, and guidelines across selected local governments and community accountability circles
- Embed and strengthen risk informed planning, resource allocation and distribution (disaster risk financing) and overall systems integration, and data platforms.
- Localize and utilize the Building Information Platform Against Disaster (BIPAD)<sup>1</sup> portal; improve communication and coordination across DRR structures and engage national DRR networks to strengthen governance and resilience.
- Generate, value, and mobilize women-led, community-rooted, and climate-informed knowledge to shape anticipatory action, humanitarian practice, and DRR governance, ensuring learning informs real-time decisions, policy reform, and accountability.
- Mobilize gender-inclusive- responsive strategies and plans to strengthen climate resilience and disaster risk reduction by empowering women's leadership, enabling equitable access to resources and decision-making, and building adaptive capacities, ensuring inclusive governance and sustainable, gender-just recovery.

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<sup>1</sup> BIPAD portal is Nepal's integrated, national disaster information management system used to enhance risk reduction, preparedness, and response

## Strategic Priority Outcome 2: GBV, Child-Early and Forced-Marriage and Education & Training

Dalit, Ethnic Minority, and Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls, and LGBTQIA+ people exercise full agency and control over their bodies and future and access/acquire quality and transformative education/training to live and thrive dignified lives without fear, violence, discrimination and harms and realize their full potential.

### Context and Rationale

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a deeply entrenched barrier to safety, agency, and equality for Dalit, ethnic minority, Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls, and LGBTQIA+ communities in Nepal. Dalit and Indigenous women face disproportionately high rates of caste-based discrimination, sexual violence, and barriers to justice, with studies showing significantly higher vulnerability due to social stigma, limited land rights, and exclusion from formal protection mechanisms. Dalit women in particular experience layered violence rooted in caste hierarchies, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, and community reprisals when reporting violence. Between 2026 and 2030, the persistence of GBV will continue to be shaped by intersecting systemic drivers, patriarchal norms, social exclusion, economic pressures, climate induced shocks, and expanding digital spaces that facilitate new forms of abuse. National and sub-national data consistently show that marginalized women face disproportionate risks. Climate-related disasters, displacement, and loss of livelihoods further compound vulnerabilities, exposing women and girls to early marriage, trafficking, and sexual harassment in temporary shelters, while digital abuse and violence increasingly target young and marginalized populations. Indigenous communities, who disproportionately reside in ecologically fragile regions, face higher exposure to climate-driven displacement. Dalit settlements, often located in hazard-prone or resource-poor areas due to historical exclusion, experience heightened insecurity, leading to increased GBV risks during and after disasters. Nearly three in ten women aged 15 - 49 have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Studies indicate that 86% of individuals have experienced online violence, which shows emerging forms of violence. Dalit girls and Indigenous youth are disproportionately targeted with caste- and ethnicity-based hate speech, online harassment, and coordinated digital attacks that intersect with gendered violence. Child marriage remains widespread, with 21.3% of girls aged 15–19 currently married and 2.8% married before age 15, reinforcing cycles of vulnerability and exclusion. Persistent underreporting, stigma, and gaps in legal and social protection mechanisms obscure the full scale of violence, making targeted and inclusive interventions essential. For Dalit and Indigenous survivors, systemic

discrimination within justice and protection institutions further reduces reporting, as they often encounter bias, social retaliation, or lack culturally and linguistically responsive services.

The consequences of GBV are profound and far-reaching. Violence and fear erode women's and LGBTQIA+ individuals' ability to exercise agency, participate educationally, economically and politically, and contribute to resilient communities. For Dalit and Indigenous communities, the effects of GBV are amplified by intergenerational poverty, landlessness, and social exclusion, deepening structural inequalities and limiting collective resilience. Survivors face long-term impacts on health, education, and well-being, and the social and economic costs ripple through families and communities. Its impact extends across generations, adversely affecting children's wellbeing and normalizing violence. Collectively, these consequences undermine social cohesion and impede progress toward gender equality and sustainable development. Addressing GBV, therefore, is not only a moral and human rights imperative but a strategic necessity: it is both a cause and a consequence of inequality, directly threatening the broader development outcomes that Nepal seeks to achieve, from inclusive governance to climate resilience and poverty reduction.

Nepal has made substantial progress in creating a legal and policy environment to combat GBV. Complementary initiatives, including shelter homes, one-stop crisis management centers, and long-term rehabilitation services, are there to provide survivor-centered support. Yet enforcement gaps, weak coordination across sectors, uneven capacity at local levels, and limited resources continue to constrain access and impact. Dalit and Indigenous women face additional barriers due to discriminatory practices, limited geographic access to services, and lack of representation in local decision-making structures overseeing GBV response.

Prioritizing prevention, protection and freedom from GBV as a strategic outcome for Dalit, ethnic minority, Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls, and LGBTQIA+ communities is therefore critical to ensuring safer and self-determined lives. For meaningful impact, interventions must incorporate culturally grounded approaches that reflect Indigenous knowledge systems and address caste-based power dynamics shaping Dalit women's lived experiences. Evidence demonstrates that sustained investments in prevention, integrated services, and community-led action achieve durable social change. By addressing the root causes and multiple dimensions of GBV, Nepal can ensure that marginalized groups not only survive but thrive, exercising agency over their bodies, lives,

and futures. This strategic priority outcome is central to advancing equity, resilience, and inclusion across all development goals, setting the foundation for a society where safety, dignity, and freedom from fear are realities for everyone by 2030.

Also, recognizing that gender-based violence and early or forced child marriages are systemically linked with the exclusion and deprivation from necessary education, training to realize socio economic agency/autonomy of young and adolescent girls.

While near-universal primary enrollment has been achieved nationally, Dalit, ethnic minority, and Indigenous girls continue to face compounded barriers related to caste-based discrimination, gender norms, poverty, geography, language, disability, and climate vulnerability. Dalit and Indigenous girls often face discriminatory treatment in schools, including segregation, bullying, language barriers, and teacher bias, contributing to higher dropout rates and lower learning outcomes. These barriers result in their overrepresentation among out-of-school children, early secondary dropouts, and low-achieving learners, particularly in foundational literacy, numeracy, and life skills.

Adolescent girls face additional challenges, including child marriage, unpaid care responsibilities, family migration, gender-based violence, and economic shocks, which threaten to widen disparities further. Adolescents also face challenges such as mobility restrictions, which limit their meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

Also, girls from marginalized communities often face limited access to skills, networks, and career pathways, which traps them in cycles of low-paid, insecure, or unpaid work, reinforcing intergenerational poverty.

Investing in holistic, targeted interventions-including accelerated learning programs, safe and inclusive schools, gender-responsive teaching and governance, livelihood-relevant skills, and strengthened community participation-ensures that marginalized girls not only access education but also remain in school, achieve meaningful learning outcomes, and translate their education into sustainable opportunities.

**Sub-outcome 1** - Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women, girls, and LGBTQIA+ demonstrate increased knowledge, confidence, aspirations and decision-making power to claim their rights, influence-negotiate life choices, and seek support or justice related to child-early and forced-marriage and gender-based violence.

**Sub outcome 2** - Dalit, ethnic minority, and Indigenous girls and women have equitable, safe, gender - responsive, and flexible learning, training and education to build foundational literacy, life skills, and leadership, enabling them to receive formal education and training for dignified occupation work, and enterprise in the marketplace.

**Sub-outcome 3** - Families, peers, community leaders, networks, and movements, together with girls' collective organizations and networks, increasingly challenge harmful norms, narratives and practices, take collective action to prevent child, early and forced marriage and gender-based violence, support survivors, and hold duty-bearers accountable.

**Sub-outcome 4** - Local governments and relevant institutions enforce, implement and allocate resources for gender - responsive/survivor - centric policies, services, accountable justice mechanisms, and dignified employment opportunities to prevent, monitor and respond to child-early and forced-marriage and gender-based violence with recovery and revitalization including for equitable and transformative education/training dignified occupation, work, and enterprise in market place.

### **Major Strategic Interventions**

- Strengthen agency, confidence, and leadership of Dalit, Ethnic minority, Indigenous women, young/adolescent girls, and LGBTQIA+ communities through integrated empowerment pathways that are intersectional and inclusive -deliver life skills, SRHR, legal and financial literacy, education continuity, mentorship, livelihoods, and leadership development to enable informed choices, economic independence, and political engagement.
- Empower families, peers, community leaders, and social movements to challenge harmful norms and narratives and prevent child marriage and gender-based violence, facilitate intergenerational dialogues, reflective sessions, media campaigns, and community advocacy to shift attitudes, promote collective responsibility, and sustain norm change.
- Engaging men and boys, focusing on gender informed/aware/just behaviors and solidarity actions, as true allies for gender equality and elimination of gender - based violence.
- Build and institutionalize women-led groups/organizations (WLOs), women's rights groups/organizations (WROs) and girls' networks as sustained platforms for leadership, collective action for protection, claim and realization of rights - establish, strengthen, and connect networks to governance/government bodies, social movements, youth councils, and national forums to expand women's and girls' influence in decision - making, advocacy, and accountability spaces.

- Protect frontline Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) and activists from backlash and practice collective care.
- Expand survivor-centered protection, justice, and recovery systems across community and institutional levels-scale safe spaces, psychosocial support, legal aid, reintegration services, digital safety mechanisms, and private-sector livelihood linkages to ensure holistic, accessible support for survivors.
- Support and ensure gender-responsive, survivor-centric GBV and child protection systems within local and national governance/government structures, advocate for policy reform, resource allocation and distribution, SOP implementation, gender-responsive budgeting, and functional coordination across police, health, justice, and social services.
- Generate, use, and scale participatory evidence, innovation, and digital tools to drive advocacy and accountability to end gender-based violence and child-early and forced-marriage, engage women and girls in research, scorecards, dashboards, storytelling, innovation hubs, and knowledge platforms to inform policy, monitor progress, and influence public discourse.
- Engage and coordinate multi-stakeholder alliances and financing to sustain and scale GBV prevention and girls' rights interventions, align civil society, government, private sector, academia in the country, and global mechanisms to mobilize resources, replicate effective models, and integrate costed actions into planning and budget cycles.
- Collaborate with national oversight bodies (e.g., Women and Human Rights Commissions) to monitor prevalence, service quality, and rights violations, publish periodic scorecards, and support local corrective actions.
- Institutionalize accelerated and alternative learning approaches within Community Learning Centers and public schools through endorsed guidelines, costed implementation plans, and collaboration among education authorities, local governments, civil society, and the private sector. This is eventually done to turn such learning approaches into a platform for norms change, policy engagement, and addressing CEFM and GBV.
- Improve school and community learning environments by ensuring gender-responsive, safe, inclusive, and crisis-resilient infrastructure, learning materials, digital access, teacher deployment, and pedagogy while integrating disaster preparedness for learning continuity.

- Build local education capacity by training and retaining community-based facilitators and teachers, strengthening digital learning systems, and supporting girls and women to transition from learning to dignified work through leadership development, literacy, digital and financial skills, career guidance, certification, and enterprise support aligned with market needs.

### **Strategic Priority Outcome 3: Health and Nutrition**

Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women and girls have accessed, utilized and enjoyed - realized improved equitable quality health services and wellbeing – focusing on sexual, reproductive and maternal and newborn health and nutrition

#### **Context and Rationale**

Nepal has made significant progress in maternal health, with the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) declining from 539 per 100,000 live births in 1996 to 151 in 2021, and notable improvements in service utilization - 94% of women now receive antenatal care from skilled providers, 79% deliver in health facilities, and 80% have skilled birth attendance. These trends indicate positive momentum toward safer pregnancy and deliveries. However, progress remains uneven and slow, with persistent inequality among rural populations, marginalized groups, and lower wealth quintiles, fueled by continued systemic challenges surrounding economic and social environments such as child marriage, violence against women and girls, poverty. Moreover, Nepal still must reduce MMR considerably just to meet the SDG target of <70 MMR by 2030, and gaps in emergency obstetric care, referral systems, and early postnatal follow - up persist.

Similarly, despite progress in reducing stunting and wasting over the past two decades, undernutrition continues to affect a significant proportion of women and children, with high rates of anemia and poor dietary diversity undermining health, education, and economic outcomes. Malnutrition is not only a health issue but a driver of intergenerational poverty and vulnerability, making it central to resilience and equity goals. Additionally, climate change threatens food systems and exacerbates nutritional insecurity through erratic weather patterns, floods, and droughts. These shocks disproportionately affect women and marginalized communities, requiring climate-resilient nutrition strategies.

Access to and utilization of health services remain low amongst Dalits and indigenous groups. Health gains made over the course of last two decades have been slower amongst Dalits and disadvantaged indigenous groups creating gaps between these communities compared to other caste groups. Specifically, maternal mortality and malnutrition remain high amongst Dalits and certain indigenous groups owing to the structural discrimination,

socioeconomic exclusion, and systemic barriers to availing health care services. Furthermore, poor service responsiveness, unequal treatment, and feeling deprioritized while seeking health service among Dalits and Indigenous groups remain prevalent in Nepal. Among young girls and women from disadvantaged community, dietary diversity remains lower and risk of anemia remain higher compared to other advantaged communities showing persistent inequality and high nutritional vulnerability. Focusing on reproductive health, maternal care, and nutrition aligns with national plans and policies such as 16th National Periodic Plan (2024–2028), the Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Rights Act (2018), the National Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health Roadmap 2030, Food and Nutrition Security Plan of Action, the Multi - Sectoral Nutrition Plan III (2023–2030) as well as global commitments under SDG 3 (Health and Well - being) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). Most importantly, reproductive health, maternal health, and nutrition (RMHN) also align with CARE Nepal’s mission to support gender equality, resilience, and social justice. Prioritizing RMHN not only saves lives, but it also empowers women and girls to overcome systemic barriers, exercise autonomy, and contribute to sustainable development.

**Sub-Outcome 1:** Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women and young/adolescent girls have claimed, accessed and utilized quality SRH, MNH and nutrition public services, including in disaster situation

**Sub-Outcome 2:** Families, peers, community leaders, networks, and movements increasingly challenge harmful norms and practices and take collective action to foster supportive environments for MNH, SRHR, nutrition, and overall wellbeing and hold the concerned institutions accountable.

**Sub-Outcome 3:** Local health system, with empowered frontline health workers, will be effective to provide essential, gender-responsive, risk-informed and resilient health, and nutrition services to women and girls

### **Major Strategic Interventions**

- Engage with and strengthen *Health Mothers’ Groups, adolescent clubs, women’s networks, and youth movements* as safe, structured platforms for adolescent girls, young women, pregnant and lactating women, and caregivers to enhance their knowledge and access to MNH, SRHR, nutrition, and mental wellbeing education, peer support, and pathways to services paired with leadership development to create local champions.

- Challenge discriminatory practices through structured community dialogues supported by legacy and proven tools such as CARE’s Self-Applied Technique for Quality Health (SATH) model, Social Analysis and Action (SAA), while strengthening women’s collectives, adolescent clubs, and youth movements to advocate for positive norms and monitor progress through accountability mechanisms like the Circle of Accountability - also, engaging influencers, including religious leaders and media personalities, to amplify messages on gender equality and health rights.
- Support national and sub-national governments to expand MNH, adolescent-friendly SRHR and nutrition services through public health facilities, outreach clinics, and telemedicine services, while institutionalizing respectful maternity care and nutrition counselling to ensure quality and dignity in service delivery. Advocate for inclusive health policies and financing through collaboration with related health and nutrition networks, including HPP and NOP
- Advocate for and advance inclusive health financing (including social protection and insurance enrolment) and promotion of social enterprises and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) for maternal and child health products and services.
- Integrate MNH and SRHR in disaster plans and actions.
- Strengthen and expand accessible digital platforms that provide comprehensive, MNH, SRHR and nutrition education, complemented by leadership development programs that train women and girls as community champions to influence local planning and decision - making processes by leveraging technology to overcome geographic and social barriers, while building a cadre of empowered female leaders who advocate for inclusive health policies and practices.
- Deliver competency based training with regular modular refreshers on SRHR, MNH, nutrition counselling, GBV screening/referral, respectful maternity care, and adolescent friendly services, paired with onsite coaching and peer learning circles, rolled out via e - learning portals (e.g., Healthy, Empowered, Accredited, Linked (HEAL) Hub), microlearning modules, job aids, decision support tools, case simulations, supportive supervision, performance dashboards, and recognition mechanisms - and, ensuring psychosocial support and safety protocols for frontline workers in high stress and disaster contexts.
- Operationalize proven approaches to coaching and mentoring of frontline health workers such as hub - and - spoke referral system connecting birthing centers, Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs), and hospitals with defined referral pathways, transport options, and escalation criteria for Emergency Obstetric and

Neonatal Care (EmONC) and GBV cases, while using digital registries and reminder systems to track Antenatal Care (ANC)/Postnatal Care (PNC) visits, high - risk pregnancies, postpartum complications, and adolescent clients needing follow - up

- Pilot/scale telemedicine for remote SRHR/MNH/nutrition counselling with provider decision support apps, digital client records, appointment/reminder tools, and AI assisted diagnostics (e.g., Xray interpretation) integrated into referral workflows.
- Enhance the capacity and resilience of local health and nutrition systems by strengthening functionality of Quality Improvement teams, deploying digital health solutions (such as telemedicine, electronic registries, and decision - support tools), and ensuring use of health information and data for micro - planning and supervision - complemented by infrastructure upgrades including solar power, WASH improvements, and cold - chain integrity, alongside robust supply chain management for SRHR/MNH/nutrition commodities with emergency buffer stocks.

#### **Strategic Priority Outcome 4: Enterprise, Climate and Agriculture**

Dalit, ethnic minority and indigenous women and young/adolescent girls, including women smallholder farmers, have safe, dignified, climate resilient and sustainable livelihood, work, enterprise, and income.

##### **Context and rationale**

Nepal's socio-economic trajectory from 2026–2030 presents both opportunities and systemic challenges for marginalized women. Despite projected GDP growth of 5% annually and constitutional guarantees of equality, entrenched caste, gender, and ethnic barriers continue to restrict Dalit and indigenous women's access to resources, markets, and decision-making. Agriculture remains the backbone of rural livelihoods, yet feminization of farming due to male out-migration has not translated into empowerment; only 19.7% of land-owning households are female-headed, limiting women's ability to leverage land as collateral for credit. While the government allocates significant resources over NRs 500 billion annually and 38.65% of the national budget in FY 2020/21 to programs directly benefiting women through Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), implementation gaps persist. Ad-hoc budgeting practices, lack of gender-disaggregated data, and weak local capacity undermine intended outcomes, leaving most women in informal, precarious work without social protection.

Today, the country hosts more than **100,000 formal and informal civil society organizations**, creating a strong foundation for mission-driven enterprises that address

social and economic gaps left by the state and market. Social enterprises primarily operate as small and medium-sized businesses, often leveraging Nepal’s rich traditions in crafts, sustainable production, and women-led entrepreneurship. Despite their growing relevance, Nepal still lacks a dedicated social enterprise policy, resulting in limited institutional support and unclear regulatory pathways for these impact-oriented businesses to scale.

Evidence shows that social enterprises contribute meaningfully to **job creation, skills development, community empowerment, and environmental sustainability**, particularly in marginalized groups. However, gaps persist: the relationship between social inclusion and broader social development outcomes remains weak, and the overall impact on economic growth is modest, indicating the need for more structured support and policy intervention.

At the same time, innovative models—especially in major cities—are emerging in areas such as digital financial inclusion, blockchain-enabled humanitarian assistance, climate-resilient housing, and sustainable sanitation, showcasing the sector’s high potential when supported with investment and technical capacity.

For CARE Nepal, this landscape presents a strategic opportunity to strengthen women’s economic empowerment, expand resilient livelihood models, and shape an enabling environment where social enterprises can drive inclusive and sustainable development nationwide

Climate vulnerability compounds these risks: the Hindu Kush Himalaya is warming faster than the global average, threatening rain-fed agriculture, which sustains these communities. Globally, 318 million people face acute food insecurity, and Nepal ranks 72nd in the Global Hunger Index with 26% child stunting, underscoring the urgency of inclusive food systems and income security. Closing the gender gap in agriculture could raise yields by 20–30%, directly improving household nutrition and resilience. However, patriarchal norms, wage inequality, and exclusion from technology and value chains persist, while digital divides limit access to emerging market tools. Strategic investment in women’s capacity building, land tenure reforms, climate-smart agriculture, and enterprise development coupled with robust monitoring of GRB and local governance offers the most effective pathway to ensure safe, dignified, and sustainable livelihoods for Dalit, ethnic minority, and indigenous women, advancing SDGs 1, 5, 8, 10, and 13. Some of the specific areas of focus under this outcome include:

- This strategic priority aims to dismantle systemic barriers and foster inclusive economic opportunities for marginalized women and girls, including Dalit, ethnic minority, and indigenous communities.
- This priority emphasizes - smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture learning platforms, including farmer field schools, adaptation sessions, and demonstration plots, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and digital marketplaces, addressing technology gaps and expanding market reach.
- This priority also emphasizes enterprise innovation through incubation and learning labs that pilot climate-smart and digital solutions, while partnerships with trade associations and private sector actors will advance green and sustainable business models and reinforce collective action through women-led producer groups and cooperatives.
- Eventually, through this strategic priority the impact people, women and girls, will acquire market-relevant skills, financial access, and digital connectivity, enabling them to establish sustainable enterprises and participate actively in value chains.

**Sub Outcome 1:** Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women and young/adolescent girls acquire enhanced knowledge, skills, and increased access to livelihood assets, finance, markets, and services including value chain/supply chain systems to establish their own sustainable and dignified farm and nonfarm work and enterprise

**Sub Outcome 2:** Private sector value -chain/supply-chain actors and financial institutions have increased engagement in markets and investment for sustainable green enterprise and dignified work for women and girls

**Sub Outcome 3:** Local governments and relevant institutions, including private sector, form/transform policies and allocate resources to enforce and implement dignified and green and sustainable farm and nonfarm work, enterprise, and income

**Sub Outcome 4:** Dalit, Ethnic Minority and Indigenous women and young/adolescent girls, including Dalit, ethnic minority, and indigenous smallholder women farmers, have equitable access to natural resources and climate finance, and actively benefit from gender-responsive climate policies, carbon financing, green enterprise and climate resilient livelihoods

## **Major Strategic Interventions**

- Organize and strengthen women-led producer groups/cooperatives (including smallholder, landless, and forest user groups) to aggregate supply, build negotiating power, and secure inclusive spaces in food security resource and market governance.
- Develop women and girls' technical, vocational, and digital skills through farmer field schools, climate-smart/nutrition-sensitive learning, TVET accreditation, mentorship, and digital literacy for e-commerce and market information.
- Diversify and upgrade product portfolios through forest-based, agriculture-based, and off-farm enterprises, adopting women-friendly climate adaptation techniques to increase income resilience.
- Facilitate access to assets, finance, and services via seed funding, Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), branding/marketing support, agro-advisory, local extension, and social protection. Deploy climate finance and carbon frameworks to scale women-centered enterprises.
- Run innovation/incubation and acceleration labs to pilot and scale climate-smart, sustainable business solutions for women-led enterprises.
- Link aggregated production to commercial markets/SMEs, partners with trade associations, and co-develop bankable business plans for growth.
- Partner with banks and insurers for climate risk transfer, deploy blended finance and equity instruments, and establish local challenge funds leveraging remittances.
- Engage employers and SMEs to align workforce needs, sign job placement MOUs, adopt fair pay and inclusive policies, and collaborate on fortified/nutrition product models with last-mile delivery.
- Embed GESI responsive policies and budgeting in local/provincial plans, strengthen Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and resource mobilization, and enforce labor and safety standards including ILO C190, equal pay, and workplace safety. Conduct GBV prevention and household dialogues to rebalance care and decision making.
- Scale proven climate-resilient agriculture and enterprise models, replicate and scale out successful pilots such as Farmer Field Business School (FFBS) system orchestration initiative through public-private partnership frameworks and evidence-based advocacy with academia/civil society.
- Advocate for policy, practices and resource allocation and distribution for sustainable natural resource management through ecosystem restoration, agroforestry practices, conservation livelihoods, and watershed management.

## Section 6: Internal Organizational Priority Outcomes 2030

### Internal Organizational Outcome 1: Positioning

Public profile and presence will be enhanced, making CARE more visible, credible and legitimate INGO development partner, collaborator and voice.

#### Key interventions

- Strengthen clarity, coherence, and alignment between CARE’s organizational fundamentals (vision, mission, values, roles, approaches and identity) and its positioning, presentation, programs and performance.
- Develop specific, strategic, feminist, bold and influential flagship profile, product, role and contribution in the social justice, development and humanitarian sector in Nepal
- Enhance its external presence, profile and visibility– quantitatively and qualitatively – in digital, print and physical engagement spaces at all levels of federal structure not only to promote CARE Nepal work but also for solidarity voice/action, transparency, accountability, knowledge development and influencing.
- Build stronger collaborative capacity, profile and engagement with the municipal level governments, specifically and with the relevant government institutions at all levels, in general.
- Actively participate in and facilitate participation of CARE Nepal partners, networks, and movements in the learning, solidarity and policy-negotiations/making/influencing regional and international spaces for local-global-local systems connections and change.
- Enhance CARE Nepal’s engagement with other relevant players in the wider ecosystem (academia, CSO networks and movements, think - tanks, media, change activists) to offer solidarity, collaboration, share resources and develop thought leaders even if they are not about and for CARE projects and programs.
- Stay firm in CARE Nepal vision, values, positions and build work with partners, networks and alliances to collectively resist against anticipatory backlash as well as influence key decisions and policies in the opportunity that the political situation in the country provides.

### Internal Organizational Outcome 2: Architecture

CARE Nepal architecture, structure and practices will be more networked and entrepreneurial guided by feminist principles.

## **Key interventions**

- Having successfully reduced (flattened) vertical hierarchy, conceptualize, and develop way of working in the intersection of locally led and network model that will be more devolved, multi-directional (vertical, lateral), collaborative, agile and adaptive, driving greater impact, quality, and effectiveness.
- Embedding feminist principles through power analysis, inclusive decision making, across CARE Nepal's structure and practices to ensure that gendered and other socially unjust power dynamics are not reproduced in the organization.
- Building and strengthening entrepreneurial mindset, capacity and practices that will, among other things, bring future focus, calculated risk-taking, product development, ecosystems considerations, innovation, resource leveraging collaboration, passion and drive in the work practice and culture.
- Exploring options of establishing social enterprises or any other business models to generate funds to support this strategy from a funding perspective with a vision to reduce donor dependency and mobilize solidarity giving.

## **Internal Organizational Outcome 3: Digital**

CARE Nepal organization and people have transformed into a fully competent digital technology practitioners of safe, secured, inclusive, responsible and empowering digital systems, culture and practice that will maximize efficiency, accuracy, timeliness, collaboration and adaptability of our internal and external mission related work.

## **Key interventions**

- Conceptualize and strategize, in partnership with CARE International and Nepali digital tech service provider partners in the ecosystem, what fully digital competency and integration means and accordingly build capacity and implement the digitalization strategy in a campaign-like manner with speed and outcome.
- Digitalize all data and processes whether internal or external mission-related so that all people involved have real-time data available for making or influencing decisions and actions.
- Contextualize and develop policies, standards and practices for using assistance of AI safely, ethically and accurately - without devaluing human intelligence, spirits and relationships - in all aspects of internal organization as well as external mission related work.

- Undertake a deliberate and extensive process – jointly with the partners and collaborators – for developing digital and AI policies, standards, capacity needs and strategy proposition, generally for social justice, development and humanitarian work and organizations in Nepal, in general and CARE Nepal, in specifics, so as to advocate and practice safe, secured, equitable, fair, empowering and productive digital and AI integration.

### **Internal Organizational Outcome 4: People and Culture**

CARE Nepal’s people (staff, volunteers, associates) will have the capability and culture in the organization to work with identity, dignity, freedom, safety, productivity and progress in a workplace environment with mutual trust, transparency, collaboration, living shared core values of the organization.

#### **Key interventions**

- Strengthen culture, policies and practice of ethical, wellbeing, safeguarding, selfcare, respectful and value aligned workplace.
- Enhance leadership capabilities and accountability across all levels while cultivating thought leadership, with a strong emphasis on coaching, performance development, effective feedback mechanisms, and inclusive people management practices for becoming a leaderful organization.
- Strengthen succession development strategy and frameworks to ensure progressive learning and development for capacity sustainability and leadership pipeline, while strengthening talent acquisition and retention strategies/methods to attract/retain diverse high competency/performing people and teams.
- Foster safe space and culture for critical thinking and dialogue, future responsive, feminist, entrepreneurial and adaptive mindsets and capability that encourages innovation, agility, continuous learning to respond proactively to evolving contexts, enabling the organization to remain resilient, responsive, and future-ready.
- Strengthen empowering culture, capacity and space for all people in CARE Nepal to exercise their agency as active citizen for social, economic and environmental justice anywhere and everywhere in CARE Nepal’s space or beyond.

### **Internal Organizational Outcome 5: Sustainable Revenue Plan**

Funding and finance for CARE Nepal will be adequate, resilient, diversified and effective for CARE Nepal to deliver the strategic ambitions, commitments and relationships.

## Key interventions

- Expanding private sector and CSR partnerships across all sectors aligning CARE's gender-responsive and community rooted models with corporate social impact goals by advocating for and unlocking CSR and private sector impact investments for women-led/focused programs and enterprises.
- Strategically positioning CARE Nepal's locally led, and inclusive approaches to build donor understanding, interest, and alignment with existing funding priorities and frameworks.
- Systematically engaging and influencing CARE International for exploring philanthropic foundations, high-net-worth individuals, crowdfunding, and individual giving for work in Nepal.
- Adopt innovative fundraising approaches, including impact journeys, curated events (both global as well as national), and compelling storytelling and digital campaigns - to deepen donor engagement and unlock flexible, values - aligned resources.
- Leveraging innovation pilots and proof-of-concept initiatives to attract scale-up funding from institutional donors, philanthropic foundations, and impact investors.
- Strengthening consortium and alliances with like-minded organizations to synergize, share risk, enhance scale, and remain competitive in high-crowding environments.
- Leveraging partnerships with domestic private sector actors, financial institutions, and local governments to mobilize blended financing/ co-financing and unlock diversified resources.
- Exploring cost-recovery and fee-based services to diversify revenue streams.
- Organizing high-level development dialogues and thematic forums showcasing CARE's impact to strengthen engagements with bilateral donors and government counterparts for attracting international funds and financing for CARE Nepal work.

CARE Nepal aims to raise approximately USD 40 million over the next five years, with an estimated USD 5–8 million to be raised annually.

## **Internal Organizational Outcome 6: Value for Money**

CARE Nepal organizational system, processes and people have improved mindset and practice on value for money, evaluating each action/intervention from cost and efficiency perspectives, while respecting equity and sustainability perspectives.

### **Key Interventions**

- CARE Nepal will prioritize to build clarity, capacity and evidence and will mainstream value for money concepts, principles and practices (programming, planning, implementation, evaluation, reporting, learning and scaling) taking into account both tangible and in-tangible outcomes/impact as well as scaling imperatives in value for money in program decisions. The resulting evidence on efficiency gains will be shared with partners and local governments to support learning and inform decision-making.
- CARE Nepal's all systems, processes, functions, and impacts are reassessed and checked from value for money perspective-exploring the options which could deliver better results with reduced cost, without compromising efficiency and effectiveness.
- CARE Nepal will reassess its structure and evaluate each cost centers from cost effectiveness perspectives – to achieve practice and profile of as a cost effective and impactful INGO
- Value for money perspective is integrated within organizational culture, and all individual and decision makers explore other time sensitive and cost-effective models and mechanisms rather than just relying on traditional mechanisms.
- Evaluate existing signature models - UDAAN, FFBS and others from value for money perspectives and make them cost effective and scalable by the government and other actors in the sector.
- Focus on automation of existing systems and processes at all levels (Operations, program delivery, monitoring, training/capacity building) which will support the organization to be more efficient and faster in delivery of the programs.

## **Internal Organizational Outcome 7: Partnership**

CARE Nepal have become and exemplar organization for truly equitable, accountable, value-adding, collaborative feminist partner of choice, practicing truly locally led and locally owned and globally connected development and humanitarian work.

## Key Interventions

- Shift from sub- grantee modality to co-creator and co-implementor, flexible, long-term collective, network-based partnership agreements that enable joint decision making and planning and locally led action
- Expand and institutionalize networks and networks of partners with diverse actors (CSOs, federations, and other stakeholders) for social movements and solidarity embedding feminist principles, mutual accountability, and partner feedback into governance and review processes.
- Re-define partnership, compliance, and safeguarding processes to ensure equity, transparency, and accountability, while adapting systems to support partners and co-manage risks through strengthened FAM, anti-fraud controls, and joint accountability frameworks.
- Invest in long-term institutional strengthening of CARE Nepal and partners to advance mutual capacity sharing through mentoring, peer learning, and embedded technical support across governance, advocacy, MEAL, financial management, and program leadership, underpinned by gender-responsive mutual due diligence, ethical risk frameworks.
- Establish adaptive engagement mechanism that enable partnership with local CBOs/CSOs, loose-networks, academia, think-tanks, private-sectors including women-led organizations.
- In line with the new strategy for enhanced engagement/partnership with private sector actors and the market, build necessary capacity in terms of knowledge, skills, policies and learning mechanisms for maximizing synergy and minimizing the risks.

## Internal Organizational Outcome 8: Learning, Adaptation, and Accountability

CARE Nepal becomes a fully integrated learning organization with robust systems and culture for knowledge management, adaptive programming, and accountability, ensuring evidence-based decision-making and continuous innovation across all programs and partnerships.

- Advance, simplify, and institutionalize currently available digital knowledge management system that enables systematic storage, retrieval, and sharing of knowledge products facilitating global, regional, and national knowledge exchange and

ensure that staff and partners have seamless access to relevant and reliable information.

- Strengthen internal culture of learning and adaptation by embedding knowledge management and learning responsibilities into job descriptions, performance appraisals, and staff induction processes including recognition and incentivization of “knowledge champions” within teams to promote reflective practices and foster innovation across all levels of the organization.
- Propel regular engagement through training, mentorships (peer mentorship program), and workshops for staff and partners on learning and knowledge management tools and approaches, including storytelling, learning circles, after-action reviews, and other participatory methods. These efforts will be complemented by the development and dissemination of standardized learning and knowledge management toolkits and manuals to ensure practical application in program design and implementation.
- Integrate systematic knowledge generation and application into program cycles, ensuring that success stories, lessons learned, and even failures are transparently documented and analyzed, and evidence and insights are integrated into new project designs, for strengthening adaptive management, and contributing to policy advocacy efforts aimed at influencing broader social change.
- Create, incentivize and strengthen knowledge-sharing platforms and communities of practice, organizing quarterly learning and sharing sessions internally and externally. Thematic hubs such as the GESI Think Tank, Social Analysis and Action (SAA) groups, MEAL working group and GED working groups will be further developed to encourage inclusive and reflective learning across programs.
- In close collaboration and coordination with its partners, organize a Joint Partners Review and Reflection (JPRR) meeting annually making it a platform for CARE and its partners to come together, reflect and learn from each other, and create safe space to hold open discussion around concurrent and most pressing issues and priorities in the development sector.
- Strengthen approaches to planning, implementation, reporting processes to ensure radical transparency and accountability, internally and externally.
- Foster strategic partnerships and alliances with government agencies, academia, the private sector, and civil society organizations to co-create, develop, and disseminate knowledge through active representation in national and international knowledge management networks to strengthen its reputation, improve resource mobilization, and shape future partnerships.

- Continually strengthen capacity of staff, partners and networks for systematic transparency, accountability and integrity to safeguard against and respond to violations.

## Section 7: Anticipated Risks

While this strategy has laid out clear pathways for achieving organizational goals and impacts, it is vital to anticipate, acknowledge, and manage existing and future risks. The following table depicts major risks, internal and external, that can influence and impact the implementation and delivery across resource generation, programmatic and operational fronts. With identification of these risks, it allows the team to plan for mitigation measures and remain adaptive to the dynamic context.

Risk Category and Detail	Level and seriousness of risk assessed	Actions and interventions required and planned to prevent, protect, mitigate, adapt the risk, harm and damage materializing
<p>Political</p> <p>In the situation of political disruption and instability, the current record low negative narrative and image about INGOs and NGOs will further deepen and public and political attacks and backlash against CARE Nepal as a foreign INGO will make secure existence and work of the organization difficult.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>1-Strengthen internal organization core, capacity, unity and coherence</p> <p>2-Strengthen external transparency, public profile accountability,</p> <p>3-Strengthen transparency, accountability and relationship with partners</p> <p>4-Strengthen relationship with ecosystem networks and leaders</p> <p>5-Engage with INGO and CSO in a deliberate collective effort for positive counter-narrative</p> <p>6-Create allies and work together with national NGOs as a complementarity.</p>
<p>Political</p> <p>Opposition, interference, influence, attacks and backlash from leaders, influences and society in the increasing polarized society and the state will make our priority work with and about gender, caste, sexual and reproductive rights and justice and local accountability harder to implement for results</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>1-Mapping of the major player in each area of work and engaging strategy is developed so that backlash will be minimized.</p> <p>2-Stay firmly on course with the issues and with the partners</p> <p>2-Strengthening engagement and collective resistance work with intersectional and ecosystem networks and coalition</p>
<p>Legal/Regulatory</p> <p>Due to the political risk mentioned above, together with the new political and governance situation may result in further/increased legislative, regulatory and administrative procedural constraints/control over INGOs and NGOs affecting effective functioning and work of CARE Nepal</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>1- Periodic and systematic engagement with SWC and government officials, tracker is developed to check all the compliance requirements; government officials are taken to the field to see the real work that CARE is doing.</p> <p>2-Further strengthen engagement and advocacy for a CSO and INGO supportive CSO Acts and Regulations</p> <p>3-Project a profile as well as become internationally/regionally active and relevant actor</p> <p>3-Strengthen transparency, accountability and relationship with partners</p>

Risk Category and Detail	Level and seriousness of risk assessed	Actions and interventions required and planned to prevent, protect, mitigate, adapt the risk, harm and damage materializing
<p>Funding/financing</p> <p>Global disruption and de-prioritization of bilateral and multilateral aid, coupled with Nepal's graduation from LDC status will cause further severe drop in available funds for development sector in general and CARE Nepal in particular (due to very limited unrestricted funds for matching or cushioning) will constrain the nature, scale and impact of work and relationships.</p>	Medium	<p>1-Advocacy with the donor and CARE USA that reach target is not the only way to assess the need for the intervention.</p> <p>2-Expanding donor landscape- FCI and private donor</p> <p>3- Exploring local revenue generation models</p>
<p>Funding Financing</p> <p>Due to development and aid cuts and crisis in these disruptive/transition periods, only short-terms project funds may be available and or CARE Nepal, under funding pressure will take short-term approach of more short-term projects, leading to internal, partner and public dissatisfaction and criticisms</p>	Medium	<p>1-Ensuring funding bids and projects are rigorously aligned with and part of the CARE Nepal Strategy</p> <p>2-Transparent and accountable engagement with partners from the inception to the end</p>
<p>Mismanagement and Fraud</p> <p>The wholesale move to localization and network model will lead to increased incidences of financial, reporting and accountability irregularities and frauds</p>	High	<p>1-Awareness session and reporting mechanism on sensitive issues-fraud and safeguarding is launched systematically at all stage of project implementation.</p> <p>2-Capacitating staff, partners and networks for better systematic transparency, accountability and integrity systems and practices</p>
<p>People</p> <p>Increased funding/financial risks will lead to perioding downsizing and or restructuring of the organization causing persistent staff insecurity/resistance for excellent functioning or for attracting/retaining talents</p>	Medium	<p>1-Systematic communication with transparency will help staff to gain trust among the management during the change management process.</p> <p>2-Leadership programs are initiated and adaptive mindset is developed within team members, new required skills are provided in the changed context,</p> <p>3-Linkage is created among recruiters and get/create the roster of the people for each working geography and local people should get priority during recruitment.</p>
<p>People</p> <p>Political and economic uncertainties, coupled of with aid-funding constraints and lack of opportunities, partners and networks will have severe depletion of talents and capability, adversely affecting our work and relationship with the constituency</p>	High	<p>1-Ensure effective implementation of CO's People and Culture Strategy encompassing talent retention and engagement, wellbeing, clear career progression, non-financial incentives among others</p> <p>2-Focus on continuous learning to enhance internal capabilities across technical and managerial aspects</p> <p>3-Focus on enhancing CARE's branding and value proposition promoting CARE as learning organization</p>
<p>Private sector contradiction</p> <p>Global, national and CARE Nepal drive for private sector engagement and private sector leadership in economy/development work may result in situation</p>	Medium	<p>1-Selection process is strengthened and values alignment is the core for partnership.</p>

Risk Category and Detail	Level and seriousness of risk assessed	Actions and interventions required and planned to prevent, protect, mitigate, adapt the risk, harm and damage materializing
of contradictions due to differences in values, purpose, methodology and political misalignment or power dynamics between CARE Nepal and the private sector actor collaborators/partners		
Private sector reputation Increased or significant engagement/partnership with private sector actors – especially, with those with baggage of social or environmental damage/extraction, land-grabbing, party-political affiliations and tainted leadership – will damage CARE Nepal’s profile, reputation and work.	High	1-Developing CO’s Private Sector Engagement strategy including its effective implementation 2-Building internal capacity to manage and engage with private sector entity in close collaboration with ARMU and global technical experts
Digital capacity External and internal drive for digital technological integration will be successful in infrastructural terms but internal organization and partners/people CARE Nepal works with have not been able to catch up with the mindsets, capacity and care needed for a safe and secured digital function, thus resulting in safety, security and effectiveness incidents and backlash	Medium	1-Plan is prepared to identify the area both at program and support function for digitalization, 2-Digital literacy is enhanced among staff.
Digital AI Over-reliance on and misuse of AI have eroded creativity and authenticity of CARE Nepal thus losing CARE Nepal core, capability and distinctive competency/advantage	High	1- Adapting AI use policy or guidance from CARE Global including its socialization across all upcoming and current staff. 2-Building AI literacy and responsible use skills across staff and partners
Digital data insecurity CARE Nepal’s internal organizational as well as CARE Nepal partners’ data, identity, profile may be breached, stolen and misused/misrepresented causing negative legal implication/obligations on CARE Nepal and or reputational damage to CARE Nepal	High	1-Firewall and other safety features of the organization are enhanced. 2-Periodic cybersecurity and data security training is provided.
Program Quality, Learning and Accountability Due to reasons of financial/funding pressure, cost-cutting, talent retention/acquisition failures and Ai dependency as well as moving from the sub-granting to the ‘network model’ may adversely affect our relationship with stakeholders and our partner organizations as well as the quality of our work, learning, creativity and adaptability, agility will be compromised.	Medium	1-Awareness session and reporting mechanism on sensitive issues-fraud and safeguarding is launched systematically at all staff of project implementation

## Section 8: Implementation Forward

As mentioned above, this CARE Nepal Strategy 2030 is a guiding document for all our work, relation and organization. This is a living document that we will review, and update as necessary based on the changing external contexts, learning from implementation, and feedback we receive.

1. CARE Nepal will use this version of the Strategy 2030 – both in Nepali and English language - to induct all staff to fully understand and internalize for implementation from their functional roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.
2. Shorter version of this Strategy 2030 tailored appropriately for partners, networks and wider public will be available through appropriate channels and medium both for informing them about the direction and work of CARE Nepal, for inviting them to collaborate as well as to hold CARE Nepal accountable.
3. All units and departments in CARE Nepal will update or develop their implementation plans for both horizons – 2026 - 2027 (in details) and 2028 - 2030 (in outlines). In addition to the traditional annual plans and budget for/by the vertical functional management unit/department teams, annual plans and budgets will also be made for cross - cutting (collaborative) issues, themes or outcomes, in line with the push for internal networked/collaborative working approach, with clarity and accountability.
4. All units and departments in CARE Nepal will develop and implement annual plans and budget in accordance with their horizon plans and this Strategy 2030.
5. All CARE Nepal annual reports will be written in line with this Strategy 2030, and the horizons plans to align and ensure transparency and accountability.
6. A deliberate process to refer to and review this Strategy will be all undertaken at the time of annual review, reflections and reporting and at the time of annual plans and budget process.

## Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BIPAD	Building Information Platform Against Disaster
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DHM	Department of Hydrology and Meteorology
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EOC	Emergency Operations Centers
FAM	Feedback and Accountability Mechanism
FFBS	Farmer Field Business School
GBV	Gender-based violence
GBViE	Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HEAL	Healthy, Empowered, Accredited, Linked
HPP	Humanitarian Partnership Platform
LDC	Least Developed Country
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual/Allies
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MFI	Microfinance Institutions
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MSME	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise
NoP	Network of Partners
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RMHN	Reproductive Health, Maternal Health, and Nutrition
SAA	Social Analysis and Action
SATH	Self-Applied Technique for Quality Health
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WLAA	Women-led Anticipatory Action
WLiE	Women Lead in Emergencies
WLO	Women-led Organizations
WRO	women's rights groups/organizations

## Glossary

Topic	Description
Advocacy	The deliberate process of influencing those who make decisions about developing, changing and implementing policies to reduce poverty and achieve social justice
Agency	Agency is a term CARE uses in its Gender Equality Framework referring to building consciousness, confidence, self-esteem and aspirations of individuals to change their world (non-formal sphere) and knowledge, skills and capabilities to do so (formal sphere).
Child early and forced marriage	Child early and forced marriage (CEFM) is any marriage where at least one of the parties is under 18 years of age. Forced marriage is a marriage in which one and/or both parties have not personally expressed their full and free consent to the union.
Culture	Culture involves every element that contributes to the emotional and relationship environment at CARE, including our leadership, policies, practices, values, beliefs, interactions, behaviors, and attitudes. This collection makes up the personality of an organization and is strengthened by listening to each other, incorporating feedback, and living out our values.
Decolonisation	Decolonisation is the idea of undoing the long-lasting effects of colonization. It's about recognizing and changing the ways that colonial history still shapes how we think, live, and interact today. Decoloniality calls for rethinking old ideas, respecting diverse cultures, and making things fairer for everyone.
Decolonising Aid	Decolonising Aid involves recognizing and addressing the power imbalances that can exist between aid organizations and the communities with whom we work. It aims to ensure that the leadership, priorities, and approaches of INGOs, such as CARE, are not driven solely by Western perspectives and values. Overall, decolonizing aid is about dismantling the historical power dynamics rooted in colonial legacies and fostering a more respectful, equal, and collaborative partnerships.
Direct participants	Individuals who are directly involved in activities implemented by projects or initiatives, receiving support, services, goods, resources or other, from CARE or partners
Diversity	Diversity, socially, refers to the wide range of identities. It broadly includes race, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, physical appearance, etc. It also involves different ideas, perspectives and values.
Do no harm	Do No Harm means considering potential risks associated with your programs and how your intervention might unintentionally increase conflict and violence. Do No Harm means that no project, service, or assessment activity should cause intended or unintended harm at any point. Harm includes, but is not limited to, GBV.4 Harmful effects are often unintended and can be avoided through analysis of the gender and power norms that exist in communities and putting in place GBV integration measures from the start of the project.
Equality	Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources and opportunities, regardless of their circumstances. In social and racial justice movements, equality can actually increase inequities in communities as not every group of people needs the same resources or opportunities allocated to them in order to thrive.
Equitable Partnerships	Equitable Partnerships. We will value equitable relationships, and welcome and embrace our differences (ergo, not aiming for equality/or to mirror each other) and the different contributions that each partner brings. Working equitably also includes joining efforts to strengthen mutual or reciprocal capacities and understandings, while avoiding perpetuating presences and/or creating harmful dependencies.
Equity	Equity, in its simplest terms as it relates to racial and social justice, means meeting communities where they are and allocating resources and opportunities as needed to create equal outcomes for all community members. Fair access, opportunities and advancement.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Description</b>
Ethnicity	Ethnicity refers to the identification of a group based on perceived shared social and cultural characteristics such as language, music, religion, ritual, food, traditions, history, etc.
Evidence	Proof from an external (3 <sup>rd</sup> -party) evaluation or study, based on a credible methodology, of positive impacts from CARE's programming. Different audiences will require different levels of rigour
Gender Expression	Gender Expression is the "external appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behaviour, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviours and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine."
Gender Identity	Gender Identity is "one's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth."
Impact	Sustainable, significant and measurable changes in the well-being of a specific group of participants. Changes at this level materialize in long lasting changes on poverty and social injustice conditions (human conditions) and are often influenced by other factors as well as those directly addressed by CARE's work
Impact at scale	Achieving sustainable, systemic change through external pathways beyond CARE and partners' direct work with communities, to deliver accelerated and gender-equitable growth of impact in the lives of women and girls, for the majority of those affected by the targeted problem
Impact Goal	The enduring large-scale social change we would like to see achieved in the lives of the Impact Group, over 10-15 years
Impact Group	The particular marginalized and vulnerable group in a specific context, in whose lives the Long-Term Program must contribute to a measurable, lasting and significant improvement
Inclusion	Inclusion is the act of creating an environment in which any individual or group will be welcomed, respected, supported and valued as a fully participating member irrespective of differences.
Inclusive language	Inclusive language entails ensuring that the language used in spoken or written form does not discriminate against any group of people.
Indirect participants	Individuals who are not directly involved in activities implemented by projects or initiatives, but still indirectly connect with the outputs resulting from those activities (depending on the modality of implementation the project or initiative adopts, this could include family members or wider community members, or those benefiting from changes in policies or practices of government or other institutions that CARE and partners have influenced)
Influencing	Being a compelling force on or producing effects on the actions, behaviour or opinions of others
Intersectionality	Intersectionality is a feminist sociological theory first coined by American civil rights advocate Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. It refers to how gender inequality intersects or overlaps with other forms of discrimination and oppression such as race, ethnicity, class, caste, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, etc. Gender is therefore differently experienced for people in these different categories.
LGBTQIA+	LGBTQ+ is an umbrella term for all persons who have a nonnormative gender or sexuality. LGBTQIA stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, Intersex, and Asexual/Allies. Sometimes a + at the end is added to be more inclusive of the ever-evolving language used to talk about gender and sexuality.
Model (or solution)	An approach, strategy, or set of practices aimed at social change for Impact Groups, which offers a clear and unique advantage over other approaches, with demonstrated cost-effectiveness and added value that is recognized by others

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Description</b>
Oppression	Oppression is the systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures.
Pathways (to Impact at Scale)	The different routes through which impact at scale can happen in the societies where we seek to see impact (models being scaled up, changes to policies, etc.). Pathways to scale represent non-mutually exclusive, non-hierarchical, non-exhaustive means of scaling impact. A single innovation or group of innovations may travel to impact at scale along one or many of these pathways at the same time or in a staged manner
Patriarchy	Patriarchy is defined by bell hooks as, “a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence”.
Person with a disability	Person with a disability is an appropriate way to speak of an individual with a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more life activity. This is considered ‘person-first language,’ that respectfully acknowledges the person before the disability.
Program approach	A conscious, thought out approach to making real long term change happen for an Impact Group, based upon a theory of change and rooted in a thorough contextual understanding of the underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability
Program quality	Program Quality for CARE consists of what our teams and our partners should do and how they should work, to meet the expectations of program participants, partners, donors and other stakeholders, and live up to our principles, standards and commitments. Increasing program quality is a process of continuous improvement, from analysis to design, implementation, and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning. High standards of program quality improve CARE and partners’ ability to help save lives, enable the people we serve to claim their rights and achieve lasting change at scale, contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals and in line with human rights standards and CARE’s Vision 2030 goals.
Program Strategies	The main roles that CARE will play, with our partners, to contribute to the desired social changes in the most significant ways, given our capacities, experience and positioning
Programs / Long-Term Programs	A program is a coherent set of initiatives, including humanitarian interventions, by CARE and our allies that involves a long term commitment to specific marginalized and vulnerable groups to achieve lasting impact at broad scale on underlying causes of poverty, and social and gender injustice. This goes beyond the scope of projects to achieve positive changes in human conditions, in social positions and in the enabling environment
Projects (or Program Initiatives)	The building blocks of programs, contributing towards the Impact Goal and Domains of Change of the Long-Term Program(s)
Relations	Relations is a term CARE in its Gender Equality Framework referring to the power relations through which people live their lives through intimate relations and social networks (non-formal sphere) and group membership and activism, and citizen and market negotiations (formal sphere).
Safeguarding	Safeguarding refers to the measures CARE takes to prevent, report, and respond to harm or abuse and to protect the health, well-being, and human rights of anyone who comes into contact with CARE, whether it is CARE Employees and Related Personnel, partners, program participants, and communities.
Social Justice	Social Justice is the idea that all people, everywhere in the world, have the right to a life of dignity. This means a life free from poverty, violence, discrimination or human rights violations. A world where social justice exists is a world where all people are included in

Topic	Description
	society, and all people can claim their rights to healthcare, shelter and education regardless of how poor or rich they are
Structure	Structure is a term CARE uses in its Gender Equality Framework referring to discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices (non-formal sphere) and laws, policies, procedures and services (formal sphere).
Target groups	Groups that have an influence on the Impact Group, which CARE and its partners target (usually for behaviour change) in order to reach and positively impact the lives of the Impact Group, rather than as an end in itself
Theory of Change	A set of hypotheses about the changes we think are required to achieve the desired Impact Goal, and how these changes are related to each other
Women's Empowerment	Women's Empowerment the combined effect of changes in a women's own knowledge, skills and abilities (agency) as well as in relationships through which she negotiates her path (relations) and the society norms, customs, institutions and policies that shape her choices and life (structures).

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