



INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE GUIDANCE NOTE

SUMMARY

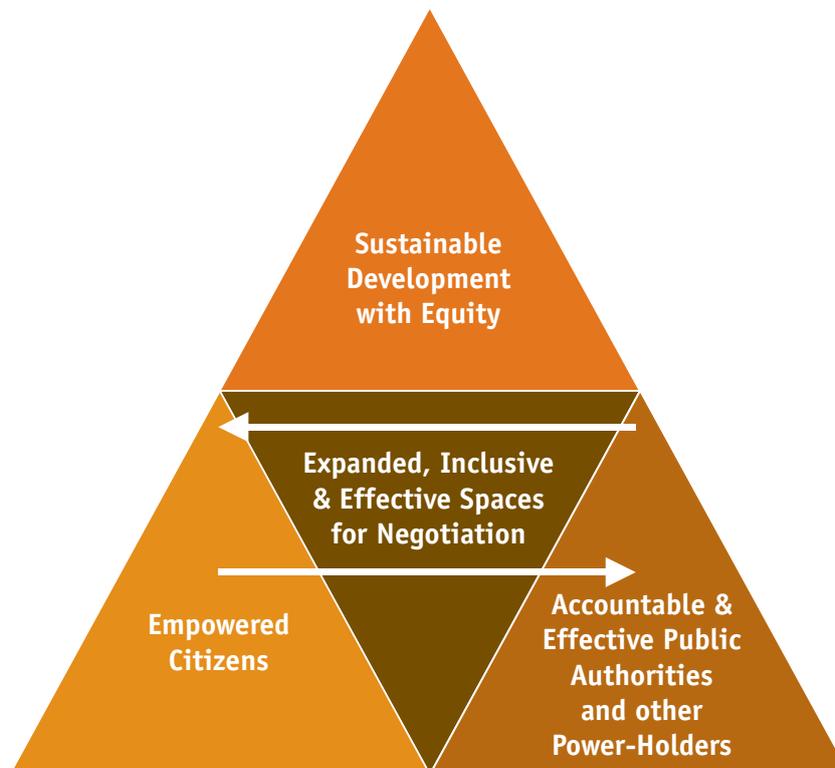


The [CARE 2020 Program Strategy](#) outlines three elements of CARE’s core approach: strengthening gender equality and women’s voice; promoting inclusive governance; and increasing resilience. **The promotion of inclusive governance is a core part of how CARE works everywhere**, in fragile and conflict-affected states and least developed countries, as well as in middle income countries and the global North. This document is a summary of the Inclusive Governance Guidance Note, available along with other resources on the [CARE governance wiki](#).

The importance of inclusive governance for CARE

CARE’s work on governance has grown considerably over the last 15 years, with CARE offices increasingly identifying poor governance as an underlying cause of poverty and social injustice. CARE recognises that poverty is created and sustained through unequal power relations and the resulting unjust distribution of resources and opportunities, often with a damaging and disproportionate effect on women and girls. For this reason, the CARE 2020 Program Strategy argues that [poverty is injustice](#). Challenging the root causes of poverty and social injustice, at all levels, therefore requires efforts to promote good governance; that is, *the effective, participatory, transparent, equitable and accountable management of public affairs*.

Theory of Change



If marginalised organised and/or individual citizens are empowered (Domain 1), if power-holders are effective, accountable and responsive (Domain 2), and if spaces for negotiation are created, expanded, effective and inclusive (Domain 3), then sustainable and equitable development can be achieved, particularly for marginalised women and girls.

CARE believes that **change needs to take place and be sustained in all three domains** to achieve this impact.

The **first domain** is concerned with enabling the poor and marginalised, particularly women and girls, to be aware of their rights and to have a stronger voice to demand change, by organising and acting collectively.

The **second domain** entails working with a range of power-holders, such as the state, the private sector and traditional leaders, to improve their ability to fulfil their obligations and be more responsive and accountable to marginalised citizens. This includes working not only with formal institutions and structures, but also engaging with informal institutions that are shaped and influenced by non-formal power and authority.

The **third domain** is the product of interactions between the other two and involves facilitating the opening up or strengthening of spaces for engagement and negotiation between citizens and their organisations and power-holders, at all levels.

CARE's role across these three domains will vary, depending on the local context, our reputation, legitimacy, capacity and experience, the space we have to act and our appetite for risk.¹

CARE's inclusive governance models

The core models, or evidence-based examples of how CARE promotes inclusive governance, can be grouped in five main programmatic areas:

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Social Accountability ([SA](#)) can be defined as citizen-driven accountability, i.e. an approach that relies on civic engagement to claim accountability. The aim is to strengthen citizens' mobilisation and voice, support the generation of citizen-generated information, and provide spaces for organised citizens to engage with service providers and other power-holders to influence decision-making and hold them accountable. Common social accountability mechanisms used by CARE include:

- **Community Score Card** – a CARE approach that brings together service users and providers to score services against a set of indicators. The results are discussed in an interface meeting and a plan of action is agreed, and reviewed again when the process is repeated six months later.
- **Social Audit** – a process of auditing public official records and assessing whether quality of public projects correspond to quality standards established in the design and contract, and whether reported expenditures reflect the actual funds spent on the ground.
- **Citizens' Charter** – a brief public document that provides the essential information that users need to know about the services provided by a public agency, including the quality standards, fees to be charged, and complaint mechanisms available.
- **Participatory budget monitoring** – this involves holding public authorities to account by enabling communities, particularly women, to have a say in the allocation of local budgets and to monitor the spending of public funds.

LOCAL PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

Working with local government and civil society to design and implement participatory local development plans that reflect demands put forward by poor and excluded social groups. Examples include:

- **Community-Driven Development (CDD) or Community-Driven Reconstruction (CDR) programmes support** the establishment of Community or Village Development Councils as platforms for marginalised citizens to plan and implement their own development priorities, with funding from the central government and/or external donors.
- **The Community Action Plan (CAP)** is a model for engaging marginalised citizens to identify and prioritise their collective needs and devise action plans aimed at influencing local development planning.

VOICE AND ADVOCACY

Supporting civil society from grassroots community organisations to national level networks to influence decision-making processes aimed at both generating new legislation or policy and closing the implementation gap. CARE has a long track record, especially at local level, in supporting women organisations to advocate for their agenda (see [The CARE International Advocacy Handbook](#)). The challenge is to scale up at national level, and work with and through civil society coalitions in influencing national actors, including relevant ministries or the parliament.

CAPABILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS OF THE STATE AND OTHER POWER-HOLDERS

Working with a range of power-holders, including the state, private sector and traditional leaders, to improve their ability to fulfil their obligations and be more responsive and accountable to marginalised groups, particularly women. Examples include much of CARE and partners' work to strengthen technical capacities and/or accountability systems within service providers.

¹ The Theory of Change is taken from CARE's Governance Programming Framework ([GPF](#)) which provides a framework for conceptualising and planning governance work. Examples of the roles we can play are provided in the GPF [main guidance note](#).

ORGANISATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

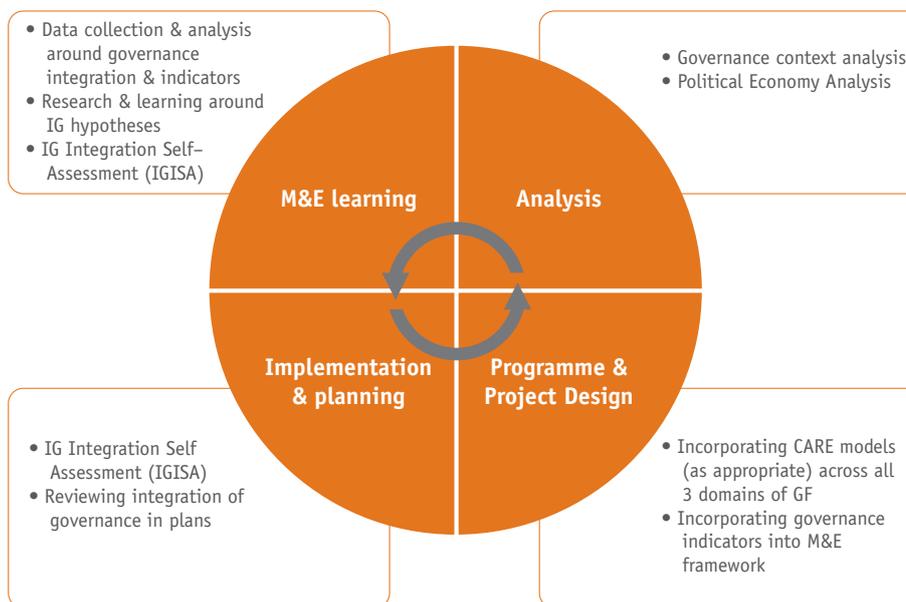
An organisation promoting accountability needs to 'walk the talk', and so CARE promotes its [own organisational accountability](#). This includes **forward accountability** to the impact groups CARE works for and with, **lateral accountability** to our partners and key stakeholders in the countries where we work, **internal accountability** within our teams and offices, as well as **upward accountability** to donors and to governments who regulate our operations.

Applying inclusive governance across the programme cycle

CARE member partners, country offices and partner teams should be working together to integrate inclusive governance across programmes and projects, including:

- **Context analysis:** integrate inclusive governance into their context assessment and analysis, including [Political Economy Analysis](#).
- **Design:** include strategies and activities across *all three* domains of the Governance Programming Framework (GPF), adapting and applying appropriate models; and incorporate global indicators related to inclusive governance in their M&E systems.
- **Implementation:** the [Inclusive Governance Marker](#) measures the level of inclusive governance integration into the programme.
- **M&E and learning:** CARE's [guidance on M&E](#) of inclusive governance work can help teams as they define their overall M&E systems and tools. The Inclusive Governance Integration Self-Assessment Tool (IGISA – see [Annex 2](#) of the [Inclusive Governance Guidance Note](#)) is designed to enable teams to reflect on their progress in integrating inclusive governance. Both the IGISA and the Governance Marker help to feed into global reporting systems (such as PIIRS).

Integrating inclusive governance across the programme cycle



For more detailed guidance, including practice examples and links to resources, please see the [Inclusive Governance Guidance Note](#).

CARE International
Governance Team
89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP

<http://governance.care2share.wikispaces.net/>

© CARE International, April 2016

Front cover photo: People gather at a food distribution in Nguel Kolo, Eastern Niger © Frederic Courbet/CARE 2015